

BRAND POSITIONING OF THE INDIA CEMENTS LTD AS A MARKET LEADER

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ABSTRACT

This project mainly focuses on the brand positioning of India cements as a market leader. Brand positioning defines how the company's target image is shaped in the minds of consumer. In a competitive environment, ensuring the differentiation of brand is possible through an effective brand positioning that includes a consistent customer brand relationship.

Effective brand positioning is required to reveal brand trust and generate measurable value. In the event of consistency, compliance with brand value enhances customer satisfaction and thus brand loyalty.

The study was conducted among the costumers and retailers. Research design adapted for the study was descriptive research design. The sample techniques chosen for this study is a non-profitability sampling method. The primary data is collected from 120 respondents through a well-structured questionnaire and the secondary data was collected through journal reports, books etc...., The tool which is used for interpretation is Percentage analysis, Chi-square test, Annova and correlation.

The conclusion of the project is the company should concentrate on direct meeting with the customers, should decrease the response time to the complain received, should decrease delivery time of cement and more promotional programme to be organized.

INTRODUCTION

Brand positioning refers to "target consumer's reason to buy your brand in preference to others. It ensures that all brand activity has a common aim; is guided, directed and delivered by the brand's benefits/reasons to buy; and it focuses at all points of contact with the consumer. Brand Positioning involves identifying and determining points of similarity and difference to ascertain the right brand identity and to create a proper brand image. Brand Positioning is the key of marketing strategy. A strong brand positioning directs marketing strategy by explaining the brand details, the uniqueness of brand and its similarity with the competitive brands, as well as the reasons for buying and using that specific brand. Positioning is the base for developing and increasing the required knowledge and perceptions of the customers. It is the single feature that sets your service apart from your competitors. Brand refers to Brand is the "name, term, design, symbol, or any other feature that identifies one seller's product distinct from those of other sellers Initially, Branding was adopted to differentiate one person's cattle from another's by means of a distinctive symbol. In marketing, positioning is the process by which marketers try to create an image or identity in the minds of their target market for its product, brand or organization.

Key objectives of brand positioning include relevance, differentiation and credibility/attainability, as described here:

- **Relevance** - Customers must find the brand appealing. If not, the brand won't make it into the consideration set, regardless of how differentiated or credible it is.
- **Differentiation** - is critical and the key driver of positioning success. The brand must be unique vs. competitive offerings.
- **Credible and attainable** - is the final measure. If you cannot credibly provide the offering, the customer is left with an empty promise.

How to Improve Brand Positioning

Brand positioning should be dynamic and fluid. This doesn't mean you have to do a major overhaul every year, but you do need to revisit it at least every quarter to see how you can make it better.

Three ways to improve brand positioning:

- **Listen to your customers:** Don't create your brand positioning in a vacuum. In order for it to resonate with your customers, make sure you are listening to what they have to say. Set up focus groups, send surveys, or simply talk to customers at events and use all those insights to improve your message.
- **Refocus your statement:** Does your brand positioning try and do too much? Have you lost sight of the one or two things that truly make you unique? If your statement has lost its focus, get back to the basics by revisiting your initial research (or conducting new research) to see if your statement is still effective.
- **Create some buzz:** If you're a small company just starting out, you may not have a large enough following to test your brand positioning. If you need more eyes on your messaging, run some paid ads to A/B test a control statement (perhaps a generic statement about your business) against your brand positioning statement to see how people react.

INDUSTRY PROFILE:

India is the second largest producer of cement in the world. No wonder India's cement industry is a vital part of its economy, providing employment to more than million people directly or indirectly. Ever since it's deregulated in 1982, the Indian cement industry has attracted huge investments, both from India as well as foreigners India has a lot of potential for development in the infrastructure and construction sector and the cement sector is expected to largely benefit from it. Some of the recent initiatives, such as development of 98 smart cities, is expected to provide a major boost to the sector.

Aided by suitable Government foreign policies, several foreign players such as Lafarge-Holcim, Heidelberg Cement, and Vicat have invested in the country in the recent past. A significant factor which aids the growth of this sector is the ready availability of raw materials for making cement, such as limestone and coal.

Marketing strategies used in cement industry.

- Be acquainted with the market.
- Determine your strategy.
- Create structural advantages.

- Test and implement commercial practices.
- Change mindsets and build capabilities.

COMPANY PROFILE:

It was established in 1946 by **S. N. N. SankaralingaIyer** and the first plant was set up at Thalaiyuthu in Tamil Nadu in 1949. It has 7 integrated cement plants in Tamil Nadu, Telangana and Andhra Pradesh, one in Rajasthan (through its subsidiary, Trinetra Cement Ltd) and two grinding units, one each in Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra with a capacity of 15.5 million tonnes per annum.

India cements is a story of wealth creation fuelled by the foresight, missionary zeal and vision of its founders and the dedicated efforts of its employees over the last 7 decades. The India cements ltd right from its inception has been alive to the larger social responsibility of organized industry. India cements focus on building relationships, relationships that help in enriching lives, relationship that promise a better tomorrow.

Growth and activities

IndiaCementsisoneoftheoldestfamilyowedcorporate.Thecompanyhasrobustly grown over the last two decades from having a capacity of just 1.3 trillion tonnes in 1989 to having a total capacity of 15.5 million tonnes per annum today. Mr. N Srinivasan the Vice Chairman & Managing Director of the company is directly indicated for the spectacular growth and development over the last twodecades.

While cement is the core activity of the company, India cements has ventured into related fields like shipping, coal mining and captive power which have synergy to the main activity of the business; it is seen as a strategy of the company to avoid uncertainties in acquiring energy and other inputs/materials in the supply chain at competitive costs.

Vision

To create value on a sustained basis for all stakeholders of India cements through lofty standards of transparency, accountability and responsibility, innovation and leadership in cement manufacture.

Mission

Indian cements will strive to remain a leader in the manufacture of cement and establish itself as a preferred supplier of products and services to its clients.

BRAND:

India Cements is currently the 3rd biggest cement company in India and the largest cement manufacture of South India. The India Cements products are marketed under

3 brands:-

Raasi Gold, Sankar super power and Coromandel.

Sankar super power is six decade old brand with emotional values and provides confidence and trust to its customers over generations. It is popular across states like Tamil Nadu and Kerala. Coromandel King is a

brand with rationale value which promises for durability and strength of cement. It is popular in all metro cities of India, generally trusted by all and widely preferred by Architects and Engineers. Raasi Gold is a three decade old brand.

Quality of products and strong brand name

We believe that brand name and reputation are important to retail purchasers of cement in India. We have built a strong reputation among cement purchasers by consistently providing high quality products. We believe that there is strong customer awareness of our brands, Sankar Super Power Cement, for (PPC) cement, Coromandel Cement and Raasi Gold Cement for (PRO PLUS) cement across India.

The marketing in the India cements ltd

The marketing department of **The India Cements Ltd.** acts as a guide and lead the company's other departments in developing, producing fulfilling, and servicing products or services for their customers. Market is the process of planning and executing the conception, pricing, promotion, and distribution of ideas, goods, and services to create exchanges that satisfy individual and organizational goals. In India cements the marketing department typically has a better understanding of the market and customer needs, but should not act independently of product development or customer services. Marketing should be involved, and there should be a meeting of the minds, whenever discussions are held regarding new product/idea development or any customer-related function of the company. The main drawback is that the marketing department also takes most of the blame if a product (or company) isn't successful, regardless of whether or not the fault actually lies there.

The company has implemented a direct mail program and has placed key codes on the mailing labels to track the source of the mailing lists from which customers who place orders are coming. If the employees who take the orders don't ask for and record those codes, then the marketing department has no way of moving which lists are working and which lists are bombing.

Marketing strategies:

In order to sell their products, the India Cements adopt the following marketing

- Advertising
- Television
- News paper
- Wall painting
- Banners
- Sponsorship.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY.

➤ **Primary objective:**

To analyse brand position and brand preference with respect to the The India Cements Ltd.

➤ **Secondary objective:**

- To study on customer satisfaction towards cement products with reference to The India Cements Ltd.
- To analyse the marketing strategies adopted by The India Cements Ltd.
- To analyse the brand preference of customers towards cement products.

Marketing objectives.

The marketing department of India cements has the following objectives

- The major objectives of India cements ltd is customer satisfaction
- To obtain maximum sales.
- To offer standard quality and best quality of cement
- To encourage the existing buyers for more orders.
- To satisfy the customer needs by delivering the product in the stipulated time.
- To develop new market.

METHODS AND MATERIALS.

Research Methodology is a way to find out the result of a given problem on a specific matter or problem that is also referred as research problem. In Methodology, researcher uses different criteria for solving/searching the given research problem. Different sources use different type of methods for solving the problem. If we think about the word -Methodology, it is the way of searching or solving the research problem.

Research design:

Research design is an arrangement of conditions for collection and analysis of data in a manner that aims to combine relevance to the research purpose with economy in procedure.

Type of research design:

The type of research design adopted in this study is DESCRIPTIVE RESEARCH.

• **Descriptive research:**

Descriptive research includes surveys and fact-finding enquiries of different kinds and it can report only what has happened. The purpose of the research is description of the state of affairs as it exists at present. Descriptive research, also known as statistical research, describes data and characteristics about the population or phenomenon being studied. Descriptive research answers the

questions who, what, when, where and how. A descriptive study is undertaken in order to ascertain and able to describe the organization constantly engaged themselves in studying and analyzing issues and hence are involved in some form of research activity as they make decisions at the work place. It involves lot of factors like the research design, tools used etc.,

SAMPLING METHOD:

Sampling is the process of selecting a representative group from the population under study. The target population is the total group of individuals from which the sample might be drawn. A sample is the group of people who take part in the investigation. The people who take part are referred to as —participants.

Type of sampling method:

The sampling method used in this study is NON-PROBABILITY SAMPLING.

Non-probability sampling:

Non-probability sampling is a sampling technique where the samples are gathered in a process that does not give all the individuals in the population equal chances of being selected.

DATA COLLECTION:

Data collection is a systematic approach to gathering information from a variety of sources to get a complete and accurate picture of an area of interest. In this study responses are collected through two different sources. The sources of data collection are;

- Primary data collection
- Secondary data collection

Primary data collection:

Primary data is a type of information that is obtained directly from first-hand sources by means of surveys, observation or experimentation. It is data that has not been previously published and is derived from a new or original research study and collected at the source such as in market. Primary data collection techniques used in this study is QUESTIONNAIRE METHOD. Questionnaire was circulated to 120 respondents. In this study various questionnaire techniques are used and they are:

- Closed ended questions
- Open ended questions

a) Closed ended questions:

Closed ended questions are just that: direct questions that ask for specific pieces of information from a respondent. Closed questions have their greatest value when we need to obtain facts and specific pieces of information. By their nature they limit the respondent field of choice and length of response. A closed-ended question is a question format that limits respondents with a list of answer choices from which they must choose to answer the question. Different types of closed ended questions are,

- **Dichotomous type:** When a question has two possible responses, we consider it as dichotomous type. Surveys often use dichotomous questions that ask for Yes/No, True/False, Agree/Disagree.
- **Multiple choice questions:** Multiple choice questions are a type which has list of answer choices from which they must choose to answer the question.
- **Rating questions:** A rating question asks survey respondents to compare different items using a common scale a question that asks the participant to position each property or object on a verbal, numeric, or graphic

continuum. A rating scale is a set of categories designed to elicit information about a quantitative or a qualitative attribute.

- **Ranking questions:** A measurement question that asks the participant to compare and order two or more objects or properties using a numeric scale. A ranking question asks survey respondents to compare a list of different objects to one another.

b) Open ended questions:

Open-ended questions are those questions that will solicit additional information from the inquirer. Sometimes called infinite response or unsaturated type questions. By definition, they are broad and require more than one- or two-word responses. An open-ended question is a question that cannot be answered with a simple yes or no, or with only one or two words, where the person answering the question has to answer it in his or her own words.

SECONDARY DATA COLLECTION:

Secondary data is collected by someone other than the user. Common sources of secondary data for social science include journals, reports, books, websites, magazines etc.

RESEARCH TOOLS:

Research tools can be defined as the instrument in the hands of researchers to measure what they intend to in their study. The collected data has been analysed by the following statistical tool:

- Percentage Analysis
- Chi-Square Test
- Anova Analysis
- Correlation Analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

- It is found that 59.2% are male respondents and 40.8% are female respondents.
- It is found that 5.8% are below 19 years respondents, 35.8% are between 20 - 25 years respondents, 10% are between 26 – 30 years respondents and 4.2% are above 40 years.
- It is found that 23.3% respondents income is less than Rs. 20000 , 23.3% income is Rs. 20000 – 40000 , 42.5% income is Rs. 40000 – 80000 and 10.8% income is above Rs. 80000.
- It is found that 16.7% are diploma respondents, 37.5% are UG respondents, 35.8 % are PG respondents, 6.7% are professional respondents and 3.3% are others.
- It is found that 73.3% are single respondents and 26.7% are married respondents.
- It is found that 20% of respondents are students, 28.3% are government employee, 17.5% are self employee, 28.3% are private employee and 5.8% are unemployed respondents.
- It is found that 27.9% are reasonable price, 21.8% are supply, 23.5% are brand image, 17.8 % are exclusivity and 9.1% are other reason for purchasing The India cements.
- It is found that the product been successful to meet 32.5% to the full extent, 38.3% more than 80%, 19.2% is 50% - 80% and 10% less than 50%.

- It is found that 35% of respondents strongly agree, 42.5% agree, 13.3% are neutral, 5% disagree and 4.2% strongly disagree.
- It is found that 45.8% stick to the same product up to certain limit in price increase, 43.3% irrespective of the price increase and 10.8% may look for different product.
- It is found that 32.5% prefer raasi cements, 45% prefer coromandal cements and 22.5% prefer sankar cement.
- It is found that 29.2% respondents are influenced through television, 39.2% through newspaper/ magazine, 15% through social media and 16.7% through display.
- It is found that 19.2% respondents are highly satisfied, 55% are satisfied, 17.5% are neutral, 5% dissatisfied and 3.3% are highly dissatisfied.
- It is found that 15% of the respondents purchase once in a fortnight, 21.7% purchase weekly, 16.7% purchase monthly and 46.7% purchase yearly.
- It is found that 21.5% respondents choose quality, 23.4% choose quantity, 19.6% choose brand image, 16.7% choose value added services and 18.9% choose free trails and discounts.
- It is found that 22.5% of respondents brand influenced by advertisement, 25.8% by shop owner, 45% by masons & engineers and 6.7% influenced by friends.
- It is found that 17.4% respondents selected quality, 25.4% communication strategies, 24.2% competitive pricing, 16.5 % good value added service and 16.5% respondents selected free trails and discounts.
- It is found that 94.2% responded YES and 5.8% responded NO.
- It is found that 20.3% responded price, 27.8% quality, 18.9% service, 16.9% brand image and 16.1% responded quantity is important while purchasing a brand.
- It is found that 97.7% respondents would recommend and 2.5% does not recommend India cements to their friends and family.
- It is found that 20% prefer because of affordability, 27.5% reliability, 22.5% awareness, 20% availability and 10% because of service.
- It is found that 38.3% purchase cement from enterprise shop, 39.2% from a construction contract, 15% from supplier and 7.5% from online.
- It is found that 19.2 % respondents highly satisfied 66.7% are satisfied, 11.7% neutral and 2.5% respondents highly dissatisfied.
- It is found, Since p value is 0.000, we reject H0 and accept H1. Therefore, there is a significance difference between brand positioning and brand preference of Indian cements.
- It is found, Since p value is greater than 0.05, we accept H1 and reject H0. Therefore, there is a significance difference between the factors which are used to study the customer satisfaction for cement products.
- It is found, Since Pearson Correlation is between -1 and +1, we accept H1 and accept H1. Therefore, there is a significance difference between the factors which are used to analyse the marketing strategies which is adopted by Indian Cements.

CONCLUSION.

- I gained a lot of insights with regards to the company's marketing techniques and strategies. I got to understand a new industry altogether, as it is not very common to choose cement industry to work for.
- I believe it was an experience that will be very useful for me to think of alternatives or take up better decisions so that I can complete my tasks.
- Company should concentrate on direct meeting with the customers as they are the most vital elements in deciding the growth or decline of any company.
- Company should decrease the response time to the complain received.
- Company should decrease delivery time of cement.
- More promotional programme to be organized.

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