

4Ps Framework of Unorganized Marketing in Pilgrim Centres of Chittoor District in Andhra Pradesh.

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Abstract

Pilgrim Centre shopping complexes are part of unorganized sector. In this study the 4Ps –Product, Price, Promotion and Place, at pilgrim market place are examined and analyzed to show how they operate.

Key words: Unorganized market, pilgrim visits, and motive, sacred, secular and locality special products, Four Ps in unorganized markets, Store layout and image, Niche market, advantages and disadvantages. Survival of pilgrim shopping complexes.

Introduction

Purposes (Motives) of Visiting Pilgrim Places

"Purification of the mind and body is a specific goal of the pilgrimage of high order "said Shri Jagadguru Adi Shankracharya. Since time immemorial, people have been visiting the pilgrim places for various purposes and beliefs. A few of them are cited:

1. To have a peaceful darshan of God (presiding deity)/Goddess,
2. To take a holy dip in the sacred waters of revers/temple tanks to clean the impurities of the mind and soul.
3. To redeem the spiritual vows and worship and make devotional prayers.
4. To attend special events i.e. fairs and festivals at the pilgrim places. (Bramhotshavas).
5. To perform sacred activities viz., sevas, pooja, kalyanotshavam, etc.
6. To see material sights like waterfalls and natural formations.
7. To perform the last rites of deceased family persons as dharma and karma.

There are many pilgrim places in Chittoor District. Only five places are examined for writing this article. They are Tirumala, Tirupati, Tiruchanur, Srikalashthi and Kanipakam which attract people across the country and the world.

Pilgrims willingly spend money to visit their most liked deities. Such visit may take place frequently or occasionally as and when find convenient or at least once in their lifetime. Pilgrims save and accumulate and pay money or material

things to the god or goddess for their wish fulfilment mudupulu (pay for promises) by dropping in a donation vessel.

Transactions at pilgrim places include money and goods. Shopping complex in temple areas are very common sights. Marketing activities taking place at these centres constitute unorganized markets. Shopkeepers sell variety of products to pilgrims, which are Sacred, Secular and Place specific products.

A. FOUR ELEMENTS OF MARKETING MIX: (Theory)

Trading of pilgrim products is closely examined from 4Ps framework perspective. In India temples are usually surrounded with small shops selling these offerings to pilgrims.

Product One of the important "P" of four Ps paradigms is "Product"

A product is anything that can be offered to a market for attention, acquisition, use, or consumption that might satisfy a want or need. Products also include services, such as health care, haircuts; vacations, etc, [1].

Products may be packed or unpacked, branded or unbranded.

Typology of products based on the characteristics of products they are classified as follows.

1. Based on durability: Durable and non-durable
2. Based on consumer: Institutional and individual
3. Based on shelf life : Perishable and storable
4. Based on physical : Tangible and intangible
5. Based on appearance: Stylish and specialty

Classification of products in the pilgrim places

a. Sacred products

For offerings to presiding deity - pilgrims buy fruits, flowers, coconuts, pan, betel nuts, sweets, clothes, ornaments and parts of body made of silver, gold or with any material, etc., . Idols of god made of metal, mud, plaster of paris, screens. Pictures prepared by local artists, kalamkari photos made of special material. No one criticize them.

Secular products

These are concerned with traditions but non-religious matters. Mundane use products like vessels, glass material, plates,

Place specific products

These are originated from a particular place. Not normally available at all places. (Not ubiquitous)

Female fancy products

Bottu (kumkum, sacred powder), katuka (kajal), bangles, chains, and other general fancy goods day to day use and also some special clothes. cosmetics, decorative and other related goods

Playing articles for children

Toys made of plastic, wood, mud, metal, rubber etc.,

Gift giving articles

Surely memorable and only available in this selective locations given as gifts for kith and kin

Mementoes of pilgrim visits

Photos, frames and generally interested articles. Also devotional books, goods, mementoes, articles as token of pilgrimage.

Religious sentimental products

Vibhoothi, kumkuma, turmeric powder, sandal wood.

Male Fancy goods

Hats, spectacles, etc.,

Imitation goods

Make believe jewellery ornaments

Exclusively for unorganized markets

Price negotiated products

Unbranded goods for all ages and genders

Low priced products

Here, the above said articles were kept available for the pilgrims in different sizes, different models and of different

makes. A variety and wide range of items are at display and for sale.

Majority of the goods purchased by the sellers are with an intention to re-sale. These are sold as it was. They are of common man quality.

Retail trading enterprises sells a variety of products to cater to the requirements of a wide spectrum of pilgrims. Sale is made at buyer being aware proposition. Exclusive sale of specialty of products are seen at certain places. But the shopkeepers maintain a rich product lines.

There is no policy for accepting the goods once they are sold. Packaging of products is done at times for nominal charges. Pooja materials for worshipping idols and the deity are commonly sold. Most of the products sold are durable in nature.

Locality specific Goods Sold

Only available at these locations like

- Zilledu (Calotropis gigantea – Arka), (Madar Tree) at kanipakam.
- Items made of brass, kalamkari products at srikalahasti.
- Electronic and ultra models of photos, clocks, durables kitchen ware, photos, dolls, idols at Govindarajaswamy temple.
- Very special kitchen ware, photos, and dolls, idols etc at Tiruchanur.
- Various types of hats, electronic and ultra-models of photos, clocks, other durables kitchenware, photos, dolls, idols at Tirumala.

Price (second key element of marketing)

A well-chosen price aims at these three objectives:

- Achieve the financial goals of the business i.e., profitability.
- Fit the realities of the market place that is customers buy at offered price.
- Support a product's market positioning and be consistent with the other variables in the marketing mix

Price is a function of cost of production, quality, distribution channel, advertising and promotional campaigns in the organized markets.

A low cost price can be a viable substitute for product quality, effective promotions, or an energetic selling effort by retailers.

From the shopkeeper's point of view, price is what customers

are willing and prepared to pay. In economic terms, it is a price that shifts most of the consumer economic surplus to the trader. A good pricing strategy would be the one which could balance between the floor price i.e., the price below which the trader ends up in losses and the cap price ceiling i.e., the price at which the trader experiences a no-demand situation.

It is important to note that “Price” is the only revenue generating element amongst the four Ps, and the rest three are only cost centres. Traders sell low priced products that ensure the survival but not very substantial survival.

The five “R”s of Trading Practices

- a. The right product
- b. Sold at the right price
- c. In the right place
- d. At the right time
- e. From a right source

Popular Pricing Practices in the Unorganized Sector

Based on demand and supply, classified in to:

- a. High prices - skimming prices
- b. Low prices – penetration prices
- c. Bargaining prices
- d. Psychological pricing
- e. Price tags/stickers are used sometimes for selling.

The prices are set to achieve profitability for the seller and acceptance from pilgrim buyers at the same time. They find some tactics for price sensitive or price conscious consumers. Some shoppers try to psychologically impress through computer billing.

Promotion (The third important marketing element is promotion).

In simple words, Promotion means: “Bringing the product into the minds of the customers” since limits to the market lie in minds of customers.

i. Promotion practices in vogue are:

- a. Display in front of shop layout.
- b. Personal selling.
- c. Sales boys and girls are trained for calling the attention of pilgrims to buy.
- d. Sell on explaining benefits.
- e. Traders show honesty in selling.

- f. Learning from mistakes to offer better products.
- g. They add some specials for attracting customers.
- h. They pay attention to the pilgrim psychology

Place (Location - The fourth important marketing element is place).

Goods must be available at the right time and place as and when the consumers need the goods. Since pilgrims need to purchase goods to mark their visits to pilgrim centres, unorganized markets develop at these places.

Retail location is considered to be one of the most important elements in retail marketing strategy, because it is a long-term decision, associated with long-term capital commitment. The selection of retail store location is a very significant decision in retail marketing, because, in store based retailing, good locations are key elements for attracting customers to the outlets. A good location, therefore, can lead to many advantages. Establishing a retail store can influence shopping patterns, traffic and pedestrian flows or the retail structure of a pilgrim complex.

For example, the temple locations have restrictions on setting up large retail formats in shopping centres. The reason for these interventions is the potentially adverse impact of large organized stores on small trading enterprises. Temple and local authorities put restrictions on their entry, locations and operations. The best location of a store attracts more pilgrims.

Shops are allotted by the temple authorities on auction basis Licence. Shopping complex is in the vicinity of temple and it is in the pilgrim corridor.

At Tirumala there is no private property. Size of the shop is determined by number of old trading enterprises in operation which were relocated as per master plan.

At Tirupati, Tiruchanur, Srikalahasthi and Kanipakam both temple authorities' constructed (shops) outlets and private property (shops) exist.

Securing a shop from the temple authorities is by participating in the auction process and as per prior existence rights. At a time two to three years of permission is given. They may get extension when renewal takes place. Such renewals are for the same owner or to their kith and kin. That is how the present system is perpetuating.

Other Ways of Trading Enterprises Coming into Existence

- i. House cum shop (Enterprise).
- ii. Shops only in owned premises.
- iii. In a complex taken on hire or for lease or in auction.

- iv. At unauthorized locations.
- v. Municipal or Gram Panchayat places.

Maintenance

Maintenance of shopping place in aesthetic sense is the top most priority for the trader. As is evident there are no or lower theft possibilities, everyone is ensuring the visibility of his shop.

The available shop premises cater to the needs of sellers and buyers.

Common services

Common security services are provided by privately employed security guards and local authorities. Cleaning and Sanitation services are also made available by both private and public scavengers in the temple complex areas.

Trader Difficulties

There are a few difficulties faced by the traders. They display products not only in the shop built up area but also encroaching the path ways in front of their shops for lack of sufficient space.

There is no free room for customers to enter in to and spend some time in the shop while being involved in the buying process. In adverse climatic conditions enterprise owners find it difficult to protect goods displayed in the shop and extended places.

Image building of the shop in the place is very limited due to space constraint.

Since no parking place is available, only pedestrian pilgrim customers can afford to purchase in most of the centres.

Store Image

A store image is defined in the minds by both functional qualities and psychological attributes. It is based on physical, personnel, product, price, service, lighting, ventilation, hospitality and other key factors.

Seller have to carefully plan in the floor space available and the orderly arrangement of individual products as well as display of majority of products they sell. This will result in visual excitement and motivate buyers to make quick and positive buying decision. There is a limited choice for traders in store image building.

Niche Markets (Micro Marketing).

Niche markets refer to concentrating all marketing efforts on a small but specific and well defined segment of the markets. Niches do not 'exist' but are 'created' by identifying needs, wants, and requirements that are being addressed poorly or not at all by other trading enterprises and developing and delivering goods or services to satisfy them. As a strategy,

niche marketing is aimed at being a big fish in a small pond instead of being a small fish in a big pond [2].

Niche marketing is a specialized market offering focused on the needs of a tightly-defined market segment.

Pilgrim niche marketing can be extremely cost-effective offering a product or service for a select demographic or retailing group. Further taking on a niche i.e., pilgrim market can be a low-risk way to grow business, as long as one keeps in mind following several important rules.

The benefits promised must have special appeal to the market niche. Identifying the unique needs of potential pilgrim customers and looking for ways to tailor pilgrim products or service is what is needed.

When approaching pilgrim market niche, it's imperative to speak the language of pilgrims. In other words, one should be prepared to communicate with the target group as an understanding member and not as a stranger. It is still vital to understand niche's key issues that are how pilgrims prefer to communicate with traders.

For example, enterprises targeting women pilgrim customers who appreciate to be provided more with content information so that they can comprehensively evaluate the products and the makers behind them. To successfully increase sales from the new niche, traders need to change the way they communicate with them by designing their marketing message.

Spadework must be done before entering into pilgrim niche markets, that is:

- i. About assessing competitors in the organized market
- ii. To determine how products in the unorganized market can be positioned

Organized /unorganized markets in non-pilgrim locations may have not found the key to providing products the pilgrim niche wants to buy. Another possibility is that they have tried and failed to penetrate the pilgrim market segment. Hence, trader should test market new products to gauge the markets receptiveness.

Risks in Pilgrim niche market

- a. The major risk is that the traders are reliant upon a relatively small market.
- b. They do not have much diversity of revenue streams.
- c. To some extent, traders are somewhat vulnerable to market downturns, new competitive entrants elsewhere and
- d. Substantial changes in the market environment.

Niche strategy is pursued braving the risk for the following obvious advantages.

Advantages for Niche Marketers.

- i. Successful pilgrim niche marketers can dominate their targeted small segment market to such an extent that they “own it” and virtually have no competition and the threat of new entrants is also very low.
- ii. Pilgrim niche marketers build strong general relationships with many of the pilgrims over a period of time. (Though repeat visit chances of pilgrims is very less)
- iii. Trading generally does not experience major fluctuations in performance, ensuring business stability.
- iv. As the trading enterprises are also usually experts in their field, they constantly add to their skill sets and capabilities.
- v. Because the niche markets are well defined, the enterprise stay focused and committed to their core business.
- vi. Niche marketers profit margins grow because pilgrim buyers are less likely to consider the price as a determinant attribute

Pilgrim niche marketers do generally tend to be small enterprises, mainly due to the fact that they have deliberately focused upon a narrowly defined pilgrim segment.

Thus trading enterprises operating in pilgrim places have

most of the attributes of “niche” markets, guaranteeing their continued substantial survival.

Results and Discussion

Economic transactions at pilgrim places take place in temple shopping complex. They are spotted in popular pilgrim places in India. Marketing activities taking place at these places constitute unorganized markets. Unorganized markets have a very long existence. Shopkeepers sell varieties of Sacred, Secular and Place specific products to pilgrims. As the four Ps are operating in a different way at the temple location shops cannot compete with the organized markets. Their continued economic survival with efficient performance can be achieved by providing suitable training to the shopkeepers.

Conclusion

Thus, the four Ps are operating in a different way at the temple location shops as compared to organized markets. Enterprises cannot compete with the organized markets. There is a possibility to train up the shopkeepers, improving for their existence and economic survival. This Unorganized markets have a very long existence. Their continuity with efficient performance ensures their substantial survival.

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