

Key Aspects of Nike's Shoes and its Effective Marketing Strategy

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Introduction

Effective marketing strategy has become an essential factor for the sustainable growth of the business in any sector (Ennis, 2020). More specifically, sports organizations have to deploy new means and methods to meet the dynamic customers' demands through strategic planning which according to Ennis (2020) cannot be achieved without utilizing modern marketing tools. However, the marketing strategy is also a function of the specific type of product that companies offer to their customers. Generally, there are four types of products i.e., convenience products, shopping products, specialty products, and unsought products which largely differ from each other based on their characteristics and consumers' behavior about purchasing them.

Convenience products are frequently purchased and they belong to the category of daily usage products while shopping products are consumed less often but the customers pay enough attention to choosing the shopping product that best satisfies their quality and price expectations. Specialty products, as the name suggests, are produced based on the special demands of the customers while unsought products are not preferably consumed by the general public either because they do not know about them or do not need them (Lumenlearning, 2014). In the following sections, Nike which is one of the largest sports goods brands has been investigated specifically with regards to its marketing strategies towards shoes that are shopping products.

Analysis

Key Aspects of the Product

The fundamental characteristics of the shopping products include customer behavior who always compare them based on their quality, price, and style during selecting and purchasing them. Moreover, unlike convenience products that are consumed on a daily basis, shopping products are less purchased but consumers are very conscious of their attributes. In this regard, it can be easily assessed that sports shoes belong to the category of shopping products because customers purchase them less often and always compare different brands to make their final decision of purchase (Sporn and Tuttle, 2018). Therefore, companies utilize their enormous resources to help their customers compare the benefits of their products with those of their competitors. Nike has made the same efforts to market their shoes all over the world by providing their customers with a sophisticated

experience of shopping both in physical outlets and on digital channels. The following section describes these marketing strategies in detail.

Marketing Strategy

As discussed by Brohi et al. (2016), Nike, Inc. has placed itself at the top position in the field of sports by offering a wide range of products and therefore is continuously growing by making huge profits every year. In fact, according to Brohi et al. (2016), the company had a revenue of more than 30 billion dollars in 2015. Due to its sustainable growth in the market, many researchers and marketing professionals have praised the effective marketing strategy of the company. Nike utilizes various techniques to attract potential customers which include enhancing athletic lifestyle in the customers' minds, using professional athletes to increase the demand for Nike's shoes, positioning itself as the premium brand for lifestyle products, and appealing quality and valuable products.

Moreover, it has also mainly focused on continuously expanding its market by targeting both teenagers and younger consumers in various regions of the world and portraying itself as the leading brand for sports shoes (Panagiotopoulou, 2017). Its slogan "Just do it" has been extremely successful in attracting new customers and earned it a very competitive position among its competitors mainly Adidas and Reebok (Mahdi et al., 2015). Moreover, considering the new trends of e-commerce and digital marketing, the company has focused on ensuring its online presence on different digital platforms and social media and actively engaging its customers through its attractive content.

Another significant element of Nike's successful marketing technique is to provide a customization facility to its customers to design their desired shoes by themselves. This consequently encourages consumers to share their self-designed shoes with their friends and families and their large community on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc. contributing to the organic reach of Nike. Professional athletes can also have their own signature shoes through this customization process which, for instance, enabled Michael Jordan to have his name Jordan shoes (Garcia, 2020). Along with this, the company invests heavily in the sponsorship of its products through celebrities and sports teams as a part of its aggressive targeting strategies. Moreover, the company is well-known for influencing consumers' psychological behavior through its various tactics that involve linking triumph with apparel. This fact is illustrated by its positioning statement i.e. "For every serious athlete Nike provides perfect shoe or sports products that give confidence for every sports activity" (Nike Purpose, 2018). This way Nike wants to sustain its global position of being a market leader in the sports shoe industry. Ivan De Luce (2013) has further provided various examples of unique ads marketed by Nike to inspire people to become athletic by wearing its shoes.

Psychological and Sociological Influences

As explained by Brohi et al. (2016), the advertising strategy of Nike has immensely influenced its customers as its shoes are now perceived as an image of great quality and style around the world.

Due to this well-integrated brand image in society, consumers tend to share their positive remarks about Nike's products with their friends and families which also get motivated to buy Nike shoes. When they actually buy them, they experience the quality they have already perceived through Nike's ads and reviews of its customers and ultimately become loyal customers. This way successfully meets the psychological preferences of the customers to have shoes that are of good quality have a modern style, and have favorable prices.

Moreover, it is also very interesting to highlight how Nike communicates its passion for the sport through its products which excite consumers to not only satisfy their need for shoes but also satisfy their emotions and feelings. Similarly, buying brand products is also a satisfying experience for the customers that intrigues them to make a similar purchase again and again. This is very clearly explained by Kunde.dk (2020) through Kunde's brand religion model which includes five steps from buying a specific product just to meeting the relevant need in developing a brand religion for oneself as the customers continue to purchase brand products to increase value in his life. Therefore, I support the marketing techniques of Nike as long as they are not targeted to uninformed customers and therefore can lead to the disturbing emotions of the public. But as much as the company markets its shoes as a symbol of comfort glory and athletic passion, it needs to invest in community services to the same extent because only then it can be called a true leader in the sports industry and achieve its mission of expanding the human potential (Nike News, 2021).

Modern Marketing Tactics

As explained earlier, the advent of new information and media technologies has immensely transformed business activities. One particular outcome of such digital transformation is e-commerce which has observed tremendous growth in the last year mainly due to the pandemic when consumers were unable to buy products by physically visiting the shops and outlets. However, Nike has been offering its products online for many years and so far, has been greatly successful in implementing an effective digital strategy which is according to Li et al. (2020) the determining factor for the enterprise's success in the 21st century.

This is also been supported by Shah and Murthi (2020) who counted the early adoption of digital strategies as one of the primary reasons behind Nike's huge success. Some of the key points that can be learned from the digital marketing strategy of the company are: focusing on telling a story, taking care of the women's communities, using [digital channels](#) that customers have access to, allowing the audience to create their own content, and targeting marketing campaign around current social issues. It is evident from the different posters and slogans that the company spreads on online channels such as Facebook and Twitter etc. to a highly selective audience in terms of their financial status, demographics, and orientation towards sports. The digital mediums provide all such necessary support to filter out their customers on the basis of different factors, which is not possible on other platforms.

Furthermore, one of the most prominent lessons among these is targeting the women's communities which Teng (2020) has stated is the most effective technique in the current era. In this regard, Nike has run various digital campaigns focusing on gender equality and women empowerment which influence the large untargeted community of women very positively. This has also been an effective channel to invoke public attention and inspire them through thought-provoking digital content that ultimately led to the improved image of the brand.

Similarly, understanding the current social issues in a particular region and then orienting marketing content around them has been very fruitful for companies in various regions of the world with different cultural and ethnic backgrounds. Therefore, it seems that the company has gained a competitive edge in the market with regard to its effective digital marketing strategy and has in fact paved the way for other brands to follow the same strategy. However, the company is still focused on managing its physical outlets to build a healthy relationship with its customers. However, as noted by Maidenberg (2017), the company still needs to understand the difference between digital immigrants and digital natives in order to successfully target its customers.

Conclusion

Shoes are one of the most prominent shopping products that are available in the market by different brands competing on price, style, and quality. Nike, Inc. is one of these players in the sports shoes that has achieved great success due to its effective marketing strategies. Moreover, the company can also introduce IoT to its products to create an individualistic product experience. Providing a shared online shopping experience is also very effective for the company because it will allow its customers to have a similar purchasing experience as in the physical outlet.

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