Marketing Hub for Local Sellers and Buyers

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Abstract: *The main specific objective of this paper is to develop a site which will make shopping simple, easy and comfortable for people around the campus. Students face a lot of issues like lack of time to go and buy stuff or difficulties going up to the mall for few things. Our objective is to find a solution for these problems.*

Keywords: segmentation, demographic

1. Introduction

The website focuses on the shopping industry and aims to provide the means to deliver groceries and everyday requirement things to the doorsteps of local residents who often find it difficult to daily visit the local shops. By providing an online means of communication between the customer and the shopkeeper, the website basically eliminates the need for the customers to physically walk down to these shops. The website provides a way for these small shops to compete with the big manufacturers who sell their items in bulk to companies like Big Basket, Amazon etc. The delivery by these sites takes sometimes up to one week to arrive to the customer. The website purpose is to ensure the safest and efficient delivery of order to the customers in the least time possible.

2. Market Analysis

The main goal of our company is to provide an online service which brings the local shops to the computers of local people sitting at home. The main objective of our service is to encourage the local shopkeepers to expand their reach to customers through new technology using Internet. The website concentrates on improving the interface between local shops and local people. It is like the shop has come to their doorstep and they have to simply select the items they need which will be delivered to them in one to two hours. This is the unique feature of the website's online service. The developers don't hold any position in the market as the website is just starting and thus the market share is static.

The current target customer are the day scholars, the working class families who are very tired after coming from work and the aged people who do the grocery shopping for their families as they face difficulty in travelling by foot. Facebook Ads and various other social media sites will have the website's pages from where they can know about our service.

3. Target Marketing Selection

The website currently aims at providing the local residents of Katpadi, Vellore to provide everyday need products from the local stores. So the primary target market is localized as of now. The targets are old age people, teenagers, working women, people who live alone, female students and other day scholars of VIT that live in or around Vellore. The basic idea kept in mind while selecting these groups was to facilitate the availability of everyday use items.

These groups of people could be categorized under various geographic and demographic factors.

3.1 Geographic Segmentation

The various bases under geographic segmentation are city size, density, climate etc. The target marketing section consists of people from a small city with medium density and hot and humid climate. The target commodity is a small city with two famous colleges (CMC and VIT) and most of the shops and services are in close proximity of these two colleges. People living at larger distances from these places may find it difficult to have proper timely access to these everyday use items and may need to take out some time of their schedule for buying these things. Also the climate is hot for most part of the year and it is very tiring to go out between 10-5. The service aims to solve these problems for the customers.

3.2 Demographic Segmantaion

The bases under demographic segmentation are age, sex, marital status, education, occupation etc. The target marketing section consist of people of different ages especially older age who may find it difficult to travel larger distances for buying small items. Also it can help pregnant mothers, single mothers, and other individuals for whom leaving the home often may not be easily feasible. Working women and the professors teaching at these universities may also find it difficult to take out time for this. Also safety can be an issue for women to go out at night. The project aims to help all these groups through its doorstep service.

4. Market Mix Decisions

This section addresses the actions and tactics regarding price, promotion, and product, distribution, and services issues.

4.1 Price

The customers will be sold product at the Maximum Retail Price (MRP) quoted on the product. The main objective is to help both the consumers and shopkeepers. Companies like Amazon, Flipkart have severely affected the sales of local shops. The project aims to help these local shops by bringing larger number of customers to them in return for a small percentage of their monthly revenue. People will prefer buying from these shops as the items will be delivered right at their doorstep and on the same day unlike Amazon and Flipkart which takes at least 2-3 days for delivery, that too with prime account which costs around ₹1k. So the customers will thus increase resulting in increased revenue for these local shops.

4.2 Promotion

The website will be promoted through social media platforms like Facebook. Facebook ads will be used to advertise the website on people's social media feed. Further advertisement can be done by putting up stalls in coordination with some NGOs stalls during college fests and in return they will be helped with some form of charity.

4.3 Service

The project aims at adding value to customers by bringing everyday use items right at their doorstep. The other startups that provide such service are mostly food based items but we provide much more than that. The level of value offered to customers can be quantified as the amount of time and energy saved and calculating safety factor involved for night time business.

4.4 Distribution

The facility will be availed online through all web enabled devices. Customers can visit the website and search for the product they want to buy and then select the shop they want to buy it from. The product will be delivered to the specified address by the shop workers.

5. Financial Projections

The on-going costs include the maintenance of the site and money being spent on advertising and increasing our outreach to public. The revenue projections after one month will be approximately around 5000 rupees. The projections may go up if the number of shops is more than 50. The profit will be almost equal to revenue collected because the cost on maintenance and propaganda is very small.

6. Marketing Plan Assessment

6.1 Competitor Response

The major competitors are other companies which provide doorstep services. The main advantage the project have over the others is that it provides products at MRP which is free of any kind of delivery charge. Other companies have considerable amount of delivery charge. Some of the difficulties could be unavailability of methods to avail the services online or some customers who might not have access to computers or laptops.

6.2 Future Scope

In future if problems as mentioned above occurs then offline service through calls can also be provided.

The financial gain can be expected to increase by another 20,000 to 30,000 rupees in the next two to three years. The reach can be extended beyond a small region or locality to an entire town as more and more get to know about the service.

7. Acknowledgment

8. Declaration

The author(s) declare(s) that there is no conflict of interest.

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