

To Examine the Key Factors that Contributes to Customers Switching Towards Other Brand

Pradeep,

Asst.Professor, MBA Dept. AIEMS college

Abstract

Brand switching is the major challenge faced by marketers in current scenario. As many new entrants are coming with updated product design & attributes to attract society people. As brand switching is long lasting process in current trend. It is also called as brand jumping with multiple reasons like marketing strategies, money value, expired & outdated technology, improper marketing mix, and lack of good customer services, brand fatigue, improper communication, and new market entrants so on. This paper helps to understand the various reasons or factors that effecting for brand switching towards other brands. This study aims to identify the various marketing strategies for customer satisfaction and also overcome the brand switching issues.

Keywords: Brand switching, customer switching, marketing strategies.

Introduction

In current scenario, the brand switching behavior is the important challenge due to advancement in IT field to provide information regarding different brands and services. Brand switching includes ending the strong relationship with one product and establishing the relationship with manufacturers of another brand product. Customer satisfaction is the best way to create a favorable impression about brand, which helps to build the long term customer loyalty & retention through offering best value products and fulfilling the expected and desired needs.

The marketers must try to understand the key factors for brand switching of product as it would help to adopt the new strategies to gain the attention of the customer. Even market research helps to devise the marketing strategies to gain the expected results from the market.

The brand switching behavior is influenced by both internal & external environment to which the buyer belongs & also it impacts on their feel, act and consideration. The environment features will decide to spend

their resources like time and money by considering the comments received from opinion leaders and reference groups.

Huge competition, availability of various brands for consumers, different pricing strategies offered by each marketer & easily availability through online shopping with home delivery services led the consumers to switch another brand. In current era, people are highly exposed to updated technologies like online payments, accessing to mails and messages, various social networking sites has diverted the mindset of customer towards another brand switching. Hence it is quiet challenging for product/service provider for holding back the customers over a long period of time with same brand.

Brand switching is influenced by various factors like culture, social, environmental & technological to change the purchase behaviour as per the desired and expected situation.

The social factors are the needs, wants, motives, learning which are highly influenced through family members, reference groups, opinion leaders and social class. Also the personal features such as buyer's age, gender, occupation, income, and lifestyle will impact on the buying behavior and also brand switching to fulfill the consumer motives.

Review of Literature

As per **Senthilkumar K (2018)** study suggested that emotional factor will influence on purchase decision of different products & brands. His study found that various variables will impact on buying decision and concluded that customer age has more impact on brand switching & loyalty. As the age of the buyer increases that will increase the different customer views during buying decision.

According to **Da Silva, Elaine Paola (2018)** study has point out that, in both sectors, most of the buyers are influenced by factors like brand name, price, quality, seller performance, elegance and different services offered by seller. The marketers & suppliers performance is considered based on credibility parts, thoughtfulness about customer needs, product vital information and additional services rendered after post purchase.

Kollman & Satish et al (2011) explored that price & product/service quality is the vital factor to influence on customer loyalty & brand switching decision of same product/service. Even they concluded that service

quality is key driver for customer retention & customer switching to another brand. Hence the company must update the products attributes and offer good services to customer to stay loyal towards the brand.

Key factors influencing to customers brand switching

Product quality

As we know that quality is the superiority of product from the perspective of consumers, quality is main factor based upon which the buying decision of consumer depends. The perceived quality indicates both tangible & intangible perception towards a product/service by a consumer.

Producers always had difficulty to provide high-quality goods to foster positive consumer image and experiences. In order to compete with their rivals and retain positive reputations among the present clients, as keeping them might be less expensive than acquiring new ones.

Consumers who are not happy with the product's perceived quality are more likely to quit being loyal to it and to try to persuade other customers to switch to another brand.

Brand image

Branding is connected to the corporate image, the brand image is the overall perception regarding brand in the mindset of the buyers. It is very easy for marketer to introduce new product with best features to retain their loyalty & relationship towards own brand. Thus in societies, status want the admiration from their surrounded people.

Social factors

These are the crucial factors for influencing the mindset of the customer towards another brand. This are societal values and norms that impact the buying decision of customers like relatives, family members, friends & status in society of each member. All social factors have positive influence on customer satisfaction thus increase their retention rate.

Customer satisfaction

Customer satisfaction has positive impact on customer loyalty and retains them over a long period of time. If any bad service or quality will results in dissatisfaction and leading the customer towards brand switching.

Hence the marketer must focus on building brand name and analyse the various causes of brand switching in this industry, which helps to devise the strategies as per the customer post purchase experiences.

Price/Affordability

If a product or service has a more cost alternative, customers frequently switch brands. When changing brands, people often look for products with comparable value to what they now buy. A client may switch brands if the normal item or service they purchase costs more than a specific amount.

For instance, if a consumer wants to purchase a car, they can think about sticking with the same brand as their present automobile. They could also take into account the costs of vehicles from various brands that have comparable characteristics. Regardless of their prior brand allegiance, individuals may decide to go with the less expensive choice when making a final purchase.

Service quality

A consumer may start buying goods and services from a business if they believe it provides outstanding customer service. By concentrating on enhancing customer service and marketing the adjustments to their customer care technique, businesses occasionally try to persuade consumers away from their rivals. For instance, a car dealership may inform customers that it provides one year of individualized customer service following the purchase of a car. This may persuade customers to switch brands by helping the dealer stand out from its rivals.

Product variety

Consumers may try new products out of curiosity or a need for variation from the things they typically purchase. This is referred to as brand weariness/fatigue by marketers. Brands often introduce new items into the retail sector, which might minimize brand fatigue. The novelty of a product may be used by a company as a selling factor to draw in new clients and strengthen consumer loyalty.

Product/service innovation

Customer brand preferences might change along with technology. When a business introduces a product that makes use of new technology, customers of rival brands may be persuaded to switch. Customers may also

choose the brand that delivers a product with more features if two firms are selling technologically advanced items at the same price.

Convenience

Sometimes it's just easier for a customer to purchase a product. For instance, if a nearby retailer discontinues carrying a certain brand's goods, a customer may choose to buy goods from another manufacturer rather than visiting another retailer. Based on compatibility, a product may also make use by a consumer more or less convenient. Customers may choose to swap brands if, for instance, one brand's technical item is simpler to operate than another's.

Different ways to avoid customers brand switching

Improve customer services

Effective customer support may encourage brand loyalty in consumers and persuade them to switch brands. By expressing that the brand values its consumers and providing them with a great experience, you could want to improve the company's customer service. You may do this by shortening the time it takes for the business to reply to queries and complaints from clients.

Address criticism

It's so simple for customers to publish evaluations of goods and services on websites and social media, businesses frequently get both positive and unfavorable comments from their clients. While it's critical for a business to thank customers, promptly responding to complaints may also stop customers from switching brands. A company could reply to a consumer who reviews a product negatively online by offering to fix the issue, which could increase customer loyalty.

Try to maintain customer's interest

Brand fatigue, which can result in brand switching, may be to blame when consumers start showing interest in innovative items rather than the ones they typically purchase. Consider often introducing fresh iterations of a product to counteract brand weariness. To encourage clients to support the brand, you may also accomplish this by creating new goods or services.

To keep clients interested and avoid brand fatigue, some businesses may also rebrand or start a fresh marketing initiative. Along with competitive pricing, they could also provide discounts or specials to draw in clients.

Provide better value

One strategy to keep customers loyal is to offer them goods or services they appreciate. To find out what consumers value and pinpoint elements of items that may require improvement, think about asking for customer input and doing product testing. This can assist the business you work for effectively compete with other brands. By sustaining pricing competition, you may provide your clients value in another way. This frequently entails providing a desirable product that is comparable to that of rivals at a reduced cost.

Innovate and communicate continuously

Consider creating new items and enhancing current ones to keep customers engaged in a brand and avoid brand fatigue. This might assist a business in setting itself apart from rivals in the market. Also a marketer may learn what matters most to your consumers by keeping in touch with them. A business can employ customer service agents and active social media managers to efficiently engage with its clients, as well as publish online surveys to get feedback from them.

Conclusion

This study indicates that brand quality and price plays a major role in customer satisfaction & product usage. It's also indicated that product improvement in quality and adding additional features will enhance the customer retention towards the brand. Even external factors like cultural, social, environmental & technological are will influence on brand switching and customer retention rate. The marketer must develop good marketing strategies to ensure that there is advancement in product quality, price affordable, service offered and attractive packages for huge buyers. Even the marketing manager must minimize the customer doubts, set a good complaint handling procedure & system & additional services for dissatisfied customers that integrated with their own business. Even customer handling system must follow up the customer's opinions, which are linked by the best services offered to buyers from their purchase to post-purchase services.



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