

The marketing mix: product and branding strategies



The Marketing Mix: Product and Branding Strategies

Do customers have relationship with brands? Is it possible to build a relationship with non-living objects? How is relationship created with objects? These questions are frequently researched on by different marketing pundits. Various researchers disagree that a relationship is not possible. On the other hand there are researchers like Fournier who believe that a relationship exists.

I think a relationship exists between a brand and customer. However, it is dependent on the type of product or service the brand is offering. Let's take Verizon and Twentieth Century Fox as two brands and elaborate my point of view by using these brands.

Verizon:

Verizon FiOS [Fiber Optic Service] is a cell phone service company.

It offers broadband internet, telephone and television channels services.

According to MultiChannel News, Verizon has approximately 1.2 million television subscribers and 1.8 million broadband internet subscribers as of April 2008. It is nationally ranked 11th.

This particular brand is actually providing a service which is basically required by almost everyone who has enough resources to watch television, communicate using a cell phone, and use the dynamic tool internet for different purpose.

I mentioned the providing of Verizon in order to realize the interaction level of this brand in a person's life. According to Fournier, the higher the interaction levels of a brand, the better the relationship and the more the chances of developing the relationship further[1].

20th Century Fox:

It is one of the six major American film studios. It was founded in 1935 by William Fox. It has produced a lot of popular and highly entertaining movies like Home Alone, Die Hard, Alien, Predator, Star Wars and the list goes on.

Biological and Emotional Aspect:

Human beings are emotional creatures and they usually get attached to others easily. We are termed as social animals. If someone shows care for us we are inclined towards him or her. This was when dealing with humans.

If we come to objects [Brands] the connectivity and relatedness is the same as that of with humans but develops at a very slower pace. We are possessive about our belongings. Why? We are possessive about our laptop, cell phone just because we use it so often and it helps us in accomplishing our goals, our personal desires like talking to a lover or a friend. Specifically Verizon, it is promoted by its name not by a service which is Broadband internet or cell phone service. This has created a relationship or a bond with customers.

They think of the service by its name which is its brand. If it had separate name for its cell phone service with brand name Verizon not much used

then, relationship would have developed with the service name and not <https://assignbuster.com/the-marketing-mix-product-and-branding-strategies/>

really with Verizon. It is important to bring in Fournier's Brand Relationship Quality here which explains this point clearly. The more the interdependence, self connection, commitment, brand partner quality love/passion and intimacy the better the relationship let alone it is an object or being.

20th century Fox is established for over 70 years, however, a strong relationship between 20th century Fox and customers is not really there, unlike in Verizon.

The main reason being the way a promotion is done. Movies are promoted by their names and cast. 20th century Fox appears at the start of the movie and at the end. The entire 75 minute interaction is with the cast and the plot. Even during the premier and interviews during the launch, the cast, the director is questioned for a longer time than the producer.

Movies do make us happy or in other words we do feel a connection with the movie but not with the studio where it is shot.

Interdependence:

Cell phone is a must and medium to stay connected. It is the most used technological gadget by people all around the world. We are dependent on a good service provider which helps us in completing our set targets which could be to communicate an office message.

If we are able to do such things almost perfectly, we are happy or satisfied and thus we make the product a part of our life and use the same product

whenever we require the same service. Brand loyalty is established. This brand loyalty is an example of brand-customer relationship[2].

For the movie studio scenario the interdependence is not much.

Firstly, majority is not watching movies every day, even if they are they go for the cast and director who delivers quality watch and not for the studio. In movies the entire is assumed to be believable real place and not some artificial environment created.

Self-Connection:

Verizon connects itself with the customer by connecting the customer with its loved ones or need ones.

20th century fox also develops a connection but with the movie which is produced in their arena. We at times are able to relate to a particular situation in a movie and even a house or background. But we assume it to be a real existing place not a set.

Love/ passion:

Here one might argue that in movies there is more love and passion than in a cell phone carrier. For those people, we are talking about your level or degree of passion or interest in the using a particular service. In Verizon, there is a NEED to use it. In Movie studio, there is no need to watch a particular studio shot movie but a WANT to watch any movie which is worth spending time and money.

After Effects:

In Verizon the after effects may not be very impactful like of a good movie but they are long-lasting like we talk to a friend on the phone, communicate what we have to say. We watch a movie and fall in love with it. When we watch another movie we are likely to fall in love with it, we will not watch the same movie all our life and not watch other movies just because this movie gave us a splendid time. In cell phone service, we will use the same service again if we are happy with its performance.

However, a relationship between the movie producers, directors and cast definitely exists with the movie studio as they are familiar with the place and feel comfortable there and prefer their movies to be shot in this particular studio only.

Implications for managers:

For a product or service where relationship exists, the brand managers have to play a real role of keeping the brand alive at all times.

By this I mean that the customers feel related to the service and have made it part of their life, so it is the brand manager's responsibility to keep the brand active and alive in order to retain the relationship. They have extra responsibilities like maintaining the quality, coming up with services which could make the customers feel like this particular brand really cares for them provide them with benefits for using their service. Use promotional ideas which project the brand as a living thing who is working for its customers. And who cares for the customers' feelings, and things.

They repetitively need to promote the brand because of the highly competitive environment[3].

The movie studio does not necessarily need to produce advertisements for us the movie watchers because it is not going to be worth it as the movie lovers watches the movie considering the cast not the set. However, they do need to take care of their immediate clients, the directors the producers and the actors. They need to give them attractive, flashy ideas and create a creative atmosphere in the studio which would be inspirational for artists.

The can come up with such promotional advertisements where they can show free flow of creativity and materialization of concepts and thoughts. Directors want their imagination to be portrayed exactly the way they have thought and if a studio is using this particular point for its promotion then it will be an effective advertisement and it would create a relationship between the crew and studio[4].

In conclusion, there are certain services which can easily develop a relationship with customers and few which cannot because of their nature of the service. But a relationship does exist between users and the brand.

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