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A STUDY ON THE CONTENTMENT OF RETAILERS IN SELLING VODAFONE DATA TO CUSTOMERS

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Abstract: In our present economy we can see a lot of technological inventions being contributed to the world for its various uses. The communication channels have been rapidly developing, enabling people to communicate from anywhere in the world. The 21st century shows the change of telephones into the highly advanced smart phones to which we find ourselves attached to. Recently, unbelievable changes and technological improvements have been taking place in the telecommunication sector. In 1946, the official cell phone was launched by the Swedish mobile. Later in the year 1983, the first portable cell phone was brought into the market by Motorola. Mobile internet is another area which is very common among today's youth. The adoption of smart phones has led to an increase in the number of people who accesses the Internet through mobile phones. Present situation divulges that laptops and computers have been replaced by the mobile phones for browsing the Internet. In this present economy, there are various telecommunication service providers like Airtel, Vodafone, Idea etc. This paper focuses on the "satisfaction of retailers on selling Vodafone data to customers"

Key word: Distributors Sale Executive (DSE), Communication Channel, Telecom Operator

I. INTRODUCTION

A mobile phone is a phone that can receive calls and make calls via radio links over a wide geographic area. This communication is provided by mobile phone operator. The basic features of a mobile are: Text messaging, SIM Card, Multi-card hybrid phones. In addition to the basic features of communication the modern mobile phones come with various new features such as Text message(SMS), MMS, Video conferencing, short range communication using Bluetooth or infrared, Gaming, Internet connection etc. Now days the mobile phone industry provides phones which have capability to perform like computers, these phones are known as 'smart phones'.

Telecommunication implies the transmission of information, data image or sound from one point to another through a communication medium. A communication medium or channel is a transporter used to transporter used to transport data from one location to another.

Indian telecommunication is one of fastest growing industries in the world after China. In India telecommunication was provided by Telecom, it was formed in 1975 as Department of Telecom (DoT). In 1992 the telecommunication industry was opened to the private sector as part of liberalisation and DoT was renamed as Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL). After liberalisation many private companies (both Domestic and International) have entered the Indian Telecommunication industry. The mobile operators in India provide both GSM and CDMA services. In 2008 3g was introduced by MTNL and BSNL. Later it was opened to private sector in 2010.

The top players in the industry are: BharatiAirtel, Vodafone Essar, Idea, Tata DoCoMo, Reliance, and BSNL. Vodafone is multinational telecommunication company based on Britain. It is a public limited company, it was founded in 1991. Vodafone has its own network in 21countries and has partners in 40 countries. Vodafone operate in India with the name "Vodafone India Limited". It is a member of Vodafone Group and headquartered at Mumbai. Vodafone India was previously known as Vodafone Essar. Vodafone purchased Essar's stake in July 2011. Vodafone India provide GSM SIM card, it started providing 3G services in the year 2011.

Vodafone India has been awarded the Most Admired Telecom Operator and Best 3G Operator at the recent Telecom Operator Awards 2012. The company has also received the globally recognized prestigious 'Product of the Year 2012' consumer award for Vodafone Apps Store in the Mobile Services Category. In another survey conducted by Nielsen, Vodafone India was the only telecom player in the Top 10 'Most Exciting Youth Brands' in India. Vodafone India also features in the Top 10 'Most Trusted Brands in India' for 2011, in a survey conducted by a leading financial daily.

MANUFACTURERS AT A GLANCE

Table 1 :Top Five Worldwide Total Mobile Phone Vendors, 2013			
Rank	Manufacturer	Gartner	IDC
1	Samsung	24.6%	24.5%
2	Nokia	13.9%	13.8%
3	Apple Inc.	8.3%	8.4%
4	LG	3.8%	3.8%
5	ZTE	3.3%	-
5	Huawei	-	3.0%
	Others	34.0%	46.4%

Note: IDC- International Data Corporation, an American market research and analysis firm. Gartner- an America IT research and advisory firm.

II. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

- To study about retailers attitude towards data packages provided by Vodafone Mobile Service
- To know the awareness level of retailer towards Vodafone.

III. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study is to help the researcher in understanding the retailers' viewpoint with regard to services, facilities, connectivity etc. The study basically consists of survey of the retailer who deal with users, and collection of their suggestions for betterment of the services. On the basis of analysis the company can improve the services and can make long term competitive consumer friendly strategies.

IV. METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

The methodology adopted in the research comprises of primary & secondary data and their systematic analysis. The Primary data is collected through survey with the help of questionnaire, personal interviews from distributors, shopkeepers. The questionnaire includes closed as well as open-ended questions and Secondary data is collected from website, books, brochures, magazines, newspapers etc.

V. FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS

The study focuses on the satisfaction of retailers with regard to the data package of Vodafone usage of customers. For analysis data were collected from nearly 80 retailers from Cochin City, Ernakulam. A questionnaire consisting of 15 questions were circulated among the retailers. Based on the data collected tables were formulated and interpretations were formed. The details can be outlined as follows:

Table 5.1: How long have you been running this outlet/shop?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 0-2yrs	23	28.7	28.7	28.7
3-6yrs	25	31.3	31.3	60.0
7-10yrs	21	26.3	26.3	86.3
10yrs+	11	13.8	13.8	100.0
Total	80	100.0	100.0	

Source: Primary Data

1. Through this research it has been found that a majority of the retailers has 5-6 yrs experience and this means that they have a very good understanding of the telecom industry and market.

Table 5.2: Which service provider provides best data offer?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Airtel	30	37.5	37.5	37.5
BSNL	1	1.3	1.3	38.8
Vodafone	37	46.25	46.25	85.00
Docomo	12	15	15.0	100.0
Total	80	100.00	100.00	100.00

Source: Primary Data

2. Vodafone is the highest selling recharge coupon in retail shops with Airtel right behind. Reason- Vodafone offers 3G data packs at reasonable rates and very good speed.

Table 5.3: Age group of customers

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 0-18	5	6.3	6.3	6.3
19-24	28	35.0	35.0	41.3
25-35	44	55.0	55.0	96.3
36-50	3	3.8	3.8	100.0
Total	80	100.0	100.0	

Source: Primary Data

3. The researcher has found that most of the customers are employees and students. On comparing the two kinds of customers it was found that, being frequent users of social networking sites and with more time to spare, students use more data than the employees. A majority of the older section of society is only getting used to the new generation ways and is neither familiar with the latest smart phones or the ways in which mobile internet works.

Table 5.4: Which gender uses data plans more?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Male	34	42.5	42.5	42.5
Female	11	13.8	13.8	56.3
Cannot Differentiate	35	43.8	43.8	100.0
Total	80	100.0	100.0	

Source: Primary Data

4. It was also found that both men and women use data equally.

Table 5.5: How far you are satisfied with the service of the DSE with the company?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Highly Satisfied	41	51.2	51.2	51.2
Satisfied	26	32.5	32.5	83.8
Moderate	6	7.5	7.5	91.3
Dissatisfied	4	5.0	5.0	96.3
Highly Dissatisfied	3	3.8	3.8	100.0
Total	80	100.0	100.0	

Source: Primary Data

5. This research has also found that Vodafone provides high quality service for their retailers through the distributors. A good relationship is being maintained between the company and the retailers. The retailers are provided with promotional items, banners and wall posters so as to increase sales and attract more customers.

Table 5.6: How far you are satisfied with the commission from the company?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Highly Satisfied	8	10.0	10.0	10.0
Satisfied	16	20.0	20.0	30.0
Moderate	39	48.8	48.8	78.8
Dissatisfied	14	17.5	17.5	96.3
Highly Dissatisfied	3	3.8	3.8	100.0
Total	80	100.0	100.0	

Source: Primary Data

6. Though there has been a hike in the prices of other products, commissions of the retail agencies remains the same. This has caused dissatisfaction among the retailers as they are unable to meet their daily expenses.

E.g.: If retailer sells 10 Rs Vodafone recharge voucher earns only 50 Ps. Whereas he can earn Rs 1 when he sells other company's recharge voucher.

VI. SUGGESTIONS

- More danglers, posters and others promotional materials should be given to retailers to increase the sales.
- Incentives, gifts and other benefits should be provided to retailers to motivate them.
- Create strong awareness among the retailers about the data and its various possibilities.
- Introduce more attractive data plans, offers to influence customers
- Reduce the pricing of the Vodafone in order to compete with other telecom industries.
- Reduce network conjunction and make it smooth.
- Introduce better offer for voice and SMS.
- Create awareness among distributors about data and provide bonus and gifts so that it creates push effect in the retailers.
- Incentives for achieving targets
- Create contest in retail shops such as visibility contest, in-shop branding
- Training should be provided to Distributors.

VII. CONCLUSION

In today's market there are lots of opportunities. But at the same time the competition is tough. There are many difficulties in data selling but maintaining the business is very difficult because the customers can easily change the products or supplier as there are many new service providers in the market. So resistance is important. Nothing is permanent in this world except change. So there is always a need to find out what the customers need and the problems faced by them, so that it can be analyzed and solutions formed. The retailer's satisfaction survey was very helpful in finding out the needs of the retailers and the problems faced by them, so that it can be rectified. This will ensure a good relation with the company. It has also helped in understanding the market and the heavy competition that the company is facing.

As per the findings of the researcher, suggestions have been made and were further implemented. The company has brought a new project named B.O.L.T (Building Outlet Of Tomorrow). The project is to meet the needs and requirements of retailers as well as the distributors and to ensure a 'push effect' for the retailers in data selling. This is so because the retailers have high influence over the customers' decision making process. The company is going to introduce B.O.L.T in top data selling outlets of Bangalore and the company had made certain strategies for it too.

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