

***BRAND AWARENESS AMONG CUSTOMERS
IN HEALTHCARE INDUSTRY***

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines on brand awareness helps in creation of demand of hospital services. It states how brand awareness is created using trust, customer satisfaction, brand loyalty, hospital image and relationship commitment. Branding is an important strategy for differentiating a product from its competitors. It is a name logo trademark patent number or package design that is used to distinguish the firm product or services from the others. Through the brand awareness is identify a firm service in the hospital or recall its brand whenever he thinks about services. Brand awareness has to be thought of as a continuous range from an uncertain feeling that a brand is recognized to a belief that it is only one in the product class. This study investigates role of brand awareness of hospital services in building up different strategies. The CRM system in the health care organization leads to getting important customers' information and utilize this information to improve the business. Health care sectors are now trying to use an appropriate customer relationship management framework to create a trust between hospital and customers. The competitive situation enforces private hospitals to compete with each other to achieve as much market share as possible. Increase in the level of customer satisfaction and customer loyalty in health care services can increase the chance of winning in market share among the other health care organizations. In this paper report, a framework will be identifying to determine the main factors that cause to improve the management of customer relationship in the health care using a multivariate measurement system.

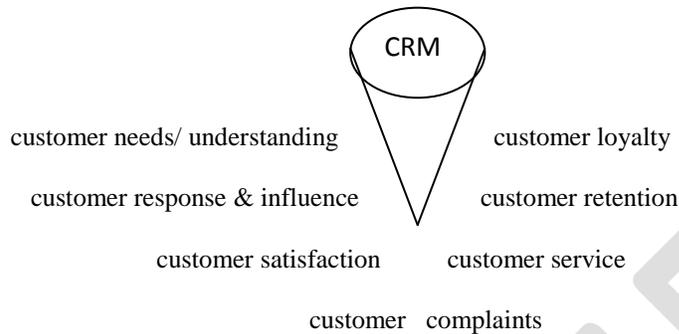
INTRODUCTION

During the last two decades the emphasis has shifted from 'Production' to 'Business Realization'. Today, the customer has the option to buy what he thinks he should and from whom, which he thinks is in his (customer's) best interest.

Product development, technological improvement, cost optimization and excellent service facility are very important for any organization but their importance is only there if the customer appreciates it. An organization's strategies towards developing and maintaining sustainable relationship differ from one organization to another depending upon on certain factors, these include nature of business, its size, its market share, nature of product type, volume of sales, geographical concentrations, social – economic status and a wide spectrum of strategies that are practiced by customers driven organization with national and global perspectives.

CRM helps the organization to identify customer needs and re – focus its strategy to serve him better. It helps the company to achieve business growth through development of competitive edge and excellence. Some of the major issues it addresses area

- Identify the customer needs.
- Help in rediscovering the customers and understanding them
- Identify untapped business potential.
- Identify fields requiring new technology and development
- Identify strong and weak points of supplier.
- Provide feedback to the supplier on his total operation.
- Provide feedback and new information on competitors
- Bench marketing to achieve global excellence
- Action plan to make organization customer centric.



The recent rapid increase in the amount of medical information has pushed hospitals to confront an essential issue which is how to utilize healthcare information technology to improve healthcare services quality. Customer relationship management system (CRMS) is an innovative technology which facilitates the process to acquire, develop, and maintain customer relationships more efficiently and effectively.

Customer relationship management (CRM) for healthcare providers is an approach to learn all they can about their customers and prospects, to communicate relevant, timely information to them, and to track results to make program adjustments necessary .

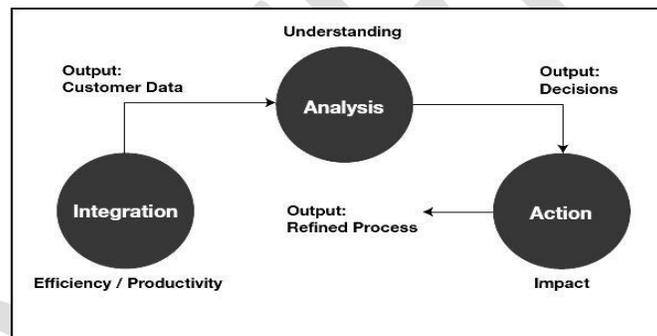
The rapid increase in the amount of medical information has pushed hospitals to confront a critical issue, which is how to utilize information technologies to manage large amounts of customer information and then improve the quality of customer services. The adoption of a customer relationship management system (CRMS) thus is increased globally among hospitals.

Also, customer satisfaction is measured by healthcare providers as a key factor of strategy and an important determinant of long term feasibility and success under competitive situation .In addition, maintaining and increasing customer loyalty level is essential for any service company's long term success.

CRM LIFE CYCLE

The CRM lifecycle commences with combination of organization's system and centralization of customer information. The first phase of lifecycle is integration and the advantageous of this phase is the improvement of front office efficiency and

productivity. When this phase completed the result is the centralized source of related customer information. In this phase understanding about the company's customer will not be clarify, however the customer value is identified in this phase[7]. The second phase of the customer relationship management life cycle is the analysis phase which is most critical to conduct the CRM to success. For making an strategic decision for the organization the analysis phase helps to discover the casual relationships and figure out the customers behavior and identifying the trend and patterns of buying by the customers. The last phase of the CRM life cycle is action where the strategic decision carries out. Business processes caused to improved customer understanding through analysis. And it will be revised across customer facing activities including sales, marketing, and customer service.



CRM IN HEALTHCARE ORGANIZATION

The Figure 2 depicts how a CRM application can be customized to enable patient relationship management within health organizations. Taking a patient relationship management approach, healthcare providers can move beyond treating episodes of illness to enabling proactive care by establishing productive, long-term relationships with patients. Patient relationship management systems can cause the following improvement:

- Increase patient satisfaction. Analyzing the performance of usual processes by passing

time can omit the unnecessary tasks and cause improvements and increase customer satisfaction.

- Coordinate the delivery of care. modified workflows can be developed to automate care coordination activities between provider organizations, which can help improve patient outcomes while increasing operational efficiency and reducing costs.
- Proactively manage chronically ill patients. Clinicians can flag patients with specific chronic illnesses and automate targeted, proactive communications to inform them of upcoming educational offerings and remind them of ways to manage their illnesses.

Brand awareness

Creating brand awareness is an important object in marketing in order to be part of the consumer's consideration set. The consumer is seen as a passive audience, who has little time for choosing a product. Nevertheless the case hospital services might be a little different, even in this ambit consumers partly relay their decision on advertising, brand symbols and brand names as well. These names and symbols, overall reassign the brand to a certain product category, encourage the brand's position and help to preserve the brand awareness.

Health care services are facing unique challenging to create brand awareness among customers. Customer relationship management is heavily depending on the creation of brand awareness among consumers. Generally hospital services challenging to advertise the services of hospitals some laws prohibits about this advertising. This study identifies five factors that influence the creation of brand awareness through successful customer relationships: trust, customer satisfaction, relationship commitment, brand loyalty, and hospital image. An empirical test of the relationships among these factors suggests that hospitals can be successful in creating image and positive brand awareness if they can manage their customer relationships well.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The previous studies conducted on the factors of trust, customer satisfaction,
BCAC-ISSN-2278-8794

relationship commitment, brand loyalty and hospital image in hospital services. This helps to discuss the role of brand awareness.

Trust

Doney and Cannon (1997), in his study found that, trust as the perceived credibility and goodwill of a target party. In the health care context, trust can create an exchange environment in which a hospital can provide better care to its patients, or customers, while becoming or remaining profitable.

Built on management capability, trust is a standard that hospitals and their employees offer patients. When patients complain about service, the hospital and its employees must do their best to respond to the complaints and thereby maintain or rebuild trust.

Customer Satisfaction

Satisfaction results from customers' good experiences. According to (Westbrook 1981), satisfaction is “a state of recognition to feel appropriate or inappropriate experience for the sacrifice adequately,” or an “emotional response which is not only affected by the whole market, but also affected by products' characteristics, service, and seller when shopping or doing similar behavior.”

Brand loyalty

Aaker (1991, 1996) argues that brand equity is a multidimensional construct that consists of brand loyalty, brand awareness, and other proprietary brand assets. Oliver (1999, p. 34) defines brand loyalty as “a deeply held commitment to rebuy or repatronize a preferred product/service consistently in the future, thereby causing repetitive same-brand or same brand set purchasing, despite situational influences and marketing efforts having the potential to cause switching behavior.”

Hospital Image

Boulding (1956) pointed out that image is built up as a result of all past experience of the possessor of the image. Kotler (1984) notes that image is the idea of the total impression of a person or thing.

Influencing factors of brand awareness a review of the literature reveals five factors that

influence the creation of successful brand equity in hospital marketing: (1) trust, (2) customer satisfaction, (3) relationship commitment, (4) brand loyalty, and (5) Hospital image. Past research has identified these as the most important factors related to brand awareness.

Materials and Methods

Secondary data is collected as the research methodology. For the purpose of in depth study the contents have been taken from relevant books and articles from journals and websites.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Trust

It is very important satisfying customers' expectations in the market with verbal and informational message. Success of service brand begins with careful relationship of employees and customer. The communication involves doctors, nurses, technical personnel and supporting staff plays a major role to increase service quality, credibility, and future consumption behavior and increase profits for hospitals. Necessities of the parties believe to each other and actions in the hospitals increase the consumers' satisfaction. Branding of hospital services more concern about create an exchange environment in which hospital provide better care to patients. When patients complained about services hospital employees respond properly to maintain and rebuild trust.

The exchange of relationship between patients and hospital personnel depends about build up trust on each service place to meet patients' expectations developing trust continuous basis on overall services.

Customer satisfaction

Consumer satisfaction in hospital services main aspects for customers in hospital industry. The services are core and value added namely assurance, responsiveness,

loyalty, features of services, perceived service fee, etc. Satisfied customers increase the awareness to trustworthy to use of services in hospital. Satisfaction is feeling or experience in which customers back their normal health. Visiting of hospital services will continue only services meeting to their basic expectations in doctor's services, laboratory services, service environment and staff behavior in the service environment.

Relationship commitment

Commitment builds the relationship with doctors and patients meeting promises orally and actions in hospitals. Hospital services available during flexible time and their timely requirement increase the commitment of doctors. There are many reasons to build a relationship with customers when doctors continue to develop their rapport and improving the patient's knowledge in health services.

Brand loyalty

The preference of customers to buy a brand again and again is the important factors. Hospital services have strong association with particularly doctor services. First time convert into repeated customers because of the loyalty with services. A deep feeling and reactions in service encounter important of every customer today because once they are satisfied with these services again they turn back into same services in future days. The word of mouth of message also increases the loyalty of the customers' turns into hospital services. The behavior and attitude of the hospital personal directly related to the customers loyalty.

Hospital image

The image of the hospital physically focuses on aesthetics, layout accessibility, seating comfort, cleanliness, display, electronic equipment etc. Emotions and physiological responses influence on the hospital image. The overall services received by patients depends upon image of the hospital services and the hospital image increase the level of customers satisfaction with physical infrastructure, medical services, emphasize on the brand name of the hospital services. The external environment required for patients in the hospital make significant differences to the hospital image and internal service

quality more focus on the image of the hospital.

Hospital Industry

Hospital services are characterized by the fact they refer to the private and public services. There are two categories of customers, the private hospitals service and public hospital service. Hospital services depend upon low price of the services in the public and services available at higher price of in private hospitals. Patients emphasizes on trust, honesty, reliability, services, and service environment. Consumer decisions are immediate in hospital services regarding doctor services, quality of the laboratory services and information about facilities available in hospital. . Service qualities in hospital industry indicate the necessity of a branding concept which involves the consumers not only on a rational level, but also on an emotional one.

Hospital Services

Basic services of the hospitals such as doctor services, quality of the service environment from branding prospective, customers tend to consider their options more deliberately, and choose more rationally than emotionally.

However, that doesn't mean the brand isn't important. On the contrary, it is more important because more is at stake in creating the right perception of value. The branding of services are both rational and irrational based on the services requires to customers in the hospitals are more on the success of their brand.

Building Consumer Relationships

Building strong brands starts with creation of dominant position and presence in the target market. This denotes that the brand has to be easily recognize and memorable and has to become the first to come in mind at the point of services. In order to emotionally attach with the consumer, the brand has to build a profound relationship with its consumers and become an element of their lives. There are different service types of consumer relationships, the provider based relationship, the process based relationship and the product based relationship and the consumer brand relationship.

It is active process in order to interact with customers in services place. In business to

business relationship social link counts there are lot of methods affected on the brand. Financial links can require the acquisition of products and services for utilization.

Role of Brand Awareness in Hospital Services

Brand awareness is the company's presented brand using service facilities, and the appearance of service providers, company name, and logo. External brand communications that is received about customer received about services such as word of mouth communication and public relations.

Strategies to Build Good Service Brand

Role of brand awareness in health care industry; brand awareness is particularly important in case of inexperienced consumers. Consumers who have the choice between well-known high priced services and unknown lower priced services will often choose the well-known product. However the phenomenon that consumer tends to choose basing on brand awareness declines from purchase to purchase. If consumers are not familiar with any of the brands available, they will try out more brands and easily discover quality differences. Consumers will always tend to choose the high quality brand with no well-known brand available.

It is the ability of a potential buyer to recognize or recall that a brand is part of a hospital services. In other words, the customer should be able to identify a firm's product in the able to recall its brand whenever he or she thinks of the product class.

Brand awareness has to be continuous range of services recognized by customers among the only one in the service class. At the end of this the uppermost in the consumer mind exist is the expected condition of the marketer seeks. Brand awareness is a marketing concept that measures consumers' knowledge of brand's existence. At the aggregate level, it refers to the proportion of consumers who know of the brand. Good branding is the product of a clear vision, and nobody knows more about vision than small business owners. But with limited resources, creating a brand identity can be tricky process.

Listen to Customers

Determine the actual brand value requires paying attention towards patients' feedback about the services, it is patient opinions it counts, when it comes to building a brand, a company can incorporate everything from signature colors to catch phrases, but at the end of the day, it's the consumer who decides what a brand is really worth. "It's not what you say [about] yourself, it's what others say of you," Fitch says.

CONCLUSION

Brand awareness is needed to disseminate information on the meaning of brand. Brand meaning plays an important role developing brand awareness. In order to emotionally attract brand customers building strong brand position and presence. Service brands are different in position to market by many factors both tangible and intangible service elements plays vital role in health care industry. It is element of customers' lives when service managers build profound relationship with them. The brand which come first to the minds of the customers and they are easily recognize and memorable is the major challenge of the service providers in the hospital services. Therefore do the service is recognized in the market brand awareness should build.

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