CUSTOMER AWARENESS AND PERCEPTION ABOUT DTH SERVICES IN KANCHIPURAM DISTRICT TAMIL NADU INDIA

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ABSTRACT

DTH is the acronym for Direct To Home television services. DTH service is the reception of satellite, programmed with a personal dish in every individual home. It is basically a satellite service that would provide the subscribers to view the television services through satellite transmission anywhere in the country. DTH provides uninterrupted signal reception with reduced amount of service breakdowns. DTH offers high picture fineness and sound quality. A customer’s behavior is influenced by the perception and beliefs that he holds of issues and events. This study has attempted to study the perception and beliefs of the customers about the DTH brands and services provided. From the analysis and interpretations it is very clear that as far as the awareness, perception, belief and acceptance is concerned DTH has won an Oscar, but with certain areas of concerns and improvements such as., Packages, choice of channels and charges, Prompt information about the services, High quality signal, Continuity of service etc., DTH offers highly customized packages and add-ons of channels. DTH is a direct competitor of the cable TV since it puts the broadcaster directly in touch with the consumers. Thus this paper explains about list of players in the broadcasting industry as on 2013 and also comparative performance of DTH vs Cable. This paper also analyses the awareness about DTH services in Kanchipuram city and DTH brands and services provided in this regard.

Keywords: Customer; Perception; Direct To Home (DTH); Services; Awareness; Brands

INTRODUCTION

DTH Services in India

Right from its inception during January 2001, DTH is growing throughout India with continuously with expanding technology, reliable infrastructure, trustworthy customer service, interactive services, price-competitive offerings etc. After ten years of the beginning of the LPG Era in 1991, following the liberalization of broadcasting industry there were many networks which are based on the other country’s network STAR TV Network, a Hong
Kong-based DTH for instance, coming into our Mother India. This was followed by launch of ZEE TV, first privately owned Indian channel to broadcast over cable. Indian cable network was Cable TV which was the dominant pay-TV distribution platform in India, with a 75% market share while comparing with the Satellite TV Network with that of 25%. However, the average revenue per satellite subscriber is set to overtake cable TV’s average revenue per satellite. DTH services have proved as a perfect competitor of the Cable TV network. With the increase in the disposable income of the Indian customers, choice for having wide channels options and at the same time to have customized packages by the television households encouraged the growth of DTH services in India from 2001. In the year 2004, Dish TV network was the first private-owned DTH service provider to get the recognition from the Government. Customers gave a overwhelming response to the DTH services. Thus preference, beliefs and perception of the customers on the DTH services had been so important that it has decided its inception, growth and sustainability.

List of players in the Broadcasting industry as on 2013:
- Doordarshan – DD Direct of Prasar Bharati comprising of 33 FTA channels and 12 All India Radio Channels,
- Dish TV of ZEE group,
- Tata Sky – Joint venture between Tata and Rupert Murdoch’s Sky TV,
- Sun Direct of Sun Network,
- BIG TV of Reliance Anil Dhirubhai Ambani Group,
- Airtel digital TV of Bharati telemedia and
- Videocon d2h of Videocon Industries.

This research paper attempts to measure consumer preference for DTH services over cable operators in Kanchipuram District of Tamil Nadu state.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY
1. To explain the awareness level of people for DTH services in Kanchipuram District.
2. To compare the performance of DTH services and Cable TV Connections.
3. To analyze the customer preference for DTH services in Kanchipuram District.
4. To examine the awareness about various DTH brands.

Research Design: Descriptive Research Design
Sampling Methods: Non probability convenience sampling technique
Sample Size: 240
Method of Data Collection: Survey Questionnaire method and Personal Discussion

SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY
- All the respondents of this survey are based from Kanchipuram District only.
- The sample size is limited to 240.
ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATIONS

In an attempt to measure the awareness about the DTH services in Kanchipuram District, 93.33% of the people are aware about the DTH brands and services provided in this regard. This shows that through various medium of communication, people are able to know about the DTH services and service providers.

In addition to the above, 73.33% of respondents use DTH television service and strongly agree to continue with the existing television service.

Awareness about various DTH Brands

Above graph clearly explains that all the Customer are aware about various DTH service brands available in the industry. Tata Sky tops the list followed by Airtel, Sun Direct and Dish TV.

As far as awareness is concerned, almost all the brands have created it but the percentage of it differs. It differs according to the geographical area, channels offered, advertisement, publicity etc.,

Respondents were expressing their views that, the preference for brands varied due to various reasons such as Region-based packages and offers, add-ons services, interactive services, high picture quality, ease of installation and connection, after sales services, dual connection facilities and discounts offered. In addition, respondents are also of the view that, Videocon d2h is gaining advantage of increased customer perception and preference. Reliance BIG TV is reaching above average performance.

Awareness about the Interactive services of DTH services
At the very first outset, we are able to understand that people are very well aware about the DTH services provided. They are aware about various added features and advantages provided by the DTH services over and above the services provided by the Cable TV channels.

When queried whether they will be willing to stick on to the Cable TV just because to watch the Local channels 75.46% of the respondents have said that they would not prefer that. So we are able to understand that people have started adopting the new technology for more benefits and higher utility.

Sources of Data and Information about DTH services

While attempting to understand wherefrom the respondents get information about various DTH brands and Services, 33% of the respondents get from Advertising in Television, Mobile phones, Bill boards etc., 21% of them get the information from their Friends and relatives. Through Newspaper 15% and Internet 18% of them are getting to know about DTH services. The sources of information and publicity chosen by the DTH service providers are right choices but they can increase the intensity for better awareness. This shows that most of the people are getting information from Advertising and Internet. So the DTH market players shall concentrate on these two medium intensely, so as to remove regional imbalances.

DTH Services are Affordable, Economical and Reasonable for its Service
From the above analysis, we could understand the more that 40% percent of the respondents are not sure whether DTH services are cost—effective or not. More than ¼ of the respondents agree that it is economical to invest in DTH services. Only 5% of the respondents are sure that it is cost effective and beneficial to use DTH services. In the other query to compare monthly charges collected by DTH and Cable TV services, both the options have secured 50% of responses which clearly states that on the Cost grounds, DTH services have to improve more to attract more customers into their market. DTH market players have to attempt to reduce cost to change this Customer perception.

**Comparative Preference of DTH vs Cable**

- **Picture Quality:** DTH has got a very strong place in the minds of the customers regarding the Quality of the television services, picture quality, entertainment, Infotainment and all the other added benefits in DTH.

- **After Sales services:** Nearly 80% percent of the respondents are of the opinion that DTH service providers are extending best After sales services. (This does not consider any particular DTH Brand.)

- **Offers and Schemes:** Cable TV service providers does not provide any other add-on services to the customers, on the other hand, DTH service providers extend seasonal discounts, add-on channels, movies, etc.,

- **Number of Channels:** As far as the number of channels are concerned both DTH and Cable has scored a equal score. But this does not take into consideration the 3D and HD channels offered by the DTH service providers. Though channels offered by the DTH service providers are pay channels, these kind of services has a high opinion in the minds of the customers.

- **Installation service:** More than 75 percent of the respondents agree that the installation service provided by the DTH service is good.
• Renewal packages and Starting price: As far as the packages and prices are concerned, the DTH customers are highly satisfied with wide variety of options they are provided with.

• Continuity of services: This factor measures the continuity of services during rainy seasons or even monsoons in summer. Cable TV service will be interrupted by even particular area’s power shut down. Most of the respondents perceive that DTH service would be the better choice for continuity of services.

• Monthly Charges: As far as the monthly charges are concerned, respondents are of the view that both DTH and Cable TV connections charge them with the same amount. This is an Area of concern for DTH service providers.

As far as publicity is concerned, cost-effective services but it need not consider ‘creating awareness about DTH’ as an objective. As per the analysis, 94 percent of the people of Kanchipuram district are aware about the DTH services and its peculiarity.

In addition to the above, nearly 75 percent of the respondents are promising to continue using DTH services. This shows that there is a strong Customer group for the Broadcasting industry. Specifically, Tata Sky and Airtel DTH are topping the list in awareness among the customer and have won their preference too.

CONCLUSION

A customer’s behavior is influenced by the perception and beliefs that he holds of issues and events. This study has attempted to study the awareness, perception and beliefs of the customers about the DTH brands and services provided. This Satellite TV network which connects every drawing room of the Homes in India directly has won loads of success that it has slowly invaded the Cable TV market too. The school of thought typified by Joan Woodward says that, “Technology is the most critical determinant of structure of the organization.” Technology has acted as the prime factor to determine the structure of the broadcasting industry. Customers have started demanding for better technology and

As per the this study it is very clear that as far as the awareness, perception, belief and acceptance is concerned DTH has won an Oscar, but with certain areas of concerns and improvements such as., Packages, choice of channels and charges, Prompt information about the services, High quality signal, Continuity of service etc., The DTH service brands should increase the awareness for DTH services and outlets and help the customers believe that DTH services are cost-effective. This perception will change into belief, then to demand and finally to loyalty.

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