

B2 b marketing case study

Business, Company



B2B means a business selling to another business rather than selling to the end user customer. On the contrary, B2C stands for business selling its products to the end consumer of such product, as opposed to selling it to another business. In B2C terms, the store represents a business that sells its merchandise to local consumers who are the end users of such product. The main distinction between B2B and B2C is probably the number of stakeholders. In B2B marketing strategies, the key aspect is the type of relationship that exists between the vendor's sales team and the seller himself. In business, it is necessary to understand that once a client dislikes you, it becomes difficult to trade with them but when he does know and trust you, there is a better chance of trading with him (ULAGA, 2003).

Demand creating managers are charged with the rather important task of creating an appropriate product mix in a B2B marketing plan of their organization. The process involves identifying new leadership strategies that make the existing lead systems move a distance further down the funnel. Actual demand managers recognize that it requires lots of skill to come up with the most appropriate mix. Some of the essential aspects in B2B mix include the following.

Developing a B2B ‘online’ sales ordering system

Positive aspects

Applying electronic order processing and B2B online ordering platform allows a business to have a better flexibility in their inventory volumes. The platform eliminated the need to operate a dedicated center for distribution which would call for huge capital expenditures in purchasing materials and equipment (MINETT, 2005). A B2B online marketing saves such probable

huge expenditures by the company.

In examining the B2B eCommerce model of saved orders, we see that saved orders are made through shopping and from items to cart. However, instead of checking out, the online order is saved or forwarded for approval. This B2B online processing feature is often employed as a checkpoint in the process of making a purchase; it allows order verification and approval. This feature ensures that the customers have the required funds; orders made are only for the authorized goods and to ensure that the order total figures have been accounted for in a proper manner.

The B2B online marketing provides for orders from history counter checks. The model allows buyers to access their historical purchases which hence obtain the required informed details of the order they are about to make. This is especially useful for regularly ordered items (ULAGA, 2003).

The online design allows for subscription orders also referred to as automatic reorder. This order creation aspect is created in advance to auto-send a predetermined order at set intervals and is mostly used for consumables. For this method of ordering to be efficient, it is necessary to send an advance notice to the order recipient so that he has the time to decide whether to change or cancel the order before a shipment is done. In this method, various aspects should be called to the attention of the trading parties such as credit card details which would be stored for future similar orders.

Another important aspect of B2B online order processing systems is that of quotations. The use of quotations as a method of order creation is almost an exclusive B2B online functionality. In this model of order creation, the user makes an online quotation and prints it for internal approval. The quotation

amerces user information for the purposes of follow up that stalls workflows and inventory on this platform. The quoting process involves a number of specific rules geared to manage the pricing expiration and the period within which a quotation remains active in the ordering system.

Negative aspects.

The negative aspect of the B2B eCommerce ordering would be on the historical ordering model. Historical ordering is inefficient when compared to other ordering methods since the user must locate the particular order he needs from a history of hundreds of them. The problem may intensify especially in circumstances when the customer lacks the knowledge of what historical order to use (ULAGA, 2003).

Another aspect would be user resistance. Since B2B eCommerce is a new aspect of doing business, many organizations especially those formed several years back express user resistance and stick to their old ways of trading through manual LPOs and quotations. The eCommerce resistance is usually fueled by the lack of trust in the online transactions by the user or fears of disclosing vital business information.

Marketing models and methods of analyzing the competition

Performing a competitive analysis of the environment within which the business operates involves addressing issues such as competitors' strength and weaknesses, target audience, using marketing strategies and analyzing and creating barriers to enter the market.

Competitor's SWOT analysis

Performing a SWOT analysis of the market's competition would give a picture of the competition and thus allow a company to draft a working strategy to get through the competition. In business, knowing one's competitor's strength is necessary for such strength is a threat to one's business.

Likewise understanding the weaknesses of one's competition is critical since they present potential opportunities and loopholes for the business to exploit to its advantage. SWOT analysis of Hard Glaze China companies e. g. the companies from china that have contributed to the demise of the company may enable Hard Glaze establish the key threats posed by such competitors and devise working strategies to counter their strength. On the other hand, the company would find loophole and opportunities from the weakness of the competition (CLARKE, 2005). After all, marketing is a form of war and for one to be victorious in war, it is crucial to know oneself and their worthy opponent.

In SWOT analysis, Strengths encompass what the company or the competitor is good at and excels in. It involves searching for possible unique advantages that would work as a head start. Weaknesses are things the company or the competitor is not good at. By establishing its vulnerable areas, HardGlaze would devise an appropriate game plan of fighting the stiff China competition. On the other hand, understanding the weaknesses of other China producing companies would present HardGlaze with a competitive advantage to exploit (ULAGA, 2003). Opportunities present areas HardGlaze can take advantage of the prevailing market trends. Threats on the side of HardGlaze are areas where the Chinese competition is coming on strong

while on the competitive side, threats are opportunities HardGlaze can exploit to its advantage.

Target audience

Target audience in this case means the businesses and end consumers that HardGlaze aims at reaching to and creating customer loyalty amid Chinese competition. HardGlaze needs to recognize its potential and existing target market and should directly advertise to the market. For a company to identify the target market, the management needs to ask themselves several questions. For instance, what makes China from HardGlaze unique from other China sold elsewhere? Firms need to convince the target market that its products are original and the best in the market.

HardGlaze needs to know the target audience well i. e. the specific businesses it is selling to e. g. whether they are hotels, airlines or railway companies. The company should then convince its specific target market why the market should buy from them. The firm should explain aspects like their logistics e. g. free deliveries, business closing hours; do they operate at night etc. HardGlaze should then identify their primary customers (ULAGA, 2003). Most businesses tend to think that everyone is their target audience, but there is a need to identify the ideal clients out of the larger target group. It is critical to do intensive research on the primary target group i. e. learn as much as it is possible about them. Learn the demographics, publication on the target audience and interviewing potential target customers.

Creating a barrier to competition

The best and only effective way to make massive sales is by devising creative offers with some element of “ Must have” in them. The goal should not only be to find and make such offering but rather to create a barrier that restricts other competitors to refrain from doing the same. Companies like HardGlaze that have traded for years with little to none competitive pressure should institute some form of barrier against competition; Some example of such include the following

Proprietary technology e. g. Prius’ hybrid synergy drive, Dreyer’s slow churn ice cream are examples of technologies that cannot be easily copied by the competition. HardGlaze has operated for many years and must possess some unique proprietary technology since it was one of the pioneers of China products (CLARKE, 2005). Using such technology and stating it in the advisement messages would lure customers towards its direction and lock out the competition since they lack the secret technology and the user perceived unique touch in their Chinaware.

Another useful approach that would lock out the competition would be using ongoing innovation. A good example of a firm that employs this strategy is Apple Inc. The firm constantly creates new products for its target audience e. g. iPod, iPad, iTouch, and Nano. This keeps its curious customers queuing at its door step waiting to try out the new product. Likewise, HardGlaze may become innovate through creating new brands of China and constantly adding some element of elegance from time to time. This will also keep its customers curious and thus maintain and expand its customer base.

HardGlaze's potential retail selling strategies

Being the authority

Amazon's effort to provide all forms of services and product's risks transform the company into a jack of all trades and master of none. Big channel retailers can learn from this and exploit the opening to their advantage by making themselves category experts (MILLER, 2012). HardGlaze can also borrow a leaf from this and offer the best in class Chinaware, thus, fitting in the shoes of curators of the finest and the best China products in the world. Through providing expert reviews, building a community of experts, and creating rich, engaging adverts, HardGlaze can become the master of Chinaware and over shadow other chinaware companies.

Knowing the close ratio

Keeping count of the number of customers visiting the business on a daily basis, and the number of business calls made is important in arriving at the businesses close ration. The number of visits and the day sales should be divided to give the close ratio. At first the ratio may seem weak but with time, being conscious of the number of customers one has, boosts sales figures (ULAGA, 2003).

Education on the product

Large companies do not require knowing much about their product since their abilities to sell at cheap prices gives them a competitive edge in the market. For one to compete with such companies, he has to gather in depth knowledge on the product his company sells. HardGlaze should avidly study and learn the pros and cons of their Chinaware, constantly update

themselves with the new developments and make efforts to stock the most recent products of chinaware. The company sales staff should be trained and regularly educated to get them up to speed with the products they sell to consumers. HardGlaze should do everything in their power to avoid high employee turnover since replacing a knowledgeable employee is an expensive ordeal.

Selling add Ons though being Savvy about it

A Cross-selling similar product to the same customer is an efficient way of increasing business sales for the company. Although it may be perceived as sort of annoying by the customer, it is a sure way to improve the volume of sales. The best way for HardGlaze to adopt this approach would be by suggesting other additional pottery product it could offer to its existing customers. The most efficient way of doing this is through relating the additional product to the usual product the customer buys from HardGlaze since they already know all about it. Utilizing stellar sales selling techniques can prove to make a remarkable difference in the overall success, in the retail business.

Long life

HardGlaze has invested a significant portion of its resources to research and development to the ends of searching for information about peculiar game changing resistant material dubbed “ Long Life”. If the company adopts this material and incorporates it in the manufacturing process, the company is set to benefit vastly from this magnificent innovation that is in line with the current trends (MILLER, 2012). The material would give HardGlaze a

competitive edge in the chinaware industry because they are the sole innovators of this important technology. Long Life is mixed with china clay to produce abnormally strong hard to break plate, cups and mugs.

Benefits to the customer

One of the key customer concerns is the fragile nature of most china ware. This forces the customers to incur great losses considering the fact that china ware is quite expensive compared to the other clay products in the market. The material is artificially made from clay and synthetic polymers which are easily available (MINETT, 2005). HardGlaze can manufacture the polymer within its premise since making is much cheaper from outsourcing the material. Manufacturing the material will also help avoid wastages and abnormal losses associated with transportation. In the past, consumers had launched complains about the bottom surface area of our chinaware. This particular product has addressed this issue by widening the base of our products especially the mugs and the jars while still retaining a stylish appearance, better than in our previous chinaware. The customers are set to get value for their money from purchasing this product.

Strategic benefits to the HardGlaze China Company

Products from this material will place the company at a competitive strategic place in the world of chinaware. Our products will be the only long lasting hard to break clay products in the business. It would be imperative for a business to patent this material to avoid copy cats (CLARKE, 2005). This material will raise the company to a competitive position that competition cannot cope. Patenting this material will mean that, HardGlaze will be the

sole owner of this technology and will control its usage especially by its competitors.

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