

PROMOTION OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SOURCES AND SERVICES: SALES PROMOTION

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ABSTRACT

The assumption is that customers are reluctant to purchase, and therefore, there is a need of encouragement, and products are pushed towards them. this paper is an attempt to explore some kind of tools of promotion with special reference to sales promotion.

INTRODUCTION

Promotion is another important phenomenon in marketing. It requires mechanism by which target groups are informed about the resources available in library and Information Centre. Promotion of what we have in the library. Users may not be aware or familiar with the library system. Hence it is essential that every year new students are joined with the library and at the beginning of the academic year, they must be provided awareness programmes. Word of mouth campaign is the best mechanism for promoting the user of library services. The primary promotion tool is library instructions in the form of workshop, seminars, lectures etc.

If the circus is coming to the town and you paint a sign saying “Circus Coming to the Fairground Saturday,” that’s advertising. If you put the sign on the back of an elephant and walk him in the town, that’s promotion. If the elephant walks through the mayor’s flower bed, that’s publicity. And if you get the mayor to laugh about it, that’s public relation. Lisa Wolfe: Library Public Relations, Promotion & Communication. (Cited in Fisher & Pride, 75)

Sales Promotion is one of the tools of promotional mix. It is short-term incentives to encourage trial or purchase of a product or service, such as discounts for access to a database over a limited time period. It is designed to cause people, library users or non-users to act. “Free” techniques that motivate people to use/buy products/services are one of them.

The aim of Sales Promotion is to add extra value to a product, service or experience over and above the normal product offering, so as to create an extra inducement for the customers to buy or try it. Although individual Sales Promotion are usually short-term tactical measures, Sales Promotion is an important strategic element in the promotional mix.

Sales promotion is defined as demand-stimulating devices designed to supplement advertising and facilitate personal selling. Sales promotion includes a wide variety of promotional tools designed to stimulate earlier or stronger market response. It includes consumer promotion –sample, coupons,

rebates, price-off, premiums, contests, trading stamps, demonstration; trade promotion-bating allowances, free goods, merchandise allowances, cooperation advertising, push money, dealer sales contests; and sales force promotion –bonuses, contests, sales rallies.

Every producer, every dealer, every businessman wants to maximise his sales. For the achievement of this object they adopt advertisement, sales promotion and personal selling. Sales promotion means and includes all the activities that are performed by a producer or by a businessman to increase his sales. Main purpose of sales promotion activities is to encourage and persuade the consumers to buy a particular product. The term “sales promotion” has been defined by many eminent authors. Some of the important definitions are as follows:

A.H.R. Delens, “Sales promotion means any steps that are taken for the purpose of obtaining or increasing sales”.

Philip Kotler, “Sales Promotion encompasses all the tools in the marketing mix whose major role in persuasive communication.”

American Marketing Association, “Those marketing activities, other than personal selling, advertising and publicity that stimulate consumer purchasing and dealer effectiveness, such as displays, shows and exhibition, demonstration and various non-recurrent selling efforts not in the ordinary routine.

CHARACTERISTICS OF SALES PROMOTION

On the basis of above definitions, following characteristics of sales promotion may be enumerated.

- Sales promotion does not include advertising, personal selling and publicity.
- Sales promotional activities are generally performed at certain times. Thus these are not regular activities, as display fairs and exhibitions, demonstrations, seasonal discounts free-gifts etc.
- Sales promotion helps in selling and it makes advertisements and personal selling easy and effective.
- Sales promotions encourage dealers and distributors to sell their product more.
- Sales promotion also encourages consumers also to buy the product

OBJECTIVES OF SALES PROMOTION

Important objectives of sales promotion can be explained as

- To introduce a new product into a market.
- To attract a new consumers to buy the product.
- To maintain present consumers and to encourage them to buy more.
- To establish effective co-ordination between advertisements and sales.

- To change the marketing strategies and policies of the enterprise keeping in view the change in the policies and strategies of competitors.
- To achieve pre-determined marketing objectives.
- To provide goods and services of high quality to the consumers at reasonable prices.

IMPORTANCE OF SALES PROMOTION

Sales promotion is very beneficial to consumers and manufacturers. Important advantages of sales promotions available can be enumerated as follows.

- It helps in creating the demands for new products;
- It helps in getting new customers for existing products;
- It helps in increasing the demand of the existing customers
- It helps in encouraging and stimulation the consumers to take more and more interest
- It helps in the achievement of pre-determined marketing objectives of the enterprise
- It gives the knowledge of new products available in the market
- It gives the information of new uses of existing products to the consumers
- It improves the standard of consumers. It is also a source of education to the consumers.

LIMITATIONS OF SALES PROMOTION

- Sales promotional activities can be prepared only for short-term and not for long term.
- Sales promotion alone cannot achieve any object. It needs the support of advertisement and selling.
- Sales promotion measures are not helpful in improving the product.
- Sales promotion measures are not helpful in removing the drawbacks of advertisement programmed.

TOOLS FOR SALES PROMOTION

Tools of sales promotion are the methods which encourages consumers to buy the product in more quantity. These methods may be as follows.

Distribution of free samples: Libraries offer an abundance of freebies including T-shirts, water bottles, coffee mugs, rulers, etc. These items typically include a library logo along with the website URL and contact information. The Public library system with free public schools. Sending (free) borrower's cards to other classes such as businessmen, laborers, and so on. These are distributed to attract consumers to try out a new product and thereby create new customers.

Discount coupons: Coupons are another way to drum up business. If your library has a café or vending service, consider providing discounts throughout the semester. The develop themes, such as discounts for the freshmen the first week of the fall, semester

Cash discount: This may be available for subscribing to a database over a limited period, or for specific group of users. Discounts don't necessarily have to be food-related, but might also include free printing or photocopying, overdue forgiveness, or other incentives during specific days and times. A good example is "NISCAIR offers free photocopying up to 15 pages/day 'free' for students on producing valid ID-card."

Special prizes/ Free gifts: They are effective in inducing consumers to buy a particular product. This is also useful for encouraging and rewarding existing customers

Incentives and Allowances: "The SAMS (Students Ambassadors) learned that providing incentives to attend the sessions was attractive to its graduate student audience. 'Lunch-n-Learns' drew a core audience,, so more successful incentives included \$10 gift cards to Uconn Co-op. additional small packages of sticky notes.... were surprisingly popular. The evaluation proved that the sessions were useful and well-received

Cheap bargain

Advertisement allowances and materials like Diaries, Calendars, Signboards, Posters, Etc.

Open House & Anniversary Celebration: The ... anniversary ... are always great occasions to ... 'give away' specialty advertising. Open house events are another way to attract students. The mixture of food, games, and social encounters is a great opportunity to increase student exposure to the library

Fair & Exhibitions: 'International Trade Fair' in New Delhi at PragatiMaidan, which is from 14th to 27th November every year, National Book Fair, or International Book Fair are good examples as a tool of Sales Promotion.

IMPORTANCE OF SALES PROMOTION

From Customers' perspective

- Availability of new products- It is easy to sell new products with the help of sales promotional tools. Hence the producers are encouraged to bring new products.
- Various rebates & free discounts- Sales promotions offers various incentives like rebates & free discounts, free samples which helps to stimulates sales & purchase.
- Thrill in life- The various incentives contents samples, demonstrations, fair and exhibitions create thrill and joy in consumer's life and the relish these beneficial offers.
- Low price- Sales promotion increases sales volume and reduce the unit cost of production & thus the prices reduce & it benefits consumers.
- Increase knowledge- Sales promotion increases the knowledge of the consumers with regard to the uses, operation & maintenance of the product.

- Provide higher standard of living.
- Buying confidence- Sales promotion tools provide the consumers an opportunity to understand the product. This creates a buying confidence among consumers. They may take better buying decisions which ultimately increases their satisfaction level.
- Minimize exploitation- The promotional plan creates a better knowledge about the products, their uses & quality. As a result, the seller can't exploit the consumers.
- Goods are available at cheaper rate.
- Financial benefits to the customers.
- Generate awareness about new products.
- Raise the standard of information used.

IMPORTANCE TO PRODUCERS

- Increase in sales- Sales promotion attracts consumers & stimulates them to make larger purchases.
- Improve effectiveness of Media Activities- the sales promotion plans make the advertisement & other media activities more effective to achieve the sales target. These give pulling power to ads.
- Help personal selling- sales promotion supports the personal selling process. The salespersons can use demonstrations, distributions of free samples, contest methods to push the sales. Sales promotion aimed at the company's own sales force might motivate salesmen to get new customers, selling a product.
- Able to capture new market.
- Increase regular sales & seasonal products.
- It helps in increasing goodwill of the firm.
- The various promotional incentives offered to the dealers help to achieve cooperation from them to sell the products & to maintain maximum stock with them.
- It is an effective step to face the competition.
- It helps in increasing the demand of new products.
- It helps in maintaining existing customers.
- It creates a trusting attitude among customers. Free sample & functional demonstrations create a faith in the use of merchandise which results in longer sales.

IMPORTANCE TO MIDDLEMEN / DEALERS

- Facilitates longer sale.
- By operating various sales promotional plans, manufacturers provide various types of help such as rebates, trade discounts, gifts, rewards to dealers & resellers.

- A direct relationship between the dealers & the customers are established through the sales promotion techniques which will continue for a long term.
- As the cost of each deal is reduced the profits of dealers are also increased.

CONCLUSION

As a librarian, we should vigorously market and promote our library sources and services. The basic aim of promotion is to know and understand our users in order that the library is able to satisfy those needs in an effective way. A library promotes itself most effectively when staff members consider the many, varied ways in which the library communicates with its customers and potential patron and try to ensure that each encounter reflects the library's mission, goals, and objectives.

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