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Vol. I, Issue - I (January 2015)

Prin. Dr. D. B. Shinde
Editor-in-Chief

Dr. S. K. Binnor
Executive Editor



Prof. S. N. Purkar

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Maratha Vidya Prasarak Samaj's
Karmaveer Kakasaheb Wagh Arts, Science and Commerce College
Pimpalgaon (Baswant), Tal-Niphad Dist. Nashik (M. S.)

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Service Marketing

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Introduction and Meaning:- Services Marketing is different from the marketing of Products. Why is it necessary for firms to market their services, how firm offering services do market segmentation and how do they select the various marketing mix elements.

Philip Kotler has defined service as any activity or benefit that one party can offer to another that is essentially intangible and does not result in the ownership of anything. Its production may or may not be tied to a physical product.

From the above definition we can see that any action on the part of a person or party to another, the nature of which action. (or offering) is intangible and will not result in the ownership of anything is referred to as services. For example, staying in a hotel by paying the necessary tariff, depositing money in a bank, travelling either by air, road or by railway, visiting a doctor, having the vehicle (Car, Scooter etc.) serviced, seeing a movie in a theatre, going to a lawyer, have a tie up with a consultancy firm etc.- all involve buying of a service.

In case of service also, there has to be match between the offering of services as conceived by its conceptualizes and the Perceptions and expectations as seen from the customer's point of view. From the customers point of view it must be clearly visible how the services offered by the particular organization is positively differentiated from the competitive services, if any in terms of service outcome, customer benefits and value to customer.

With technology advancement, service marketing involves a range of services from financial services to times shares net surfing to multimedia communication services and so on.

Keywords : (Service Marketing, Intangible, Value Added Services, Core Services, Empathy)

Objective of the study :-

- To know the concept of service marketing.
- To know the advantages of service marketing.
- To examine how services affect consumer purchasing decisions.
- To know value added services.

Hypothesis of the study :-

- How services marketing is different from the marketing of Products.
- Why is it necessary for firms to market their services.



Research Methodology :-

The present study is based on secondary data which are collected from the books, consumer behavior, national level newspaper and articles published in reputed journals. An important source of the paper. In addition to this government and non government websites are also referred for preparing this paper.

Perceived benefit and added value :-

All the firms offering or marketing services must be concentrating on perceived benefits and added value.

Successful firms offering services like Citibank, Readers Digest, Infosys technology etc. have developed a holistic approach to communicate relevant 'intangible' added value which the purchaser (of service) is willing to pay a price.

Core Service :-

- Function :- Purpose or Utility
- Packaging :- quality of services
- Design :- Understand customer needs
- Price :- Value for money
- Features or physical environment where services are offered.
- Delivery :- Through ensuring customer delight.
- Availability :- Timely availability of services.
- Add one :- Free gifts, relationship marketing and so on.

Intangible :-

- Quality Perceptions
- Value Perceptions
- Organisation or Institution or Industry
- Brand name
- Corporate image
- Reputation
- Other users (buyers of services) recommendations.

The Role of Marketing in the Services Sector :-

Today there are many changes occurring in this environment. Competition has intensified at the market place.

Continuous inflation, slow productivity, Stagnation, more demand from the customers have forced service firms to take an interest in marketing. Indian Air line and even Air India have been forced to study their customers and the competition and are taking steps to make travelers trips more comfortable, easier and more pleasant. Hotels are also trying to increase the flow of both domestic and foreign tourists by involving various attractive packages and schemes. Banks and financial institutions offer a wide range of personal and business transactions. From the 'bank account' transactions, there are other financial services like insurance



import/export service and debit cards which have to be brought to the attention of potential users, who have to be persuade to use them.

Thus we can see Indian consumers have a wide range of choices which have expanded beyond competing players in the same service category to new competitive services from different categories that meet the same need. This calls for delivering with uncompromising quality what the customer requires firms to do. Since the customer spends time in deciding and choosing what is good for them, or try to 'change the customer behaviour'. This is necessary not only to differentiate in self from the moves made by its competitors but also for ensuring that customer benefit and satisfaction are taken care of. This only reiterates the fact that it is necessary for service providing firms to undertake marketing researches and also work out suitable marketing strategy and positioning to determine.

- Whom (customer) do we want to serve, and what are their needs?
- What services do we offer?
- How do we offer value added services?

The aim of marketing is to understand the customers so well that the product or service fits him and sells itself. Ideally, marketing should result in a customer who is ready to buy.

Adding value Added Services :-

Service businesses on dependent on higher volumes because they may witness reducing margins over time. 'Trust' plays a very important role in the service industry. Once trust is broken, it is difficult to built it again. To meet the changing tastes & preferences and also gain a competitive edge, these firms have invest a lot in infrastructure, processes and advanced systems.

Many of the worlds' best airlines have strongly positioned themselves on punctuality, on in flight excellence, on routs and so on. The human touch or hospitability makes all the difference to the customer. So service firms should invest in high quality human resources with a high degree of employee satisfaction. Effective market positioning will be in being able to the customer relates to.

Service Quality :-

It is difficult for customers to evaluate services as compared to Conventional Products. It is because of this reason that service providing firms give a lot of thought to the physical environment in which the service is delivered. They try to build up a service image with tangible features. Many such tangible service features are included in the advertising and promotional literature.

Some may argue that service quality means focusing on satisfying customer's needs and in that sense it is not much different from product quality which also focuses on satisfying consumer needs. However, service only. This experience or feeling about the service received may vary from customer to customer. So sometimes it becomes difficult for the firm to gauge customer expectations. Usually firms have been concentrating on the following factors to influence customer expectations. These factors are :-



- **Assurance** : This refers to the firm's ability, assurance and confidence of delivering service in a way appreciated of delivering the service in a way appreciated by customers.
- **Reliability** : This is with reference to the firm's ability to deliver the service depend accurately and consistently.
- **Tangibles** : This refers to the atmosphere and physical environment which is use make a positive impact or image in the minds of the customer ability and feeling responsibility to deliver the services promptly and helpfully.
- **Empathy** : This refers to the firm's ability to empathies and deliver the service convey understanding of the needs of individual customers.

Thus ability of the Service providing firm to deliver a quality service will be depend on identifying the needs of the customer.

An effective quality service plan also allows for the periodic assessment of quality performance and systems for resolving quality problems when they arise.

Conclusion :-

Service providers must always develop a marketing plan keeping in the mind the firm's operating area, its existing and potential customers need and requirement and on all the services they (firm) will be able to provide to the target market.

In service marketing, Product, Place, Promotion, Price and Personnel or People are marketing mix elements are essential.

Service firms are referred to as 'People's Business because the customer will develop an image about the firm through its (firm's) employees. These calls for developing a positive organizational climate whereby the firms employees are trained to perform better and they will be happier in their jobs and thus provide a good job of interacting with customer. Service providing firms should consider training employees as an investment in future.

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