

Illustrating the dimensions of mcdonaldization: the case of uniqlo



Uniqlo now is developing at an amazing speed and it has become a well-known brand label in apparel industry across the world. This Japanese company operates in a systematic way through designing, manufacturing, and retailing. It aims to build “ a new style Japanese firm making good casual clothes available for all to wear.” (Uniqlo. com). The huge success of Uniqlo also follows the four principles of mcdonaldization that Ritzer developed in last century—efficiency, calculability, predictability, and control.

In this essay, I will analyse how Uniqlo has become a so successful global brand according to Ritzer’s McDonaldization theory. I will begin by introducing the business philosophy of McDonaldization. Second, I will assess Uniqlo based upon these each criteria. Finally, I will discuss the distinctive factors driving the Uniqloisation.

Theory review

Ritzer has observed the operation of McDonald’s and developed the thesis of McDonaldization. This theory comprises 4 main principles: efficiency, calculability, predictability, and control, all contributing to the success of McDonald’s. At the same time, it spawns a lot of drawbacks—irrationality of rationality.

Efficiency

The heart of McDonaldization is efficiency, which emphasises faster service, higher productivity and greater profit. It is represented in streamlined operation. There is fries man, griddle man, burger man who is responsible for his or her own part of work. During each process, innovations are adopted to

increase efficiency. For example, griddle workers use “ partially sliced buns that arrived in cardboard boxes” and the certain amount of wax is added in paper “ so that the patties would readily slide off the paper and onto the grill.” (Ritzer, 2004)

For customers, they enjoy the quickest service from McDonald’s. They select from the limited menu, or order through driving and can even call for delivery. The whole process only takes 3 minutes at maximum.

Calculability

McDonaldization stresses time, quantity instead of quality. Numerical standards are set in almost every aspect of its operation. The cooking for hamburger, fries and pies, the serving with each customer, and the delivery all can be measured by time. For example, McDonald’s sets strict retaining time to ensure the best taste of their food: fries in 7 minutes, hamburger in 10 minutes, and coffee in 30 minutes.

Predictability

The standardisation of McDonald’s ensures the same layout, the same decoration of its restaurant, and also the identical taste of its food. It is said that no matter when and where customers step into the restaurant, they will definitely get the same experience so that they do not need to worry about the feeling of alienation. For workers, predictability makes their job much easier just doing the routines without exceptions.

Control

Non-human technologies are adopted during the operation of McDonald's to increase control over employees and customers, avoid uncertainty and decrease cost. Staffs work under the framework or follow the simple steps that have been demonstrated the most efficient way to do that job. Also their machinelike work is cooperated with a number of real machines, including sensory soft drink dispenser, automated French fries machine, and computerized cash registers. Similarly, customers are under controlled when they step into the McDonald's. They need to follow the structured behaviour: queue up, fetch their food by themselves and dispose rubbish.

The irrationality of rationality

There are lot of irrationalities of rationalities, including inefficiency (long line on the checkout), incalculability (enormous amount of waste), unpredictability (pollution to the environment) and loss of control (make children addicted to fast food and lead them to overweight).

Uniqlo fits the 4 principles

Efficiency

In terms of efficiency, Uniqlo provides one-stop shopping experience with a wide variety of styles and colours. Their chain stores are spread nearly every corner of the high streets within the country.

All the clothes are arranged in open-shelves, and customers are free to choose whatever they like. In other words, a lot of work requires customers to complete by themselves. Customers need to choose the suitable style for themselves and also select the fittest size among the number of clothes. For <https://assignbuster.com/illustrating-the-dimensions-of-mcdonaldization-the-case-of-uniqlo/>

those time-constrained consumers, on-line Uniqlo store is the best choice. Within just few clicks, they can put items into their trolley, pay them and finally just wait for delivery.

Efficiency is presented in their everyday management. Staff members should stand all through the meeting, so they are forced to report the most important thing instead of wasting time on trivialities.

Calculability

Calculability is a fundamental element of Uniqlo operation. Unlike McDonald's focusing on quantity rather than quality, Uniqlo delivers high quality casual clothing at affordable price. It wants to create "new casual brand that all people could wear at any time." Uniqlo emphasises on great stock of its clothing and fruitful colours. Leveraging the very latest interior technology throughout the central atrium-lit store, Uniqlo created spacious shopping environment. When people shopping around, they will believe they can get great value—varieties choice, high quality and low price.

Predictability

Predictability gives customer the sense of familiarity and security. No matter where customers shopping in, the flagship stores or the chain stores, they will experience totally the same environment—large number of stock, open shelves and self-service etc. Customers go through the similar process. They usually take a basket, pick their favourite clothes, take them to fitting room and finally pay for at the checkout counter.

Control

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Control ensures Uniqlo growing organically. The solid management principles and corporate culture are delivered through day-to-day operation. Staffs will be evaluated weekly and monthly on their performance and clothes related knowledge. For customers, they are encouraged to stay longer time and buy more clothes under the leisure environment with light music, self-free purchasing. Before they take chosen items into the fitting room, they are forced to count the number of clothes and hold the number tag with them.

The irrationality of rationality

The rationality system can often implement with irrationalities. Customers need to pick up the right size from the mountain amount of stock patiently. After a couple of minutes, next customer would have to face a mess situation and walk away disappointedly. On weekends or holidays, consumers need to queue up for going into the fitting room and face the long line to pay for chosen items.

Uniqloisation

Uniqlo's distinctive managing concept contributes to its huge success. Unlike most of the apparel brands, it encourages consumers to integrate its pieces into their own unique style. So you cannot find any labelling or logo from the clothing for distinguishing its brand. These No-Label-Tags and standard shape clothes can go with any other clothes. To facilitate customer's shopping experiences, Uniqlo often opens its stores opposite to or close to designer brands. It means that after customers shopping around top designer labels, they can rush into Uniqlo to purchase basic clothes or accessories matching what they have already bought. For example, it <https://assignbuster.com/illustrating-the-dimensions-of-mcdonaldization-the-case-of-uniqlo/>

established a flagship store near “ Galeries Lafayette Haussmann” in Paris, the most luxury shopping mall of Europe. Another major element of Uniqloisation is continuous innovation, ranging from fleece to heattech, providing a great wearing experience.

Conclusion

Uniqlo makes great success based upon efficiency, calculability, predictability and control. It develops these principles in its everyday operation, establishes No-label-tags method to promote unique clothes style and creating unique highly functional clothes for consumers.