

Market segmentation  
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## Market Segmentation of Toyota and Consumer Buying Decision Process for Hilux

Toyota Motor Corporation (TMC) is a widely recognised car manufacturer in Malaysia and around the world. Currently, Toyota is the top carmaker in the world, beating their closest rivals, General Motors in both production numbers and sales. Even though the major markets of Toyota are in the United States and Japan, they exert no less influence in the Malaysian market, holding a large portion of market share. Let us now take a look at how Toyota segments their target market in Malaysia.

The purpose of market segmentation is to divide the general market needs into smaller defined groups. Toyota has come up with a variety of models to tend to the needs of Malaysians. The models released in Malaysia are Camry, Vios, Hilux, Avanza, Innova and Fortuner just to name a few. These different models aim to capture different levels of income of consumers. One of the segments that Toyota aims to attract is the middle to high income earning group. Toyota provides its customers with a broad range of prices for both middle income and high income earners. Middle income customers are able to afford the lower range Avanza and Vios which are within the RM70, 000 range while high income earners can go for the more luxurious Camry and Fortuner of which can cost within the range of RM140, 000 to RM170, 000.

Aside from income, Toyota also targets consumers who live a luxurious lifestyle. Lexus is a luxury car division under Toyota. Lexus sets itself apart from its competitors by offering high quality luxury cars at lower prices.

Lexus models that can be found in Malaysia include the LS 460, IS 250, GS

300 and RX350. Instead of the classic Mercedes Benz and BMW, drivers can now feel as luxurious and classy driving a Lexus car which cost less. A more affordable Lexus car also allows lesser earning drivers who always dreamed of driving a luxury car to realise their dream, bringing in more customers.

Another segment that Toyota targets is geographic needs. Malaysia is a tropical country with lush rainforests and there is a need for reliable four wheel drives to traverse them. Therefore, Toyota has designed several 4X4 vehicles meant for off road travels. The vehicles currently sold in Malaysia are the Fortuner, Hilux and Rush. These four wheel drives work well on tough terrain and has been proven to be durable under the worst of conditions, thus satisfying the needs of consumers as well as capturing market share.

Next, we will be evaluating the buying decision process of consumers for a renowned Toyota product, the Hilux. Buying decision process is a series of steps that a buyer would experience as he/she buys a product. This process mainly comprises of awareness of unsatisfied need, a search for information, comparing alternatives, buying the selected product and finally evaluating the product after purchase.

A driver who frequently drives off road on rough terrain knows that it is difficult to find a reliable 4X4 that would carry them through the steepest of slopes and dense pools of mud. Jungle four wheel drive expeditions also frequently find themselves in need of a powerful machine to pull other four wheel drives out of a sticky situation. This brings about awareness to find the solution to these problems and births an unsatisfied need.

The next step for the drivers is to look for the answer to their need.

Information is vital to the decision buying process as it gives buyers insight on the product and influences their decision to purchase it. Nowadays, buyers can find information easily through the internet and on brochures which are freely available. These sources also provide very detailed specifications to the product that they are looking for. Alternatively, buyers can also visit Toyota showrooms to have a firsthand look and experience of the product, together with precise details from a salesperson.

In the same way, buyers would search and compare the various alternatives available to them. For the Hilux, there are a number of similar four wheel drives that buyers would consider. Among them are Mitsubishi Triton, Nissan Navara and Isuzu D-Max. All these alternatives share similar design and function but all have their own unique specifications in which will critically affect the buyer's decision.

After considering all the alternatives available to the buyer, he/she will finally buy the selected product, the Toyota Hilux. The purchasing process begins with the buyer going to a Toyota showroom to discuss terms with the salesperson. The buyer then settles the down payment and decides on the mode of payment. The brand new Hilux will then be delivered to the buyer.

Finally, the buyer receives the car and fulfils his/her need. The buyer then starts to drive the Hilux and evaluates its performance. From there, he/she will measure the satisfaction of driving the four wheel drive and whether it has achieved the need that it was purchased for. If the buyer is satisfied with

the product, the cycle starts again or he/she will introduce it to his/her friends.

In conclusion, Toyota has identified their target market in more detail through market segmentation. This has helped them market their products more efficiently and made them the top car maker in the world. The buying decision process has also helped to understand consumers and their behaviour better in order to stay ahead of competitors.