



A STUDY ON BRAND SWITCHING TENDENCY OF TELEVISION CUSTOMERS IN GOBICHETTIPALAYAM TOWN

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Abstract

Marketing is often dynamic, challenging and rewarding. It can also be frustrating and even disappointing. Marketing is indeed an ancient art. The traditional objective of marketing had been to make the goods available at places where they needed. This idea was later on changed by shifting the emphasis from “exchange” to “satisfaction of human wants”. However, satisfying goods and services to the benefit of the present and potential customers is important to achieve organizational objectives. Different authors tried to give suitable definition from their viewpoint. Some are very broad, others are rather too narrow. Some concentrates on the traditional view of producing goods and finding out customers, others concentrate on the modern view that marketing must first find out what customers really want and then plan a product to satisfy their need. Enis defines marketing as, “A fundamental human activity, which encompasses exchange activities conducted by individuals and organizations for the purpose of satisfying human wants.”

Legal aspect, of which the good example is: “Marketing includes all activities which are concerned with effective changes in the ownership and possession of goods and services.” Economic, aspect, for example: “that part of economics which deals with the creation of time, place and possession utilities.” It is the phase of business activity through which human wants are satisfied by the exchange of goods and services for some valuable consideration. The factual or descriptive such as “The performance of business activities that direct the flow of goods and services from producer to the consumer or user.”

The Television Industry and Branding

The television viewers had an emotional attachment with the television sets. Usually television occupies an important place in the family room, developing a strong bond with the people (consumer). The television industry, which is a part of the consumer electronics segments depended heavily on branding. The TV manufactures have to create a perception among the consumers about the unique benefits of their products. In developing a marketing strategy for individual products, the seller has to confront the issue of branding. Branding can add value to a product and is therefore an intrinsic aspect of product strategy. Branding is a major issue in product strategy. Developing a branded product requires a great deal of long term investment, especially for advertising, promotion and packaging.

The manufactures eventually learn market power which lies with building their own brands. Perhaps the most distinctive skill of professional marketers is their ability to create, maintain, protect and enhance brands. Marketers say that “branding is the art and cornerstone of marketing.” Branding becomes very important to the future of any organization whether it may be a profit or non profit. Branding is everywhere. It is not only a logo, slogan or advertising but a value that creates a little space in people’s mind.

Brands Can Be Categorized Into Three Groups

1. There are products, which people can touch and feel: soaps, watches, etc. Here, branding attempts to build a halo around the product.
2. Services like airlines, hotels, mobile telephone operators, movie multiplexes, etc. What is real in all of these is the experience. It is not palpable, cannot be touched; but it is distinctive. Branding can embellish the experience of Service.
3. The most intangible is creating and embellishing a symbol, like a corporate brand. It’s like a spirit, manifesting itself in distinct forms in different circumstances – like light – it cannot be touched or felt. ‘Experience’ of light is really the reflection or image of an object. A corporate brand manifesting multiple product categories is a bit like that.

Brands are powerful assets and the marketplace is intensely competitive today. In the light of these two overriding facts, companies have realized that the key to sustain profitability is to nurture loyal customers.

Buying Behaviour

Consumer decision-making varies with the type of buying decision. Complex and expensive purchases are likely to involve more buyer deliberations and more participants. Assael distinguished four types of consumer buying behaviour based on the degree of involvement and the degree of differences among brands.



Complex Buying Behavior

Complex buying behaviour is exhibited for expensive and risky products bought infrequently which are self-expressive. Buyers are highly involved in the purchase and they are aware of significant differences among brands. The marketer of a high involvement product, must understand consumers' information-gathering and evaluation behaviour. They have to develop strategies that assist the buyers in learning about the product attributes and their relative importance. They also have to differentiate the brand's features, use media to describe the brand's benefits and motivate the store personnel and buyer's acquaintances to influence the final brand choice.

Dissonance-Reducing Buyer Behaviour

Such behaviour is also exhibited for expensive, infrequent and risky purchase and the consumer is also highly involved in the purchase but sees little difference in brands. In such cases, the buyer will shop around to learn what is available but will finally buy fairly quickly, perhaps responding primarily to a good price or to purchase convenience. Marketing Communications should supply beliefs and evaluations that help the consumer feel good about his or her brand choice.

Habitual Buying Behaviour

Many products are bought under conditions of low involvement and the absence of significant brand differences. Consumers buy some products out of habit with low involvement because such products are low-cost and frequently purchased. Here consumers do not extensively search for information, evaluate characteristics and make a decision. Instead they are passive recipients of information in television or print advertisements. Marketers of such products find it effective to use price and sales promotions to stimulate product trial.

Variety Seeking Buying Behaviour

Some buying situations are characterized by low involvement but significant brand differences. For such products, brand switching occurs for the sake of variety rather than dissatisfaction. Marketers of this product category try to encourage habitually by sponsoring frequent reminder advertising, and by offering lower prices, deals, coupons, free samples etc.

Brand Switching Tendency of customer:

The decision by consumers to substitute alternative BRANDS for the ones they currently consume. This may be a response to dissatisfaction with their existing brand, the attractions of newly-available brands or consumers' search for variety Brand switching may be induced by ADVERTISING and SALES PROMOTION designed to overcome BRAND LOYALTY to existing brands. The fortunes of established brands are driven by consumers' fluctuating desires, not by changed perceptions. When a consumer switches around within a set of brands, it's because her fluctuating desires temporarily alter how important it is that she receive the benefits of one brand vs. another. Once a product has been used, a consumer's perception of it rarely changes, but desires for the perceived benefits of competing brands often fluctuate and it's this that creates brand switching. However, when consumer brand perceptions are tracked for an established brand, one finds they are rarely any different during or after a campaign that increased market share than they were before. Because the share went up, these tracking results are usually dismissed as meaning only that perceptual changes were too subtle to measure or that some critical attribute was missed. Here we present a general theory of consumer purchase behavior that has important implications to the management of established brands.

The Process Theory of Brand Choice

1. The experience a consumer receives from using a brand solidifies her perceptions of it. These fixed perceptions can rarely be changed through advertising alone.
2. How a consumer perceives each of the different brands in a category determines which ones are used and which ones are not. The consumer may perceive different brands to be superior on different desirable attributes and this result in her switching around within a set of brands rather than using a single brand.
3. When a consumer uses a set of brands, the consumer's fluctuating wants and desires are what cause her to switch from one brand to another.
4. In many categories, brand use itself is what causes a consumer's desires to fluctuate. The consumer may temporarily satisfy certain desires by using one brand but deprive herself of other satisfactions she could have received from a competing brand.
5. As consumers' desires fluctuate relative to their fixed perceptions of brands, a consistent process of brand choice (brand switching) results over time.
6. Advertising and promotion intervene in the process of brand choice by temporarily changing the probability of a user purchasing the brand the next time the category is shopped.
 - a. Advertising intervenes by temporarily intensifying the consumer's desire for some benefit the brand is already perceived to provide.
 - b. Price promotion intervenes by temporarily changing the perception of price/value.



7. New brands, line extensions, product improvements, disequilibrium price changes and restages of existing brands change consumers' perceptions and permanently alter the process of brand choice (the probabilities of brands being selected) for some category users.
8. It is the fate of most brands that their own advertising will never improve users' perceptions, but instead that new competitors will diminish these perceptions over time.

Currently, an advertising strategy that has successfully positioned a new brand is then expected to improve that position over time. Since this is rarely possible, most advertising for established brands produces relatively low persuasion scores, and the advertising on behalf of one brand tends to be offset by its competitors'. New brands quickly settle into a market share pecking order with the competition and rarely move up as advertising is asked to accomplish the irrelevant goal of improving perceptions. Not only do established brands rarely improve their market share-unless the product is reformulated-the average brand actually loses about a third of a share point each year to new entries. Advertising for an established brand, particularly a well-differentiated one, will be much more effective if it exploits the brand's positioning. Specifically, advertising should exploit the important elements of positioning that differentiate the brand from competing brands in a set. For example, if consumers use a brand of toothpaste to prevent decay, and some of these consumers also use other brands for other reasons, advertising alone will not improve perceptions of the brand's decay-fighting ability, but it can and should make decay prevention more important. The key to more effective advertising is to understand exactly what it is about your brand that is both differentiating and important to current users. Often the driving elements of a brand's positioning are not what marketers assume. However, there is a research technique that reveals what these elements are and if segments are using the brand for different reasons.

Review of Literature

SantoshKumari (2005) conducted a study and concluded that the advertisement is good enough source to improve sales and a reason behind a dealer dealing with a particular brand is brand image. **VishnumurtyNarra (2006)** in his article stated that the ultimate aim of marketing is to generate product demand through adoption of better marketing strategies; there should be a sound advertising strategy. This article analyzes those facts which are essential in harnessing sound advertising strategies such as concrete advertising methods and techniques, role of message credibility and transparency, control of new product markets, interests and new advertising strategies, role of reference groups, contagion phenomenon in advertising, brand positioning etc.,.

Arindan Mukherjee and SubhasreeBasu Roy (2007) in their article stated that brand strategies need to be customized to suit the socio-economic classification of the consumer pool and disparity in their purchasing power which perhaps influence their buying decisions. **Balaji (2007)** in his article stated that marketing of brand constantly seek innovative ways to achieve high grown, stay ahead in the competition and bring in more profits for its stakeholders. Companies frequently launch new products to meet the changing customer needs and preferences. **Siddhartha Paul (2007)** concluded that if the company could create a proper brand image, the sales figure will increase proportionately. But we can't say that branding and selling had been directly related to each other in the television industry. There had been other associated factors like pricing, quality and also the reference groups, which affected the purchase of TV sets. **RashmiMalapur (2008)** in her article stated that the consumer always associates closely with a brand; all the positive associations have to be exploited and the negative associations need to be neutralized. What is important is to create new vital associations.

Statement of the Problem

Branding plays a major important role in the modern marketing. The customer of a particular brand may switch over to other brand for some reasons. The customer may have negative attitude about their previously owned television. Some factors may motivate the television customers to purchase other brands. Some television customers may be attracted by the features of other brand. To remove these problems the following questions should be answered.

1. How far the customers are satisfied with the existing television?
2. What makes a customer to go for other brand?
3. Which brands are mostly preferred by the television customers?
4. Which features of the other brands are attracted by the television customer?

In order to find answers to these questions this study has been undertaken.

Objective of the Study

The following are the objectives of this study

1. To study the Socio-economic characteristics and brand switching tendency of Television customers.
2. To assess the attitude of the television customers about their previously owned television.



3. To study the factors influencing the television customers to purchase other brand of television.
4. To know the best attractive features of the television customers.
5. To offer valuable suggestions.

Hypothesis of the Study

Hypothesis relating to attitude of television customer about their previously owned television. There is no significant difference between factors influencing of respondents of different age categories regarding their attitude about their previously owned television. There is no significant difference between factors influencing of respondents of different educational qualification regarding their attitude about their previously owned television. There is no significant difference between factors influencing of respondents of different occupation regarding their attitude about their previously owned television. There is no significant difference between factors influencing of respondents of different annual income categories regarding their attitude about their previously owned television. There is no significant difference between factors influencing of respondents of different number of family mem

Methodology

The present study intends to examine the issues framed in the objectives and hypotheses relating in the context of television. This study is an empirical research based on survey method. The data collected for the study included both primary and secondary. The primary data have been collected through the survey method by direct personal interview with 100 respondents. The secondary data were collected from the various journals and newspapers.

Sampling Design

The sample size selected for the study is 100 respondents. Convenience sampling methods were used to select the respondents. In first stage, the Erode District was selected from the TamilNadu State. For convenient Gobichettipalayam town was selected from the Erode District.

Scope of the Study

The study has been undertaken to know the brand switching tendency of television customer, with special reference in Gobichettipalayam town, Erode District. The study intends to examine the television customers buying behavior, attitude of Television customers about previously owned television, factors which influence the television customers to purchase other brand best attractive features of television customer.

Area of the Study: The area of the study is confined to Gobichettiplayam town, Erode District.

Limitation of the Study

In spite of the detailed investigation made in the present study, it has got the following limitations. This study is based on the opinions and view of limited number of 100 sample respondents. So the findings and suggestions of this study may be applicable to the same socio economic background of consumers. The study was conducted only in Gobichettipalayam Town, Erode District. Therefore, conclusions of the study may be generalized to the extent of these limitations. The study is subject to the familiar limitations of the survey method. These include the lack of opportunity to prove the sample respondent's memory may not be completely free from bias, though efforts were taken to minimize it with adequate cross checks.

Attitude of Customers about Their Previously Owned Television

Consumers have been given supreme place in the field of marketing. A manufacturer should study the consumers in relation to their needs. The firms should try to help the buyers in solving the problems. Otherwise a product cannot be survived in this competition world. If a product wants to survive in the market, the consumers should have positive attitude on that product. This study, tries to find the attitude of television customers. The term "attitude" frequently used in describing people and explaining their behaviour. Attitude is a persistent tendency to feel and behave in a particular way towards some object. Attitudes are directed towards some object about which a person has feelings and beliefs. An attitude is a state of mind or feeling. It may be described as a person's emotional feelings, action, tendencies towards some idea or object. People have attitude towards each and everything. If a person has an attitude towards settle into a consistent pattern, attitude made people to believe in a fairly consistent manner towards certain object. It includes people to behave in some way. So far explaining buying behaviour, attitudes are very important.

The attitude of television customers about their previously owned television on various aspects viz.,

1. Less price.
2. Good clarity.
3. Good sound system.



4. Excellence after sale and service.
5. Enough guarantee period.
6. Good appearance.
7. Easily available in all places.
8. Required size.
9. USB portability.
10. Additional features.

Quantification of Data And Attitude of Customers About Their Previously Owned Television

The attitude will differ from person to person. It may be positive or negative. Some people may feel that their previously owned television have very good quality and the price for it, is reasonable and some people may feel the price of their previously owned television is very high when compared to its quality. In order to find the attitude of television customers about their previously owned television the ten questions have been asked. To analyse the attitude of sample respondents, Likert's 2-point scaling technique has been used (Agree, Disagree). It has been categorized as positive attitude and negative attitude of the respondents. If a respondent agrees a statement he will score 2 points. Else his score will be 1. As per this calculation, a respondent can score maximum 20 (10x2) and minimum 10 (10x1). After providing the points for all questions, it has been totalled. The respondent who scores up to 14 is considered as a customer having negative attitude about their previously owned television. If the total score exceeds 14, then it is considered as a positive attitude about their previously owned television. As per this calculation the following results are obtained.

Mean Score and SD on the Attitude of Television Customers about Their Previously Owned Television

S.No	Factors	No. of Respondents			Mean Score	SD
1	Less price	56	44	100	1.47	0.18634
2	Good clarity	74	26	100	1.42	0.10230
3	Good sound system	66	34	100	1.45	0.17119
4	Excellence after sales and service	29	71	100	1.40	0.08653
5	Enough guarantee period	46	54	100	1.40	0.11319
6	Good appearance	67	33	100	1.42	0.9900
7	Easily available in all places	50	50	100	1.46	0.19261
8	Required size	66	34	100	1.45	0.17640
9	USB portability	57	43	100	1.44	0.17634
10	Additional features	36	64	100	1.40	0.10940

The above table shows that 56 percent of the respondents agree for less price (mean score 1.47), 74 percent of the respondents agree for good clarity (mean score 1.42), 66 percent of the respondents agree for good sound system (mean score 1.45), 67 percent of the respondents are agree for good appearance (mean score 1.42), 66 percent of the respondents are agree for required sizes (mean score 1.45) and 57 percent of the respondents agree for USB portability (mean score 1.44) and 71 percent of the respondents disagree for excellence after sales and service (mean score 1.40), 54 percent of the respondents disagree for enough guarantee period (mean score 1.41) and 64 percent of the respondents disagree for additional features (mean score 1.40).

Most of the respondents agree for less price, good clarity, good sound system, good appearance, required size and USB portability. Majority of the respondents disagree for excellence after sales and service, Additional features and a significant number of them disagree for enough guarantee period.



Findings

50% of the respondents are between the age group of 26-40 years. 61% of the respondents are female. 64% of the respondents are married. 44% of the respondents are college level in educational qualification. 37% of the respondent's occupation is profession. 53% of the respondents annual income is above Rs.70,000. 63% of the respondents are of nuclear family. 42% of the respondent's family consists 2-4 family members. 64% of the respondents are of two members earnings of the family. 66% of the respondents are aware of the various brand of television. 29% of the respondents are came to known by relatives. There is no significant difference between the factors influencing the respondents of different age categories regarding attitude of customers about their previously owned television. There is a significant difference opinion on factors influencing the attitude of customer about their previously owned television between male and female respondents. There is no significant difference opinion on attitude of customer about their previously owned television between married and unmarried respondents.

Conclusion

'Brand switching tendency of the customer's has the most prominent place in the marketing. In the initial stage of the customer's buying process, the buyers need to select the technology suitable for them. Through information search, they could recognize the advantages and disadvantages of both technologies. After the selection of a particular technology, the customers go for the evaluation of alternatives. As television is not a frequently bought product, buyers were highly cautious in their process. In this competition world making a customer to switch in a particular brand is very difficult task. In order to prevent the brand switching tendency the manufacturer and distributors should take necessary steps. There is no doubt that the brand switching tendency of the customers can be prevented by implementing these suggestions.

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