

Marketing and operations relationship essay

[Business](#), [Marketing](#)



The modern business environment is shaped in accordance to recommendations by management theorists who proposed that different functional areas follow principles based on hierarchical control and functionalisation, and work-task specialization (Balasubramanian & Bhardwaj 2004). Functional areas in any organisation that ensure achievement of goals and smooth running include operations, human resources, accounting, and marketing departments. However, operations and marketing are considered the value adding departments in any business where they dictate what is to be offered (good and services), how it will be offered and delivered. Therefore, for the two departments to create value to the customer there must be a positive relationship that is conflict free and that is based on understanding and motivation to achieve organisational goals.

The principles followed in modern organisations which concentrate on work division have made the two departments be responsible for direct activities that link customers to the products (Piercy 2007). The other departments—accountings and HR—add nothing to the production process. Delivering value to customers is a complex process when the two departments, operations and marketing, are involved hence the need for them to collaborate and work together for success. This makes them related in the sense that marketing is dependent on operations for servicing customers, introducing new products, developing products, and pricing while operations are dependent on marketing for production costs (Piercy 2007).

The structuring of operations and marketing as independent functions in a business results in making it hard for management to coordinate operations. This is because of a 'legendary gap' between them making them have

relationships typified as (Crittenden et al. 1993): uncomfortable and adversarial; troubled and strained; and combative. With the relationship strained, there is a high probability that conflicts would occur between the two functional areas.

In an organisation the major conflicting areas are in diversity management, conformity management, and dependability management (Crittenden et al. 1993). In diversity management there is a tendency of the marketing function to insist on a diverse product line that is broad while on the other hand operations wanting a narrow line that would enable them cut on production costs. In the area of conformity, marketing function believe that products or services can be decreased and increased immediately hence submitting imperfect forecasts which is not the same for operation function which requires exact forecast and lengthy time in adjusting to specified conformities. Dependability management area results in conflict where both departments have different expectations in terms of delivery and quality control of services and goods.

With the high probability that operation and marketing departments would have a negative relation with each other, it is imperative that mechanisms be set in place so that a proper balance is achieved. This will make the organisation not to be neither too sales oriented nor too manufacturing oriented. This paper will analyse in detail the problem areas that result in conflict between the operations and marketing functions of a group. The basic causes of conflicts will also be highlighted with special attention given to complicating factors that intensify the basic causes of conflict. Once the areas of conflict and causes of conflict are thoroughly reviewed, then conflict

reduction mechanisms will be discussed with a view of improving inter-functional coordination between the two departments. The mechanisms will be anchored with practical strategies that were used by companies to improve relationships between the two departments.

Discussion

Areas of Conflict in Operations and Marketing

Crittenden et al., 1993, categorised the areas in an organisation that result in conflict into three, which are diversity management, conformity management, and dependability management. The three categories all house eight specific problem areas that are necessary for cooperation to avoid conflict. The eight areas are (Shapiro 1977): planning capacity and forecasting of long-range sales; product scheduling and forecasting of short-range sales; physical distribution and delivery; quality assurance; product-line breadth; cost control; new product introduction; and additional services.

References

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