



A STUDY ON STRATEGIES FOR MARKETING MANAGEMENT ADOPTED TO INCREASE CUSTOMER AWARENESS BY THOLGIRI (THE ETHNIC HUB), GUWAHATI, ASSAM

Jumi Kalita¹, Aseka Sultana²
E-Mail: asekasultana48@gmail.com

¹Assistant Professor, Department of Management, Assam Down Town University, Guwahati, Assam

²MBA Student, Department of Management, Assam Down Town University, Guwahati, Assam

Abstract: A marketing strategy is a business's overall game plan for reaching people and turning them into customers of the product or service that the business provides. The selling strategy of an organization holds the company's price proposition, key marketing messages, information on the target customer and other high-level components. The marketing strategy is a route map of the marketing plan, which is a document that lays out the types and timing of marketing activities. A company's marketing strategy is expected to have a longer lifespan than any individual marketing plan as the strategy is; where the value proposition and the key components of a company's brand image reside. These components ideally do not shift very much over time. The marketing strategies adopted by organizations may vary from industry to industry and may even vary among similar industries. Marketing strategies helps in developing products and services in one business that can meet the needs of the target market. Good marketing strategies helps the customers understand the products or services in a better way. A good selling strategy must be drawn from marketing research and specialize in the proper merchandise combine so as to attain the most profit potential and sustain the business. A marketing strategy is also important for developing a promotional strategy as it helps the business identify its target market and to set measurable goals. It is vital to the success of the organization that implements a marketing plan that aims for growth and positive change in the bottom line.

Keywords: Marketing strategy, Customer etc.

1. INTRODUCTION

Earthquake Situated right in the heart of Guwahati - the historic Latasil area, 'Tholgiri' (থলগিৰি) is a wonderful concept. A conglomeration of four different housing styles prevalent in the villages of Assam, the interiors will leave you spellbound. The first two sections are for the display and sale of various items indigenous to Assam and the other two sections serve the purpose of a cafe-cum-bookstore. The owners: a noted journalist- Manorom Gogoi and Author- Monalisha Saikia have strived to create a space like home - the feeling of belonging, connecting and purpose. It is interesting to see how on the one hand, Assamese sub-nationalism has hit a new low due to the acts of miscreants, and on the other hand, some people have channelized this into creative ventures. This variant is all-embracing and devoid of parochialism.

Tholgiri came into existence on 14th of December, 2018. Tholgiri being a complete new concept aims at serving the various cultural and ethical products of Assam, which are also manufactured in Assam. Along with enhancing the ethnic items of the state they are also providing opportunities to the people of various villages to earn by providing the resources which ultimately results in the economic growth of the state as well as the country. The local villagers from various villages of Assam has been engaged in providing the resources and also producing the packaged products. Tholgiri has lead to a great source of income to the local people of the villages providing them the employment opportunities.

The products of Tholgiri are manufactured in Assam, starting from the raw materials till the finished products. Group of people from various villages of Assam are engaged with the manufacturing of products like pithas (rice cakes), khar, pickle, rice, organic tea and green tea, chungta tea (phalap), fruits juice, organic oil, spices, jiggery, kumal chaul jolpan, chiri jolpan, sandoh jolppan, pitha guri jolppan, hurum jolppan, bora chaul jolppan, pithas, ladoos, pork rice(boiled veg, pitika, chatni), chicken rice (boiled veg, pitika, chatni), duck rice (boiled veg, pitika, chatni), mati maahor jol, paneer curry, mushroom curry, fish tenga, fish with mustard seeds, fish pitika and fish with vegetables, curd(doi), cream, molasses and payos(kheer), etc. The clothing items i.e the ethnic attires are manufactured in Sualkuchi which is famously known as the 'Manchester of Assam' for its large number of cottage industries engaged in handloom.

As we know, Assam as a state is well known for its natural resources (Like Silk, Cotton, tea, Rice etc.) and the people of Assam has been engaged in agricultural and handloom activities since decades, and Tholgiri is an idea of keeping this tradition alive. The main aim of the Tholgiri is to enhance the resources of Assam and to promote the culture and food habits of Assam among the younger generation and promote it all over Assam and other parts of the country.

DOI Number: <https://doi.org/10.30780/IJTRS.V04.I09.002>

pg. 9

www.ijtrs.com

www.ijtrs.org



People now a days are also much into the consumption of wheat based food products, which is scientifically an unhealthy consumption. Tholgiri has also shown concern regarding the various food habits which are leading to various health problems and has been making efforts to spread awareness to the customers with an aim to replace such food habits with organic and rice based products. The products of Tholgiri are produced organically and are preservative free.

The main objectives of Tholgiri are as follows:

- To keep the culture of Assam alive.
- To enhance the cultural and ethnic food habits of Assam by providing various packaged items as well as serve various ethnic meals in the outlet.
- To help the local producers and vendors by providing employment opportunities.
- To promote the books written by different authors from all over Assam.
- To promote the ethnic attires of different parts of the state thereby opening opportunities for the handloom sector of the state.
- To promote the the various resources which are available in the country.

According to Kotler & Keller "The marketing strategy lays out target markets and the value proposition that will be offered based on an analysis of the best market opportunities." [1]

Marketing strategy involves mapping out the company's direction for the forthcoming designing amount, whether or not that be 3, 5 or 10 years. It involves enterprise a 360° review of the firm and its in operation surroundings with a read to distinctive new business opportunities that the firm might probably leverage for competitive advantage. Strategic designing may additionally reveal market threats that the firm might have to think about for semi-permanent property.

Strategic designing makes no assumption concerning the firm continued to supply constant merchandise to customers into the longer term. Instead, it's involved with distinctive the business opportunities that are doubtless to achieve success and evaluates the firm's capability to leverage such opportunities. It seeks to spot the strategic gap; that's the distinction between wherever a firm is presently located (the strategic reality or accidental strategy) and wherever it ought to be situated for property, semi permanent growth (the strategic intent or deliberate strategy).

Strategic designing seeks to deal with 3 queries, specifically:

- Where are we now? (Situation analysis)
- What business should we be in? (Vision and mission)
- How should we get there? (Strategies, plans, goals and objectives)

A fourth question may be added to the list, namely 'How do we know when we got there?'

Due to increasing need for accountability, many marketing organizations use a variety of marketing metrics to track strategic performance, allowing for corrective action to be taken as required.

On the surface, strategic designing seeks to deal with 3 straightforward queries, however, the analysis and analysis concerned in strategic designing is incredibly refined and needs a good deal of skill and judgement.

2. LITERATURE SURVEY

According to researchers like Stanley F. Teele, the marketing practices of Food manufacturers and observed that the use of brand names is not directly related, however, to high distribution costs because it is the intensity with which brands are promoted that determines costs rather than their use alone. The costs of marketing differ very decidedly from organization to organization within the same product division of the food industry. It is of great importance to see how wide a range of marketing practices may be adopted successfully by companies in competition with each other.

The wide variety of marketing practices had exemplified by the extent to which firms differed in the selection of types of customers. Personal selling costs vary significantly from one industry to another, but within each industry there is more of a tendency toward a common or typical figure. Firms of larger size tend to had higher distribution costs in relation to smaller firms in the same industry.[2]

According to Barksdale study, in the United States cross-sectional study on consumers attitudes towards the policies and practices of business of a national sample of consumers. Consumers showed a high level of apprehension regarding bound policies of business and discontent over specific promoting practices.

Most consumers valued the free enterprise system highly. In the marketing system presence of imperfections was believed to be caused by the ineptness, carelessness, and apathy of consumers. Consumers also believed that their problems required a lot of attention and expressed the necessity for bigger government regulation.[3]

According to Peter F. Drucker, in today's modern day society there is no other leadership group except managers. Despite the emphasis on marketing and its approach, marketing is still rhetoric rather than reality in many types of businesses. After many years of marketing the rhetoric consumerism has become a powerful popular movement that has prove that not much marketing has been practiced[4]. According to Williamson in a study concerning the pattern of adoption of new drugs, surveyed 140 general practitioners and the results showed that doctors prescribing attitudes are strongly influenced by the characteristics of the drug. He pointed out that a single marketing practice for the entire product line would be ineffective and recommended a different combination of marketing variables to influence sales revenue in each product market taking into account the complex factors characterizing each product market and the effects of the product characteristics on doctor's

prescribing attitudes. He also draws literature on risk assessment to examine the medical practitioners prescribing the new drugs". He concluded that the level of risk which a doctor perceives determines the external validation he or she requires in order to prescribe the drugs. The preferred information sources vary with the perceived riskiness of medicines by the doctors. He also stated that the most important source for low-risk drugs are medical representatives, but are less important for higher risk drugs.[5]

According to Jain in his study, Marketing strategy is pointed out by the promoting objectives, client and competitive views and product and market momentum (i.e. extrapolation of past performance to the future) kind the idea of selling strategy"..... "Marketing strategy is developed at the business unit level. Within a given surroundings, marketing strategy deals essentially with the interplay of three forces known as the strategic 3 C's: the Customer, the Competition and the Corporation. A good commercialism strategy have to be compelled to be characterized by a) clear market definition; b) a decent match between company strengths and also the desires of the market; c) superior performance relative to the competition is the key success factors of the business. Marketing strategy in terms of these key constituents must be defined as an endeavour by a corporation to differentiate itself positively from its competitors, using its relative corporate strengths to higher satisfy client desires during a given environmental setting. Based on the interplay of the strategic 3 C's, formation of marketing strategy requires the following decisions:

- Where to compete?
- How to compete?
- When to compete? [6]

3. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

- To examine the influence of marketing strategies to create brand awareness among customers.
- To examine the SWOT analysis of Tholgiri.
- To analyze the response of consumer with respect to quality, price, variety, packaging and freshness parameters.

4. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study is limited to the customers of Tholgiri, Guwahati, Assam. There was no previous data to study on Tholgiri and the whole initiative is a first-of-its-kind.

5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this descriptive Research design, a structured questionnaire has been used as the data collection instrument from a convenience sample of various customers. The sample size of 100 is taken for the purpose of research. Moreover, interviews were conducted on a face-to-face basis. There were a number of data provided by the customers which helped in studying the various measures undertaken by the Organisation to increase customer awareness.[7]

The methodologies applied for successful completion of the study are:-

Primary Sources of Data Collection

- Personal Interview and Contact: - Personal contact was established with customers to obtain necessary informations.
- Questionnaires: - For the purpose of collecting data and information structured questionnaires were prepared and shared for recording responses.
- Findings: - Findings includes vision as its main means of data collection. Different customers attitude, behavior and knowledge are noticed here.
- Sample Size: - The total number of sampled customer surveyed is 100 on a personal basis through the help of structured questionnaire.

Secondary Sources of Data Collection

- Files and Documentary Sources: - Data were collected from Tholgiri files and documentary sources.

6. DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

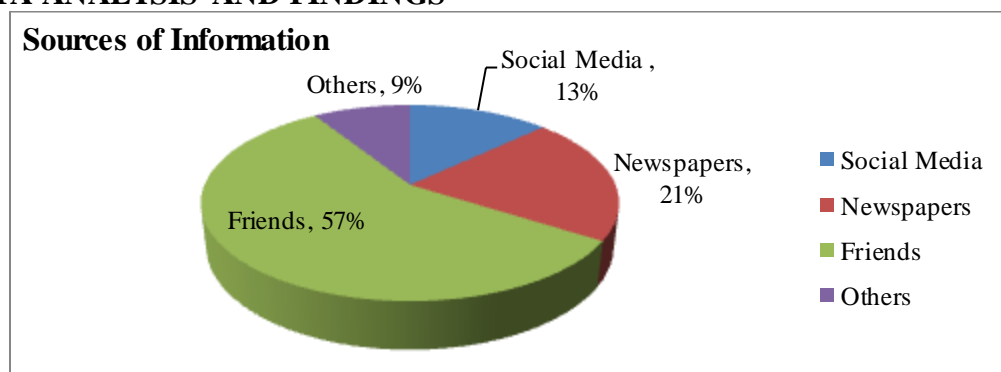


Fig. 6.1 Sources of Information about Tholgiri

Analysis: It is found that a large number of the customers have come to know about Tholgiri from friends and moderate number of customers have come to know about tholgiri from newspapers and social media. It is understood that the organization should focus more on promoting over print and social media to attract more customers. 57% of them came to know about Tholgiri from their friends, 21% of them from newspaper, 13% from social media and 9% from other sources.

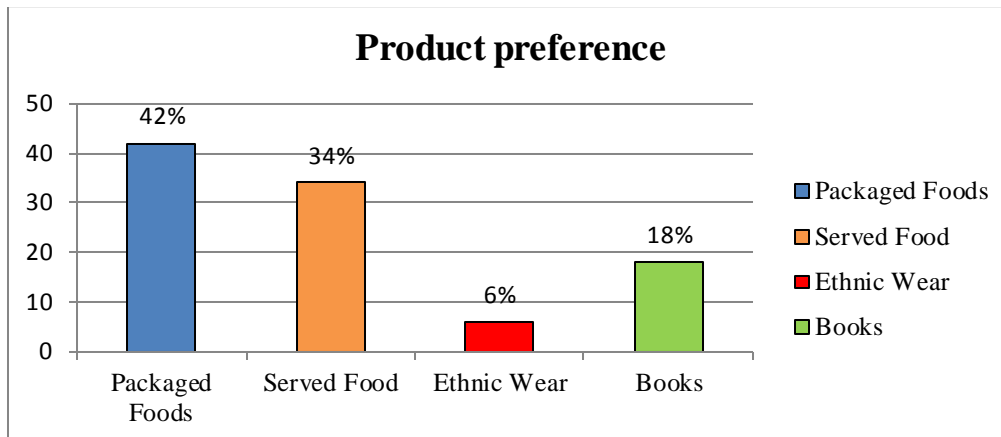


Fig. 6.2 Product Preference of Tholgiri

Source: Field Data

Analysis: It is found that good number of customer prefers the packaged food items and the food served in Tholgiri and moderate number of customers prefers the books and a very less number of customers prefers the ethnic wears. It is understood that the customers are preferring the food items more than the other items offered by Tholgiri. Hence, Tholgiri needs to concentrate on its other products as well to increase the customers preferences. 42% of the customers likes the packaged food items, 34% of the customers likes the food served in Tholgiri, 18% of them likes the books and 6% of them likes the ethnic wear.



Fig. 6.3 Customer Satisfaction at Tholgiri

Source: Field Data

Analysis: It is found that Tholgiri is doing really well with the service being provided to the customers and have been successful in making the customers satisfied with its service quality as majority of the customers has given a positive respondent towards its customer service. 94% of the customers are satisfied with the customer service, 6% of the customers are somewhat satisfied with the customer service.

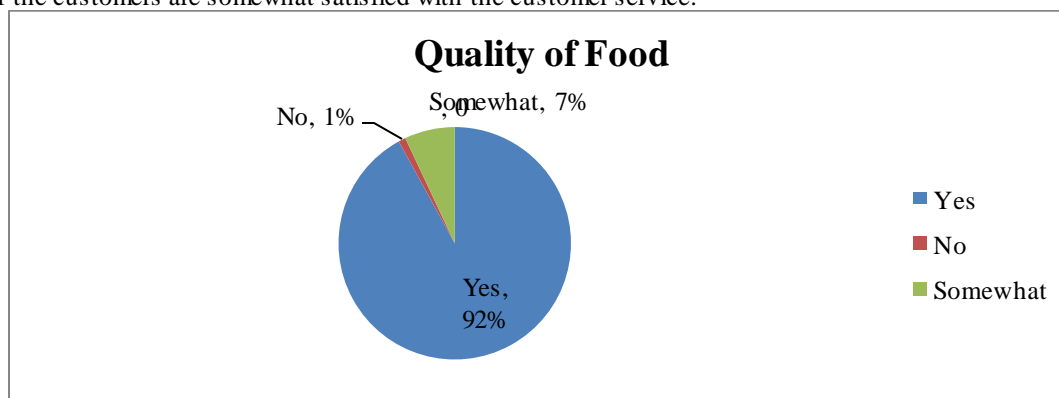


Fig. 6.4 Quality of the Food Served by Tholgiri wrt Price

Analysis: It is found that majority of the respondents are satisfied with the quality of the food being served to them. 92% of the respondents are satisfied with the quality of the food in respect to its price, 1% of them are not satisfied and 7% of them are somewhat satisfied.

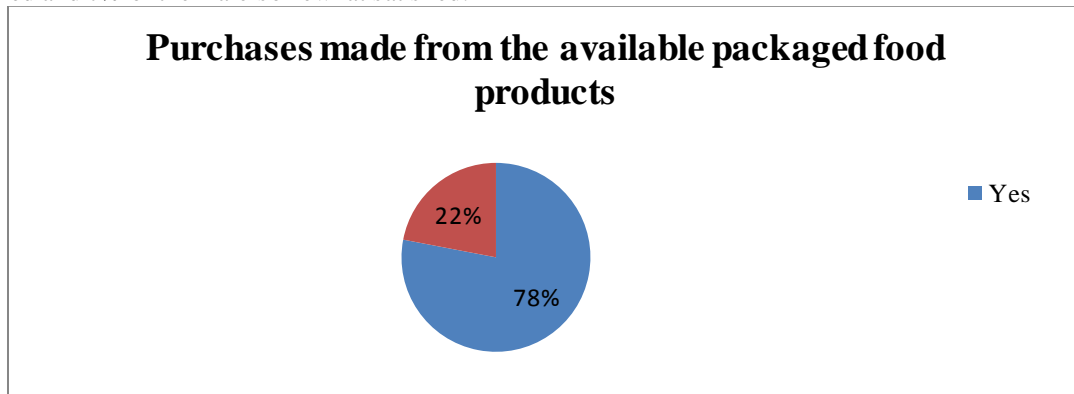


Fig. 6.5 Purchases Made from the Available Packaged Food Products

Source: Field Data

Analysis: It is found that although being a new entrant in the market, Tholgiri has a good number of customers who have purchased and liked its packaged food products. 78% of the customers have purchased the packaged food products offered by Tholgiri and 22% of the customers haven't purchased it yet.

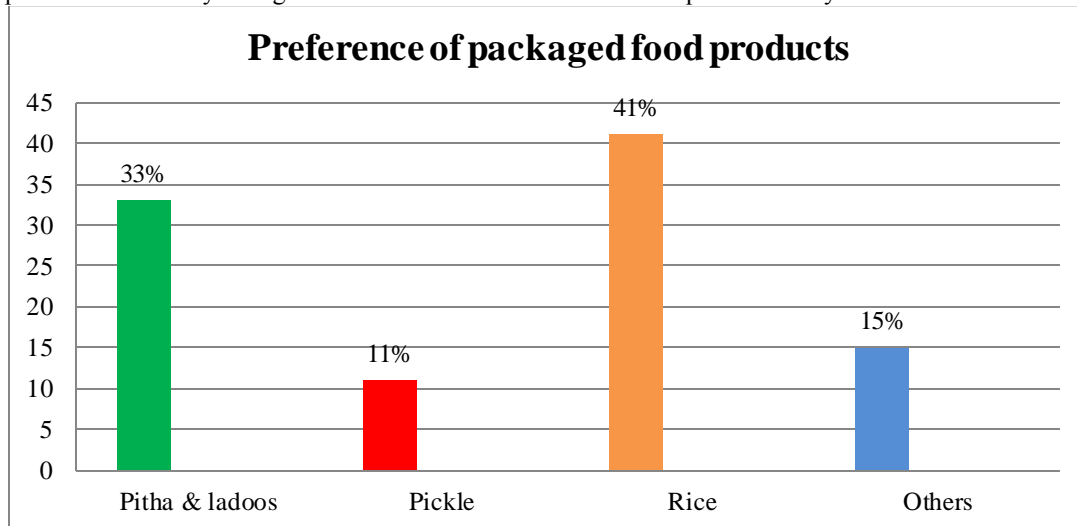


Fig. 6.6 Preference of Packaged Food Products

Source: Field Data

Analysis: It is found that a good number of customers likes the rice products and pithas, whereas the number of customers who prefer pickles and other products of Tholgiri are less. 41% of the customers prefers the rice products offered by tholgiri, 33% of them likes the pithas and ladoos, 11% of them likes the pickles offered by Tholgiri and 15% of them likes other products like oil, spices, tea etc.

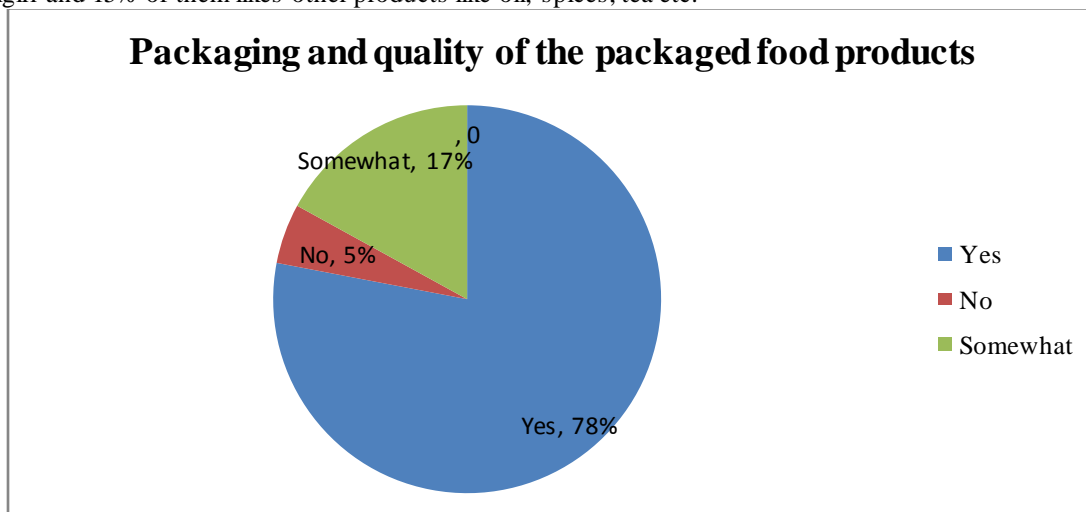


Fig. 6.7 Packaging and Quality of the Packaged Food Products

Analysis: It is found that a few of the respondents are not much satisfied with the packaging of the products of Tholgiri which means Tholgiri needs to focus on its packaging in order to meet the customer expectation. 78% of the customers are satisfied with the packaging of the products, 17% of the customers are somewhat satisfied and 5% of the customers are not satisfied.

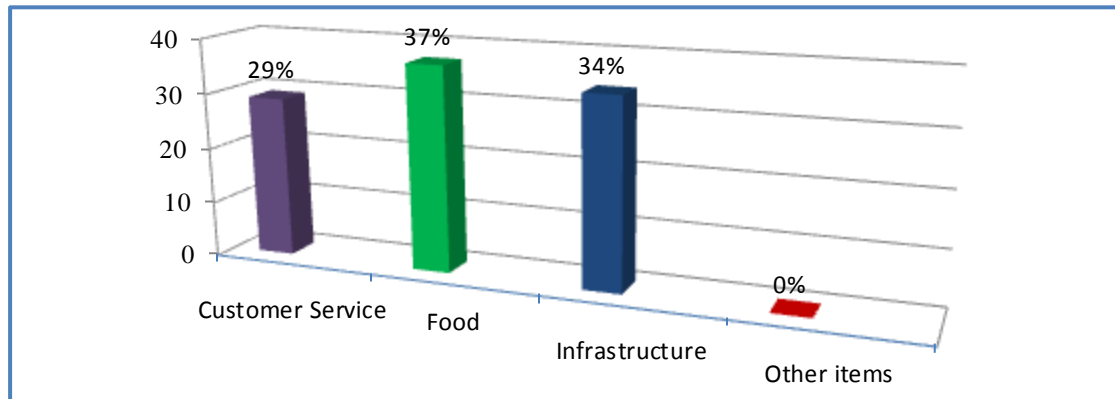


Fig. 6.8 Customers Liking about Tholgiri

Source: Field Data

Analysis: It is found that majority of the customers likes the food and infrastructure of Tholgiri and also a moderate amount of them likes the customer service. 37% of the customers likes the food offered by Tholgiri, 34% of the customers likes the infrastructure and 29% of them likes the customer service.

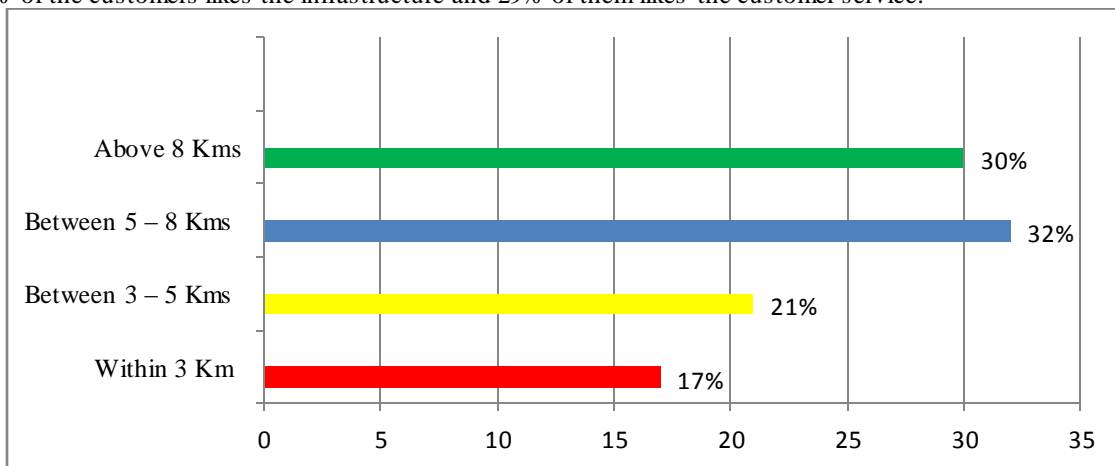


Fig. 6.9 Customers Convenience from their Location

Source: Field Data

Analysis: It is found that Tholgiri is convenient to customers as they are located within 8 km radius. 17% of the customers finds Tholgiri very convenient from their location, 21% of the customers finds Tholgiri convenient as they are located within 3-5 kms from the location of Tholgiri, 32% of them finds the location of Tholgiri less convenient as they are located with 5-8 kms from Tholgiri and 30% of the customers do not find the location of Tholgiri.

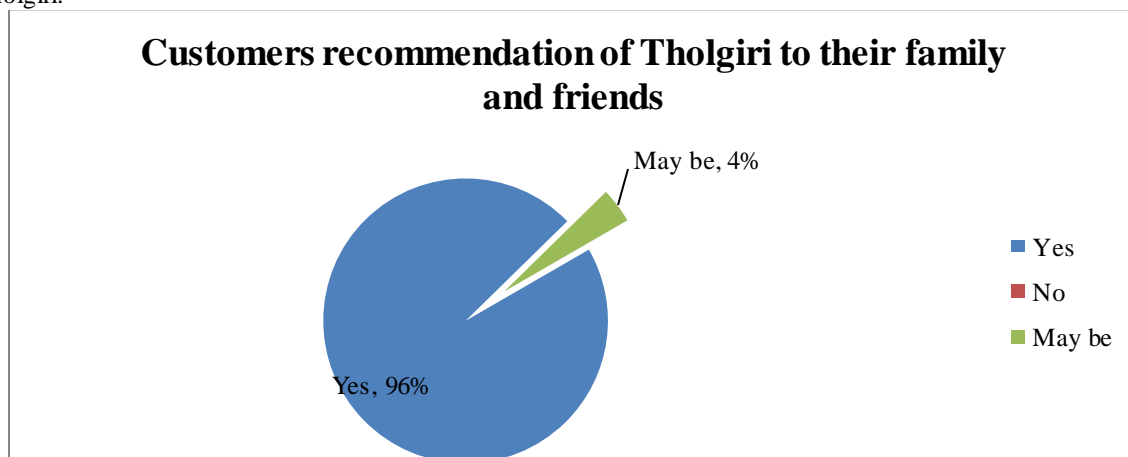


Fig. 6.10 Customers Recommendation of Tholgiri to their Family and Friends

Source: Field Data

DOI Number: <https://doi.org/10.30780/IJTRS.V04.I09.002>

pg. 14

www.ijtrs.com

www.ijtrs.org



Analysis: It is found that Majority of the customers are willing to recommend Tholgiri to their friends and family which shows the positive impact of Tholgiri on its customers. 96% of the customers are willing to recommend Tholgiri to their friends and family and 4% of them may or may not recommend Tholgiri to their friends and family.

7. FINDINGS

By using the 7p's of marketing mix the strategies of Tholgiri regarding its products and service has been analyzed. It is seen that out of all the P's Tholgiri lacks behind in its promotional strategies of marketing mix. Tholgiri haven't yet invested in any sales promotion as it is new to the market. Tholgiri is currently engaged in direct marketing.

It is also observed in accordance to the 7p's of marketing mix that Tholgiri is not able to target large number of customers because of only one outlets in the city.

By using SWOT Analysis the major Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities and Threats of Tholgiri have been found:

Strengths of Tholgiri: Variety of products and food items, Organic products and Unique concept and attractive outlet.

Weakness of Tholgiri: Only one outlet, No promotional strategies and no home delivery.

Opportunities of Tholgiri: New in the market, Unique concept, Deals with Ethnic food and products, large number of target market.

Threats of Tholgiri: High number of competition, Different food habits of people, Customer preferences.

According to customer survey:

That majority of the customers came to know about Tholgiri from Friends that means word of mouth has played the key role in promoting Tholgiri among Customers. It is also understood that Tholgiri should focus more on promoting over social and print media to attract more customers.

- It is found that 42% of the customers likes the packaged food items, 32% of the customers like the food served in Tholgiri, 18% of them likes the books and 6% of them likes the ethnic wear. It is understood that the customers are preferring the packaged products and served food items more than the books and ethnic wear. Hence, Tholgiri needs to concentrate on its other products as well to increase their sales.
- It is seen that majority of the customers are satisfied with the customer service being provided by Tholgiri, which shows positive impact of Tholgiri among the customers.
- It is also found that majority of the customers are satisfied with the quality of the food in respect to its price, While a few are not completely satisfied as they think few food items are priced slightly high.
- Majority of the customers i.e 78% have purchased the packaged food products offered by Tholgiri and 22% of the customers haven't Purchased yet.
- Among the packaged products, the rice products and Pithas and Ladoos are the mostly preferred ones among the customers. Hence, Tholgiri should focus on its other products as well to enhance the customer preferences of Tholgiri products over other brands.
- Majority of the customers are satisfied with the packaging of Tholgiri products while few of them are not much satisfied as they think the packaging could have been of better quality.
- It is found that all of the customers had positive reviews for the infrastructure of Tholgiri as they find it very unique and attractive.
- It is seen that 37% of the customers like the food offered by Tholgiri, 34% of the customer likes the infrastructure and 29% of them likes the customer service. It is understood that the majority of the customers likes the food and infrastructure of Tholgiri.
- While being asked about location, 17% of customers finds the location of Tholgiri convenient as they are located within 3-5 kms from the location of Tholgiri, 32% of them finds the location of Tholgiri less convenient as they are located with 5-8 kms from Tholgiri and 30% of the customers do not find the location of Tholgiri convenient as they are located with in 8 kms from Tholgiri and they want Tholgiri to come up with more outlets in other location of the city of Guwahati.
- Majority of the customers are likely to visit Tholgiri again and a very few of them may or may not visit Tholgiri again.
- Majority of the customers are willing to recommend Tholgiri to their friends and family, which shows the positive impact of Tholgiri on its customers.

RECOMMENDATION

On the basis of analysis and findings as explained in the previous pages, the following recommendations are being made:

- Tholgiri should use the marketing mix strategies or any of the tools of the marketing strategies to understand the market situation and take marketing measures accordingly.
- Tholgiri should invest in promotional activities to promote itself among more no. Of customers.

DOI Number: <https://doi.org/10.30780/IJTRS.V04.I09.002>

pg. 15

www.ijtrs.com

www.ijtrs.org



They should focus more on online promotions of their products and services.

- Tholgiri needs to have their own website, which will help the customers reach Tholgiri more easily.
- They should also focus on the quality of packaging of the products to meet the customer expectations.
- The most preferred products of Tholgiri are the food items and products, tholgiri should focus on its other products as well to increase their sales.
- They should also increase the stock of their ethnic wear collection to make it more attractive.

Tholgiri should plan to come up with more outlets in the city to reach large no of the target market.

CONCLUSION

A marketing strategy is a business's overall game plan for reaching people and turning them into customers of the product or service that the business provides. The selling methods of an organization possess the company's price proposition, key selling messages, data on the target client and alternative high-level parts. Tholgiri is a unique concept which is completely new in the market and aims at serving the various cultural and ethical products of Assam. The main objective of the study was not only to understand the marketing strategies but also to analyze the customer response in respect to the price, quality, packaging and freshness of the Tholgiri products. From the analysis, we can conclude that Tholgiri being new in the market needs to focus on its marketing strategies and promotional activities to make people aware of its existence in the market. Tholgiri should also come up with their own website and keep itself updated in various social platforms to reach large target markets.

REFERENCES

- [1] P. Kotler and K. Keller, Marketing management 14th edition. Prentice Hall, 2011.
- [2] G. L. Robertson, Food packaging: principles and practice. CRC press, 2005.
- [3] S. G. Bharadwaj, P. N. Thirunarayana, and P. R. Varadarajan, "Attitudes towards marketing practices, consumerism and government regulations: An exploratory survey of consumers in India," Vikalpa, vol. 16, no. 1, pp. 15–28, 1991.
- [4] P. Drucker, The age of discontinuity: Guidelines to our changing society. Routledge, 2017.
- [5] S. R. Florentinus, New drugs in general practice: prescribing patterns and external influences. Utrecht University, 2006.
- [6] J. Mongay, "Strategic Marketing. A literature review on definitions, concepts and boundaries," 2006.
- [7] R. Kakati, "A Study on Mobile phone usage and its effects on students," vol. 12, pp. 181–189, 2017.