



# JIATIS

Journal of International Accounting, Taxation  
and Information Systems

<https://jiatis.com/index.php/journal>

Online ISSN - | Print ISSN -

## Effective Strategies in Managing Consumer Behavior

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### ARTICLE INFO

#### Article History

Received : 05.02.2024

Revised : 29.02.2024

Accepted : 03.03.2024

Article Type: Research Article

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### ABSTRACT

Marketing strategy encompasses a comprehensive range of tactics aimed at attaining a long-lasting competitive edge. Its ultimate objective revolves around achieving total customer satisfaction through the implementation of various marketing concepts, tips, and strategies. However, it is crucial to understand that true customer satisfaction lies not in providing what we assume they desire, but rather in delivering exactly what they want, precisely when and how they desire it. Consumer behavior, on the other hand, entails the entire process and activity of seeking, selecting, purchasing, utilizing, and evaluating products and services to fulfill one's needs and desires. This journey of buyers in making purchasing decisions can be broken down into five distinct phases: recognizing the need, conducting an information search, evaluating alternatives, making the purchase decision, and taking post-purchase actions.

Keywords: Marketing Strategy, Services, Consumer Behavior

## 1. Introduction

Marketing strategy is a means of introducing products to consumers and this is important because it is related to the profits generated by a company. A marketing strategy achieves optimal benefits if it is supported by a structured plan for both internal and external aspects of the company. In marketing science, before implementing various types of promotions and other marketing approaches, a company must first clearly target a market or segment (Silviana, 2012). Business failures that occur are mostly caused by companies that do not determine their target market and potential.

The large number of consumers and diverse purchasing desires mean that companies cannot reach all market segments, so companies must be able to conduct segmentation studies to determine which market segments they serve most effectively. The service sector has grown dramatically over the last decade. The dominance of the service sector in gross domestic product growth is increasing. This is proven by more than 60% of Europe's GDP of 4,444 being dominated by the service sector. In the United States, data shows that the proportion of the workforce working in the service sector increased by 30% in the 1900s, reached 74% in 1984, and increased even more rapidly in the 2000s.

In Indonesia, the service sector is experiencing quite rapid growth. This figure is proven by the fact that in the 1900s, the service sector contributed 35% of gross domestic product, and in the 2000s this portion increased further. This encourages the author to examine further the development of the service industry and

the elements most needed by the national service industry. Various methods or strategies used by companies to improve the marketing of their services. Apart from that, to create important market opportunities for services in the era of modernization whose demands are the same as today, with lots of access that can support it and increasingly widespread competition in marketing these services.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1. Service Marketing**

The service industry is now a very large economic sector and is growing very rapidly. This growth is not only driven by the growth of previously existing types of services, but also the emergence of new types of services due to needs and technological developments. In the context of globalization, the rapid growth of international service companies is characterized by increasingly intensive cross-border marketing and the emergence of alliances between various service providers throughout the world.

These developments may ultimately exert major pressure on regulatory reform, particularly the relaxation of protections and the use of new technologies, which may have a direct impact on increasing competition within the industry ( Lovelock, 2004: 2 ). This situation directly confronts existing problems - increasing business competition. Economic actors are expected to be aware of the form of competition they face, set different standards of performance, and keep competitors in sight (Sofjan, 2004).

The dynamics that occur in the service sector can be seen in the development of various sectors such as banking, insurance, aviation, telecommunications, retail, consultancy, lawyers, and others. This is further proven by the growth of non-profit organizations such as NGOs, government agencies, hospitals and universities. These organizations are increasingly realizing the need to be more customer and consumer oriented. Manufacturers now realize that their products require an element of service to increase their business competitive advantage (Hurriyati, 2005). An important consequence of this phenomenon is that competition will increase and services marketing management will need to be managed differently from traditional (product) marketing (Philip, 1991).

### **2.2. Service**

According to Zeithaml and Bitner (2003: 20), services have four main characteristics that greatly influence the design of marketing programs, namely as follows:

#### **a. Intangible**

This causes consumers to not be able to see, smell, touch, hear and feel the results before they buy them. To reduce uncertainty, consumers will look for information about the service, such as the location of the company, the service providers and distributors, the equipment and communication tools used and the price of the service product. Several things that companies can do to increase the trust of potential consumers are as follows:

- a) Improve visualization of intangible services
- b) Emphasize the benefits obtained
- c) Creating a brand name for services, or
- d) Using the name of a famous person to increase consumer trust.

#### **b. Inseparability (inseparability)**

Services cannot be separated from their source, namely the service company that produces them. Services are produced and consumed at the same time. If a consumer buys a service, he or she will be dealing directly with the source or provider of that service, so that sales of services are prioritized for direct sales with a limited operational scale. To overcome this problem, companies can use strategies, such as working in larger groups, working faster, and training service providers so that they are able to build consumer trust.

#### **c. Varies (variability)**

The services provided often change depending on who provides them, when and where the services are provided. This makes it difficult to maintain service quality based on a standard. To overcome this, companies can use three approaches in quality control, namely as follows:

- a) Invest in good personnel selection and training.
- b) Standardize the service production process.
- c) Monitor customer satisfaction through a suggestion and complaint system, customer surveys, and comparison shopping, so that poor service can be identified and improved.
- d) Easily destroyed (perishability). Services cannot be stored so that they cannot be sold in the future.

This perishability is not a problem if demand is stable, because it is easy to prepare services in advance. If demand fluctuates, the company will face difficult problems in preparing its services. For this reason, it is necessary to carry out appropriate product planning, pricing and promotional programs to anticipate mismatches between demand and service supply.

### **2.3. Previous Research**

Basically, consumer behavior is behavior or actions related to efforts to obtain a product (goods or services) that can satisfy a need, including aspects that influence this behavior. There are no similarities in definitions found by experts, and these differences are caused by differences in perspective. Human behavior is so complex that it is very difficult to explain in words. Consumer behavior can be defined as the behavior that customers exhibit when searching for, purchasing, using, evaluating, and disposing of products, services, and ideas that are expected to meet their needs. This definition refers to the behavior of consumers who pay money. Be careful in searching for, purchasing, using, evaluating, or abandoning products, services, and ideas that are expected to satisfy so that consumers can fulfill their needs through consuming the products and services offered.

Consumer behavior can be described as "Consumer behavior can be defined as the decision-making process and physical activity of individuals when evaluating, purchasing, using, or disposing of goods and services. All this includes the evaluation, acquisition, use, or abandonment of goods and services. Consumer behavior refers to actions directly related to the procurement, consumption and disposal of products and services, and include processes before and after those actions. Consumer behavior is the study of the actors and decision-making processes involved in adopting, using, and deciding on goods, services, and ideas. This definition uses the term decision-making unit because decisions can be taken by individuals or groups. This definition also states that consumption is a process that begins with acceptance, consumption, and ends with a decision (disposal).

At the acceptance stage, the factors influencing consumer product choices are analyzed. The consumption phase analyzes how consumers actually use the products they receive. Leveling indicates what consumers will do after they stop using the product. This study of consumer behavior includes what they buy, why they buy it, and how often they buy it. In general, consumer behavior is defined as "the dynamic interaction between affect and cognition, actions and events around us that have an exchange aspect. We can conclude that this definition has three important elements. Consumer behavior is dynamic, involving the interaction between affect and perception, action and events around it, and has an exchange dimension.

## **3. Methodology**

This type of research is descriptive and focuses on qualitative research. Therefore, this research is expected to be able to explain existing phenomena, especially those related to service marketing strategies regarding consumer behavior (Sari, 2016).

## **4. Results and Discussion**

### **4.1. Strategy for Consumer Behavior**

Marketing strategy consists of a series of integrated actions to achieve sustainable competitive advantage. The ultimate goal and marketing concept, tips and strategies are complete customer satisfaction ("Total

Customer Statistics"). Complete customer satisfaction means not giving customers what we think they want, but giving customers what they really want, when and how they want it. In short, it's about meeting customer needs. Before a company launches a new product, the company must design the right product strategy to ensure the resulting product achieves the desired goals.

Marketing strategy is a plan to increase market influence in the short and long term based on market research, evaluation, product planning, sales promotion, and sales distribution planning (Stanton, 1984). One marketing strategy that can be implemented by a company is the marketing mix. Running a service business also requires a marketing strategy. However, before deciding which marketing strategy to use, it should be noted that service marketing strategies are different from marketing strategies for companies that offer products or goods.

Service companies are more likely to provide services through direct contact with consumers. Therefore, service companies measure the success of their marketing strategies based on the level of consumer satisfaction. A services marketing strategy can implement the following steps:

- a. Provide services efficiently. By providing fast and accurate service and meeting consumer expectations, we can indirectly encourage consumers to use our services again. This is because consumers usually don't like to wait too long to get the service they expect.
- b. In marketing services, the role of employees who frequently interact with consumers really attracts consumers' attention. Employee performance determines the company's image.
- c. The high and low prices offered by service companies should be adjusted to the level of benefits that consumers obtain from the service products we provide. The greater the benefits or value perceived by consumers, the greater the costs that consumers must bear.
- d. Utilizing technological developments and innovations to produce service products that can provide optimal solutions to consumers. The more sophisticated the technology used, the faster service can be provided to consumers.
- e. Adapt to an ever-evolving culture. The service industry is also influenced by the culture that is currently developing.
- f. Handling Customer Complaints Speed of customer service supports service marketing. If consumers experience problems with our services, we must be ready to solve these problems with the best service. We will provide and provide the best to eliminate consumer disappointment and make you satisfied with our service.
- g. Pamper your customers with marketing media. There are many ways to pamper your customers.

## 5. Conclusion

In order to achieve sustainable competitive advantage, a marketing strategy must consist of a well-coordinated series of actions. The ultimate goal of any marketing concept is to ensure complete customer satisfaction. However, it is important to note that complete customer satisfaction does not mean giving customers what we think they want, but rather giving them what they truly desire, in the way and manner they prefer. Consumer behavior plays a crucial role in this process, as it involves the various steps individuals take to search for, select, purchase, use, and evaluate products and services that meet their needs and desires. These steps include recognizing their needs, conducting information searches, evaluating alternatives, making purchase decisions, and reflecting on their post-purchase behavior.

By understanding and analyzing consumer behavior, marketers can tailor their strategies to better meet the needs and desires of their target audience. This can lead to increased customer loyalty, repeat business, and positive word-of-mouth referrals. Additionally, by continuously monitoring and adapting to changes in the market and consumer preferences, companies can stay ahead of the competition and maintain their competitive advantage over the long term. As such, a successful marketing strategy is one that is customer-centric, data-driven, and adaptable to changing market conditions. By focusing on providing value and meeting the needs of customers, companies can build strong relationships, drive sales, and ultimately achieve sustainable competitive advantage in the marketplace.

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