

The importance of the physical evidence marketing essay



Services are radically different from products and need to be marketed very differently. So the classical 4 P structure of the Marketing Mix needs to be modified suitably to incorporate the 8 Ps for services marketing, which was previously known as 7 Ps only.

Services can range from financial services provided by the banks to technology services provided by the IT Company or hospitality services provided by hotels and restaurants. Services marketing are dominated by the 7 Ps of marketing namely Product, Price, Place, Promotion, People, Process and Physical evidence. All of these factors are necessary for optimum service delivery. While everyone knows about the 7 Ps of services marketing, the 8th P of Services Marketing has emerged in research very recently. The 8th P is Productivity and Quality.

8-P-Marketing-Mix

Physical evidence

Physical evidence is the ability and environment in which the service is delivered. Both tangible goods that help to communicate and perform the service, and the intangible experience of the existing customers and the ability of the business to relay that customer satisfaction to potential customers.

Physical evidence is the element of the service mix which allows the customer again to make judgments on the organization. Consumers will make perceptions based on their sight of the service provision which will have an impact on the organizations perceptual plan of the service. For e. g. If one moves into a restaurant his expectations are of a clean, friendly

environment, besides high quality food which is the core service of the restaurant. On an aircraft if he travels he expects enough room to be able to laydown. Some points stating the importance of physical evidence in service marketing are-

• Physical evidence is ' packaging' for services, therefore creation of service environment should not be left to chance.

• Customer judges the service quality through the process of deduction.

• Physical evidences both- dominant and peripheral should be co-ordinated to achieve uniformity in its projected service image.

• Peripheral evidences are small and trivial but have impact on customer perception about services and are real source of competitive differentiation.

• It makes the intangible service apparent.

Physical Environment of Hotel:

• location

- What kind of customers prefers a city centre?

- What kind of customers prefers a hotel at seaside?

• Signs and logos

Many hotels belong to chains and their signs and logos are well known.

Different chains help hotels to profitable business. Competition is very hard

nowadays. Good reputation and recommendations help very much a hotel to get new customers and also make them to come again.

âœ” Style, furniture, colors, lighting

âœ” Clean air: some customers want luxury, and they are ready to pay for it. Other customers are satisfied with a little lower level.

âœ” Reception

What is good customer service at the reception?

âœ” Office, information, customer service

Is it easy to reserve a room? What is the easiest way to reserve a room today?

Good customer service is very important in the competition today.

âœ” A hotel room

What does a customer want from a good hotel room?

The room itself and the bath room must be clean and the bed must be comfortable. Something extra provided that a customer has not expected gives a good feeling.

âœ” Restaurant- heart of the Hotel

The restaurant and its kitchen create the heart of a hotel. At a big hotel there can be many different types of restaurants.

Reception

A hotel receptionist's job is to make guests feel welcome, to check them in and out efficiently, and to deal professionally with enquiries, face to face and by phone, fax or email. When guests call at a hotel to make a booking, the receptionist is the first person they speak to and may also be the first person whom they meet at arrival. The receptionist in short represents the "entire hotel" in front of the customer.

• The Hotel should provide a 24 hour reception service.

• At the Hotel there should be an array of experienced and qualified receptionists to handle the customers. They should work in a batch of three that is at any time there should be three receptionists in the front office for the convenience of the customers. They should change the shifts to ensure the best service possible.

• The receptionists should act as a guide, a friend, a counselor to the customer.

• They should use laptops and telephones to manage the accounts and to handle the queries or to provide service to the customer.

• The front office plays the most important part in the hospitality industry. Welcoming the customer with a smile, making them feel important is the valuable job of the receptionist.

Receptionists at Hotel should provide extra services such as calling the in house porter to carry the luggage, arranging for conveyance for sightseeing or official visits, booking flight or rail tickets and arranging parties.

Receptionist should look after the customer's personal taste such as his menu, movies and music and proper functioning of equipments in his room.

The receptionist

should also allot time for visits to the spa and fix appointments with doctors.

This aspect of service in a Hotel accounts for the high satisfaction among its customers.

Rooms at Hotel

Rooms should be spacious and attractively decorated. The rooms can be differentiated on two major criteria's.

Space Facilities provided.

The rooms can be categorized as follows: superior, deluxe, club, crescent, terrace, executive and presidential suite. However the superior, deluxe and club rooms must be the same in area

The visitors of the presidential suite should be provided with superior services and the most spacious rooms.

The services provided inside the rooms can be as follows:

Mini bar

• Coffee and tea maker to provide the ease of making it according to their own preference.

• Hairdryer

• Iron and an ironing board.

• Television facility with domestic channels and international channels.

• DVD players and a variety of video tapes

• High speed internet facility.

• Telephone with speaker facility.

• Refrigerator.

• Smoke detector.

• Newspapers and magazines.

• Convenient and adequate plug points in the room.

• Electronic safe and door locks for ensuring the safety of the visitor.

• Bathrobes and slippers.

• User friendly bathroom fittings.

• Jacuzzi.

Restaurant

Human aspect of a service sector industry sets it apart from the production sector. The inherent quality of a product and also its physical outlook attracts the customers towards it.

But when it comes to service the approach is totally different. Through its service, i. e. the quality of service provided, an industry in the service sector, tends to retain as well as create a customer. The service has to be made tangible in this fashion.

• The entrance made should wear a majestic look. The warm welcome by the man at the gate should make the guests comfortable and wanted.

• The overall ambience should be mesmerizing.

• The furniture laid around: The chairs and table should have wooden finish. The tables should be arranged to cater to the customers' needs i. e. buffet and sitting arrangement. The buffet should have table with expensive copper, steel and glass cutlery. The sitting arrangements should be planned judiciously keeping in mind the customers comfort as well as taking care of the economic aspect of space utilization. The furniture should be elegant and highly comfortable. The chairs should have soft cushions.

• The most attractive and significant part should be the attitude and professionalism of the waiters. They should be in a proper dress code. The ratio of waiters and table should be 2: 1, because of which customers can always be at ease and taken care of.

âžŸ To satisfy a customer in service sector especially in restaurants where the service delivered should provide the maximum satisfaction- which itself differs from one individual to another.

Gym

The physical environment at the gym should include the following:

âžŸ Stairs

âžŸ Front door: There should be a guard at the entrance who checked the membership cards of each customer.

âžŸ Smoothie bar Area- There should be a bar area which should include drinks such as: energy and fruit drinks besides providing normal water.

âžŸ Membership Card- All the customers should be given membership cards for easy recognition and catching the defaulters.

âžŸ Appearance of Employee- All the employees should have a dress code which should be similar to the other employees of the Hotel.

âžŸ Walls- The walls of the gymnasium should be with posters suggesting health and gymming tips and motivational phrases.

âžŸ Lockers- Locker facility for all customers to keep their belongings safely.

âžŸ Music

âžŸ Equipments- The gym should have all equipments related to cardio and weight training.

• Light- The hall should be well illuminated with focused lights.

• Appearance of staff- The trainers and the supervisors should be wearing branded sportswear.

• Towels- The towels should be very clean and dirt free.

• Hair Dryer- Hair drying facility for customers.

• Cleanliness- It should be well maintained to keep the entire area spic and span.

• Therapist- There should be a therapist to look after any unexpected injury.

• Temperature- The room should be conducive for comfortable exercising.

• Merchandise-If the customers intend to purchase any similar health product, the same should be available.

• Sauna and steam bath

• Jacuzzi

Parking

• Hotel should provide “ valet parking” for its customers.

• Valet parking is a service whereby a valet takes the car from the customer and parks it in the parking lot. The customer is hence spared of the hassles involved in car parking.

¶ In most five star hotels the parking lot becomes jammed during peak hours. Car parking by the valet proves beneficial for both customers as well as the hotel officials. On one hand the customer does not need to worry about the parking place; on the other hand the valet has the car at his own disposal. This means that he can park the car wherever he feels it convenient to do so.

¶ This leads to better service of the customers as they can enjoy the stay at the hotel without caring for maintenance of their vehicle.

¶ Offering a valet to take care of the car adds luxury to the service

¶ This can be further increased by the valet bringing the car up to the main entrance and holding the door opened to allow the customer to get in.

Conclusion

“ It’s not always words that impress”.... Truly, physical evidence in hotels and restaurants speak louder than words. It is through these evidences that the customer attaches himself. A hotel is an abode of customer delight. During this Endeavour we learnt the importance of physical evidence in a service industry like “ the hotel industry”. Physical evidence serves as an entire ‘ package’ for a service industry. It holds the power to tangible the intangibles. In the end we can conclude that the physical evidence of the services provided at Hotel should be highly impressive and efficient. It should make sure that the customer makes repeated visits. For a hotel industry viral marketing is the strongest advertising tool, hence all efforts should be made to make the customer satisfied.

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