BRAND IMAGE – A NEW MARKETING STRATEGY WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO DINDIGUL LOCKS

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ABSTRACT

Small scale industries play a vital role in economic development. In Dindigul lock manufacturing industry provides job opportunity to 3000 families in Dindigul district. Brand image maintains the marketing opportunity. In marketing, trust can be defined as the “willingness to be vulnerable”. This willingness to be vulnerable can be called as ‘customer’s trust’. Trust makes the customer “willingness to be vulnerable” to what the brand promises. Brand image is the perceptions and beliefs held by customers, as reflected in the association held in the customers’ memory. In the Dindigul lock has the brand image and wide scope of business opportunities. This paper helps to focus the marketing feasibility of Dindigul locks. It helps to support the units and attracts the new entrants.

KEYWORDS: Dindigul locks, marketing feasibility, brand image.

INTRODUCTION

Brand image is a set of beliefs held at a specific brand. It’s nothing but the customer’s perceptions about the product. If the organisation creates its brand image, the organisation captures the market. Now-a-days marketing means creating the brand image which completes the marketing activities. Lock manufacturing industry is one of the most important, popular and employment oriented traditional cottage industries in India. The Dindigul locks are in demand because of their special attributes like quality, re-processing facility, key facility and attractiveness. Dindigul lock manufacturing units are more than 100 years old and are spread over more villages in the district such as Paaraipatti, Mattupatti, Nallampatti, Nagalnagar, Perumalkovilpatti, Balamarthupatti, Kammalapatti and so on. Hand-made locks have an international reputation. Dindigul locks had the high level of brand image. Dindigul lock manufacturing industry does not involve the marketing activities. The units are fall in small scale industry, so they are not spent amount for marketing activities. But they have high marketing potential for the product.
Brand Image:

Brand image defines the impression in the consumer’s mind of a brand’s total personality. Brand image is developed overtime through advertising campaigns with a consistent theme, and is authenticated through the consumer’s direct experience. Brand image should be positive, unique and instant. Brand images can be strengthened using brand communications like advertising, packaging, word of mouth publicity, other promotional tools etc.,

Brand image has not to be created, but is automatically formed. Brand image is actually brand content, when the consumers purchase the product; they are also purchasing its image. Brand image enhances the goodwill and brand value of an organisation.

Brand Awareness:

Brand awareness is the customer’s ability to identify the brand under different conditions, as reflected by their brand recognition or recall performance. Brand image is the perceptions and beliefs held by customers, as reflected in the association held in the customers’ memory. Therefore, one of the significant goals of any business should be to build up brand awareness in an effective and cost efficient manner. Customers tend to make purchase decisions based on peer recommendations and direct experience, as well as traditional advertising methods. That is why, it is necessary to build brand awareness strategies by instilling trust among customers. This trust must be achieved through creditability, rather than just a catchy advertising campaign. Promotional marketing involving a one to one component is proving increasingly effective in building trust and acquiring new customers. Online brand awareness strategies are used frequently, albeit with differing levels of success.

Dindigul Locks:

Dindigul locks were famous for their traditional design, safety and quality raw materials. Twin keys or three keys for single lock and locks with multi-locking system were some specialties. Even government departments, temples and godowns have been using Dindigul locks. Some of the special features in the Dindigul Locks are as follows,

1. The craftsmen claim that the precision lever mechanism of their locks is unpick able.
2. The shackles are meticulous in design and offer greater resistance to anyone who tries to break in.
3. The levers are so designed that they have a greater degree of non-interchange ability of keys. There’s a combination of proper key-holes to suit male, female, round or flat type of keys.
4. A few locks are designed with unique and remarkable synthesis of traditional design and compatibility with foreign keys.
5. The motto of the lock manufacturing units in the cluster is, “Our customers are trustful and thieves are fearful”.
6. Complete manual assembling with each lock having its own unique key code.
Review of Literature:

The Hindu (2009) several locking units have been functioning as cottage industries solely depending on commission agents to market their products. Dindigul locks were famous for their traditional design, safety and quality raw materials. Twin keys or three keys for single lock and locks with multi-locking system were some specialties. Even government departments, temples and godowns have been using Dindigul locks.

National Manufacturing competitiveness programme (2006) gave the guidelines that Marketing, a strategic tool for business development, is critical for the growth and survival of MSMEs. Due to lack of information, scarcity of resources and unorganized ways of selling / marketing, MSME sector often faces problems in exploring new markets and retaining existing ones.

Desai (1983) also stated that rapid industrialization in India depends on the growth of small scale industries. Most of the small scale industries are operating under certain handicaps like shortage of raw materials, low levels of technical knowledge and counseling, poor infrastructure, inadequate capital and credit facilities, improper distribution system, lack of facilities for market analysis, research and development. They are also weak in marketing their products beyond their localities especially in international markets.

Pandiya.D.K., Brajesh Kumar et al., (2012) illustrates in marketing, trust can be defined as the “willingness to be vulnerable”. That, is the customer, at some level, has to be willing to offer the brand an opportunity to influence his/her behavior. This willingness to be vulnerable can be called as ‘customer’s trust’. Trust makes the customer “willingness to be vulnerable” to what the brand promises. Brand awareness is the customers ability to identify the brand under different conditions, as reflected by their brand recognition or recall performance. Brand image is the perceptions and beliefs held by customers, as reflected in the association held in the customers’ memory.

Objectives of the Study:

The main objective of the study is to analyse the Brand image of lock manufacturing units in Dindigul district.

Need for the Study:

Dindigul town has been famously associated with iron locks, iron safe of good quality and good durability. A lock manufacturing unit under co-operative sector is functioning here. Dindugul locks are sold to local, national, and international markets. Dindigul city is also known as lock city. Lock manufacturing units, one of the traditional and prestigious industries of the district, has been providing jobs to over 3,000 families in Dindigul and several villages around it. In olden days, more than 5000 units were spread over the District. But now only 500 units are spread over the District. It is necessary to focus the brand image of the locks and helps to rehabilitation of the unit.
There is no documentation of the method of manufacturing and even the drawings of the locks do not exist. The entire process is based on the craftsmen's memory, most of who have been engaged in this business for many years. The lock cluster did not use the promotional activities. In the globalisation, there are available in variety of locks in the market. It is necessary to analyse the brand image and marketing activities of lock manufacturing units. This paper helps to focus the brand image of the locks and analyse the brand image how to pull up the marketing activities.

Methodology:
In the present study, both primary and secondary data have used. The secondary data have collected from the reports, magazines, newspapers and websites. Primary data have collected from the lock manufacturing units functioning in Dindigul District. For the descriptive type of researches, the best-suited research approach is survey method. From a sample, data is collected and different magnitudes measured with respect to the whole population. The researcher has used structured questionnaire for collecting primary data from the Dindigul lock manufacturing units. The questionnaire dealt the demographic details and marketing prospects.

Scope of the Study:
The study covers only the lock units operating in the Dindigul town only and the period covered is 2011-2012.

Brand image of the Lock Industry:
Dindigul lock manufacturing industry has the high level of brand image. Dindigul is also known as ‘lock city’. There is no need for advertisement, displays and exhibitions. Without promotional activities, they marketed their products efficiently. They are involved in direct marketing. Customers have ordered based on their specifications. The workers have produced based on customer’s expectations. Sometimes they soled their products to the agents who ordered bulky. Plenty of locks available in the market, people gives first preference for quality and select the dindigul locks. It shows the prestigious image. For this purpose, analyze the way to market the locks, customers, mode of distribution, maintaining the brand image and competitors.

Number of lock Manufactured:
In Dindigul lock manufactures, sometimes produced 1000 number of locks. Normally, they produced above 1,00,000 locks per month. The production is depends upon the number of labors, form of organization and working hours of the unit.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of lock manufactured per month, (in Numbers)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frequency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below 1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25,001-75,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75,001-25,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.25,001-75,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>above 1,75,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Inference:

In the above table explains 22 percent of units produced below 1000 number of locks, 14 percent of units produced 25,000 to 75,000 of locks per month, 29 percent of units produced 75,000-1,25,000 of locks, 20 percent of units produced 1,25,000 to 1,75,000 locks and 15 percent of units produced above 1,75,000 locks per month. The frequency is explained in the following bar chart.

Source: Primary data

Way to Market the Product:

Way of marketing is focused how the manufactures sold their products. Dindigul lock manufactures marketed their products by the way of co-operative society, by self, by agent, by wholesalers, by other source. In Dindigul, lock co-operative society has run. They were sold their products to individual specification. The agents purchased the locks from manufactures and sale it to individuals. Some times manufacturer sold their products to wholesalers and some other sources.
Table: 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The way to marketing your product</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>by co-operative society</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by self</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>36.2</td>
<td>36.2</td>
<td>40.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by agent</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>34.4</td>
<td>34.4</td>
<td>75.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by wholesalers</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>22.1</td>
<td>22.1</td>
<td>97.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>any other please specify</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>276</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Primary data

Inference:

It is clear from the data given in the Table 1 that 4.3% respondents sell their locks to co-operative society, 36.2% respondents markets their products by self, 34% respondents depends upon the agent, 22% respondents sell their products to wholesalers and 3% of respondents markets their product any other source. Here, it can be safely said that the lock manufactures markets their products by self.

Mode of Distribution:

In the Dindigul lock manufactures distribute their products by focus easy distribution, low work, high price, and inadequate selling knowledge, any other reason. From the above factors are cross tabulated with form of organisation. In the three type of forms of organisation is there. There are Sole proprietorship, Partnership firm, Private Ltd. Company.
Inference:

$H_0$: There is no significant association between the mode of distribution and forms of organisation.

The above test significance level is less than .05, so the null hypothesis is rejected. The Kruskal-Wallis test reveals that the significant relationship between the mode of distribution and forms of organisation.

Geographic Market Coverage:

In the Dinidigul locks are very popular in India and Foreign also. But, some lock makers are not interested to sell their product to abroad. They focused only the local customers. Some manufactures produced their locks for temples, hospitals and government offices. Their geographic market coverage is different from to one another.
In the above table explains the market coverage of the respondents. The lock manufactures sell their products to local customers, other districts, within Tamilnadu and foreign countries. 11% of
respondents sell their products to local customers, 11% of respondents sell their products to within the district, 1% of respondents select within industry, 4% of respondents select foreign countries, 10% of respondents select local customers and within the district, 4% select local customers and within Tamilnadu, 7% people selects local customers and foreign country, 6% of respondents selects other districts in Tamilnadu and within India, 4% of respondents select other districts and foreign countries, 6% of respondents select within Tamilnadu and foreign country, 9% of respondents select local customers, other Districts in T.N., & Within India, 4% of respondents select local customers, within India, & foreign countries, 3% of respondents select other Districts in T.N, within India, foreign countries, 6% of respondents select local customers, other Districts in T.N, within India, foreign countries, 12% of respondents select local customers, other Districts in T.N, within India, & foreign country.

**Chi-Square Tests:**

It is important to analyze the relationship between the market specification and number of lock manufactured per month. It is one of the assumptions maximum number of lock manufactured units focused wide level of geographical coverage. For this purpose, the researcher determine the hypothesis,

\[ H_0 \text{- There is no significant association between the market specification and number of lock manufactured.} \]

**Table: 5**

**Specify the Market * Number of lock manufactured per month, (in Numbers)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chi-Square Tests</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Chi-Square</td>
<td>264.852(^a)</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likelihood Ratio</td>
<td>278.913</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linear-by-Linear Association</td>
<td>.035</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.851</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N of Valid Cases</td>
<td>276</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. 60 cells (80.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .58.

Source: Primary data.

**Inference**

According to the Chi-square test, relationship between two is identified. The chi-square Asymp.sig. is greater than 0.05 at percent level of significance, the null hypotheses (\(H_0\)) is accepted. So, there is no significant association between the market specifications and number of locks manufactured.
Reasons for maintaining the Brand Image:

Dindigul city called as lock city. Dindigul lock manufacturing industry has run in the conventional industry in the area. Dindigul locks prefer by their superior quality. Other district people, other state people and foreigners are preferred for their high quality. In the Dindigul lock manufacturing industry, locks produced by their customer opinion. Based on their customer view, manufacturers produced their product. Lever facility, key facility and other needy facilities would have attached on the basis customer specification. For this purpose, analyse the four factors.

H₀ – There is no significant relationship between the distribution of Heritage, Quality, Direct Marketing and Customer satisfaction.

Inference

In the above table reveals the Asymptotic significance level is less than .05, the null hypothesis is rejected. So, there is relationship between the distribution factors of Heritage, Quality, Direct Marketing and customer satisfaction.

Distribution Factors and Forms of Organization- Relationship:

It is important to analyse the relationship between the distribution factors and forms of organization. In the three types of forms of organisation is there. There are Sole proprietorship, Partnership firm, Private Ltd. Company. For this purpose, the Kruskal- Wallish test used for analysed the hypothesis.
Table:7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Null Hypothesis</th>
<th>Test</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>Decision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The distribution of Heritage is the same across categories of Form of organization.</td>
<td>Independent-Samples Kruskal-Wallis Test</td>
<td>.515</td>
<td>Retain the null hypothesis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The distribution of Quality is the same across categories of Form of organization.</td>
<td>Independent-Samples Kruskal-Wallis Test</td>
<td>.023</td>
<td>Reject the null hypothesis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The distribution of Direct Marketing is the same across categories of Form of organization.</td>
<td>Independent-Samples Kruskal-Wallis Test</td>
<td>.135</td>
<td>Retain the null hypothesis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The distribution of Customer satisfaction is the same across categories of Form of organization.</td>
<td>Independent-Samples Kruskal-Wallis Test</td>
<td>.032</td>
<td>Reject the null hypothesis.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Asymptotic significance are displayed. The significance level is .05.

Source: Primary data

Inference

There is no significant relationship between the distribution of heritage and the form of organisation.

There is significant relationship between the distribution of quality and the form of organisation.

There is no significant relationship between the distribution of direct marketing and the form of organisation.

There is significant relationship between the distribution of customer satisfaction and the form of organisation.

Findings:

1. Majority of the units produced 75,000-1, 00,000 locks per month. Below 1000 number of locks produced units came under the second place.
2. Majority of the respondents preferred self marketing. Agents depended producer came under the second place.
3. Mode of distribution did not relate the form of organisation. The producer selected the mode of distribution based on their interest.
4. Majority of respondents selected the four geographic areas such as local customers, within District, within Tamil nadu and foreign countries. There is no relationship between the number of locks manufactured per month and the market coverage.

5. There is relationship between the four distributional factors such as heritage, quality, direct marketing and customer satisfaction. The heritage and direct marketing factors did not related on the form of organisation. But, quality and customer satisfaction has the relationship with the form of organisation.

Suggestions:

1. Vocational training may extended to Dindigul rural community that enables them to understand the production process.

2. Skill development can do in polytechnics and industrial training institutes. Skills put to work in training-cum-production workshops.

3. More vigorous marketing strategy is also under consideration to tap on the export potential of Dindigul locks by the various marketing channels and participation in international exhibitions.

4. Guidance Cell set up to handle the various problems of lock manufactures all over the District. Programmes for encouraging lock manufactures among men can extend at local level.

5. Government will take needy steps to pull the new entrants of labours for utilizing the marketing viability.

Conclusions:

The government of India has taken conscious efforts to substantially enhance the spirit of traditional workers. Traditional workers perform an important role in building the real backbone of a nation’s economy. Indian traditional brands are facing a serious challenge to survive and companies are forced to redesign their marketing strategies for effective marketing and penetration in markets. But Dindigul lock manufacturing units have high level of marketing feasibility. Dindigul locks have the high level of brand image and it creates wide level of market coverage.

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