

Training to Improve Customer Satisfaction through Product Quality Enhancement

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ABSTRACT

Technological advancements, including those in telecommunications, are rapidly evolving, and mobile phones have become essential tools for various activities, supported by prepaid cards for communication and internet use. In Indonesia, with a population of approximately 261 million and around 231 million mobile phone users, the demand for reliable telecommunication services is significant. Telkomsel, a major telecommunications provider in Indonesia, plays a pivotal role in this sector. Despite high product quality, Telkomsel faces the challenge of maintaining and enhancing customer satisfaction amid rising competition. This study investigates how improving product quality can impact customer satisfaction, focusing on Telkomsel's internet service packages. Using methods such as Coaching and Deep Interviews with students from the State Islamic University of North Sumatra, the research identifies key strategies for enhancing service quality. Results indicate that consistent service quality, competitive pricing, customer feedback integration, and responsive customer service are crucial for maintaining customer loyalty. The study concludes that Telkomsel must continuously improve its service quality to meet evolving consumer expectations and remain competitive.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Technological advancements occur annually, including developments in telecommunications. Mobile phones have become a fundamental necessity for supporting various work activities, enabling the operation of many functions (Yushardi et al., 2022). Prepaid cards are products offered by companies to complement the functionality of phones for communication and internet browsing. With a population of approximately 261 million, Indonesia has around 231 million mobile phone users, making it one of the countries with the highest number of users globally, ranked sixth according to data from The Spectator Index cited by Supriyadi (2018). In 2015, the number of mobile phone

subscribers was recorded at 338 million according to information from BPS (Badan Pusat Statistik) (Ginting, 2019). In addition to serving as a communication tool, mobile phones also have the capability to send SMS, share data, send photos, and access the internet. According to BPS data (2017), the number of mobile phone subscribers in Indonesia increased from 249.8 million in 2011 to 435.11 million in 2017, showing a rise of 49.62% (Putra, 2020). Wireless communication technology in mobile phones has drastically transformed the modern telecommunications landscape, making phones so popular that their numbers surpass the global population (Jagetia, 2022).

Mobile phones' benefits are felt by users when equipped with prepaid cards. Prepaid cards, especially internet data packages, now come in various price ranges according to the quality provided. The quality of a product is crucial as it directly impacts the product's performance and its acceptance in the market. Higher product quality generally leads to greater consumer preference. Telkomsel, as one of the largest telecommunications service providers in Indonesia, plays a crucial role in meeting the communication needs of the public, including in Medan, a major city with significant economic growth. According to a survey by the Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association (APJII), Telkomsel was the most widely used cellular operator in the country at the beginning of 2023. Out of 8,510 respondents, 40.27% used Telkomsel, Simpati, Kartu Halo, or byU, while 33.4% used Indosat Ooredoo Hutchison or Three, 21% used XL Axiata or Axis, and 5.32% used Smartfren. Most respondents (47.5%) chose their cellular operator based on the strongest signal availability in their area, with others selecting based on internet package prices and attractive promotions (26.8%), pre-existing numbers (18.4%), ease of purchasing data packages (6.5%), and other reasons (0.8%). At the beginning of 2023, the majority of respondents (42.2%) spent between Rp10,000 and Rp50,000 per month on mobile internet, and most (49.2%) felt that mobile internet costs were becoming increasingly expensive. This survey was conducted by APJII with 8,510 respondents across 38 provinces in Indonesia from Aceh to Papua Pegunungan, using multistage random sampling and interviews with questionnaires. The data has a margin of error of 1.14% with a confidence level of 95%.

To achieve success in competition, a company must meet its goal of creating and retaining customers. To reach this goal, companies must strive to produce and deliver what consumers need (Abdurrahman, 2016). Prepaid mobile cards have long been recognized by the public as a supportive communication tool for mobile phones, with various brands emerging, including Telkomsel, XL, Three, Indosat Ooredoo, Smartfren, and Bolt. The proliferation of service providers has created competition within the telecommunications sector. Telkomsel, a private company providing information and telecommunications services, remains well-regarded among consumers. Telkomsel's efforts to retain its customers extend beyond product functionality to include brand quality, network coverage, and internet speed, which contribute to customer satisfaction (Telkomsel, 2018).

Similar to humans, brands are also perceived to have personalities, and consumers often select brands that align with their own personalities. Brand Personality is significant as it adds value to a brand in the eyes of consumers and influences customer satisfaction (Rossa, Kumadji, & Hidayat, 2015). Kotler and Armstrong (2008:273) define product quality as the performance quality of a product in fulfilling its function. Companies offering high-quality products create customer satisfaction, with product quality being free from defects and meeting standards (targets, observations, and measurements). Quality reflects all aspects of a product offering that benefits consumers. Product quality is often associated with the product's price (Tjiptono et al., 2008:67). The quality of Telkomsel's offerings, such as signal strength, internet speed, and customer service, is a key factor in determining customer satisfaction. Satisfied customers are more likely to remain loyal and become

long-term clients, which can increase the company's revenue and profits. However, with rising competition in the telecommunications industry, Telkomsel must continually enhance its product quality to meet consumer expectations and needs. Aggressive competitors offering various attractive promotions and improved services present ongoing challenges for Telkomsel in maintaining and boosting customer satisfaction.

2. METHOD

This article uses the Coaching method to enhance understanding and practices related to product quality and customer satisfaction. The training can cover material on marketing techniques, product performance evaluation, and strategies to maintain the product's appeal in the market. It also provides direct guidance to Telkomsel marketers to apply the knowledge and strategies learned. This approach allows for practical application of the training to address existing issues and improve performance. Additionally, Deep Interview is necessary to obtain in-depth information about individual perspectives, experiences, and needs related to product quality and customer satisfaction. This method provides detailed insights into how customers and marketers view Telkomsel's products and services. The data in this article is based on primary data, with the population being students from the State Islamic University of North Sumatra and a sample size of 30 individuals.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Based on the community service results, although Telkomsel's internet service packages are already known for their high quality, the company recognizes the need for a deeper understanding of how product quality enhancement can impact customer satisfaction. While the high quality of the product has contributed to significant purchase interest, the company needs to implement more effective strategies to maintain the product's appeal in the market. To address this, a training program titled "Product Quality Enhancement and Customer Satisfaction Management for Telkomsel Internet Service Packages" was designed to improve marketers' understanding of the importance of product quality in attracting and retaining consumers. This training includes an analysis of how product quality improvements affect customer satisfaction and marketing techniques that can leverage quality to increase product appeal. Additionally, the training teaches marketers how to evaluate product performance and make necessary adjustments to keep quality competitive and aligned with consumer-perceived value. The results of the training indicate that with a better understanding of the role of quality, Telkomsel marketers can maintain high purchase interest and optimize sales. The program also provides additional insights for the company on how to use product quality strategically to build consumer loyalty and enhance customer satisfaction. With this strategy, Telkomsel is expected to continue growing and better meet market needs.

Discussion

This finding indicates that companies should focus on improving product quality if they wish to enhance customer satisfaction. High product quality plays a crucial role in building customer loyalty and creating a positive market image. In an increasingly competitive context, consumers have numerous choices and are more likely to select products that not only meet their needs but also provide additional value. Therefore, companies that invest in improving product quality will be better positioned to attract and retain customers. Investment in research and development (R&D) is a key

aspect of enhancing product quality. Through R&D, companies can identify market trends, understand customer needs, and develop innovative products.

Additionally, R&D helps in improving production efficiency and reducing costs, which can ultimately enhance profit margins. For example, by adopting new technologies, companies can produce goods more quickly and with fewer defects, contributing to the overall improvement in quality. Quality control is also an essential element that should not be overlooked. A rigorous quality control process ensures that every product produced meets the established standards. By implementing systematic testing procedures and utilizing customer feedback, companies can identify issues early and make necessary improvements. This not only reduces the rate of product returns but also enhances customer satisfaction, as they feel they are receiving products that meet their expectations. Regular customer satisfaction surveys are also crucial. These surveys provide direct insight into consumer perceptions of the products offered. By collecting data from customers, companies can understand which aspects of their products need improvement and what is already working well.

Additionally, surveys can reveal unmet consumer expectations, allowing companies to continuously adapt to changing market preferences. Customer feedback should be regarded as a valuable source of information for continuous improvement. In the dynamic business world, change is inevitable. Therefore, companies must be responsive to the feedback they receive. This might include changes in product design, enhancements in features, or adjustments in after-sales service. By implementing changes based on this feedback, companies not only demonstrate that they listen to their customers but also show their commitment to providing the best quality. Furthermore, it is important for companies to build strong relationships with their customers. Open and transparent communication can enhance trust and customer loyalty. For instance, companies could hold dialogue sessions with customers to discuss product quality and gather direct input. Through this approach, companies can create a more engaged and loyal customer community.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this article, to enhance customer satisfaction through product quality improvement in Telkomsel's internet service packages, the company needs to implement several strategic measures. First, Telkomsel must ensure that the internet service packages offered provide speeds and stability that meet users' needs. By regularly upgrading network infrastructure and technology, Telkomsel can ensure consistent and reliable service. Additionally, offering a variety of packages with competitive pricing that fits customers' budgets, such as special packages for students or budget-friendly plans, can attract more customers. Integrating customer feedback into product development is also crucial to understand what users need and want. Providing responsive and friendly customer service will strengthen customer trust and satisfaction, ensuring that any issues or inquiries are addressed promptly and effectively. With these measures, Telkomsel can improve the quality of its internet services, which in turn will enhance customer satisfaction and loyalty.

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