

Training on How to Optimize Product Quality to Increase Purchasing Decisions

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to conduct training to improve product quality on consumer purchasing decisions for MR D.I.Y. products. The method used involved training with MR D.I.Y. employee and the branch manager of MR D.I.Y. on Jalan Pancing. The results indicate that inadequate product quality negatively impacts consumer interest. Consumers tend to feel hesitant about products that do not meet their expectations, which affects brand loyalty. Therefore, it is crucial for MR D.I.Y. to enhance quality control standards and ensure that every product sold undergoes a stringent verification process. By focusing on improving product quality, MR D.I.Y. can strengthen its market position and build positive long-term relationships with its consumers. This research provides practical implications for management to pay more attention to product quality in their marketing strategies.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The retail business in Indonesia has been experiencing growth year after year, making retail very easy to find today. Various types of products and services at low prices dominate the Indonesian market. Currently, the retail industry remains one of the major supply chains for society, as retail meets a significant portion of daily needs. Retail is a crucial part of the distribution chain and acts as the final stage of that distribution process. Through retail, products can be directly accessed by consumers. The performance of the retail sector has a significant contribution to driving economic growth. The retail sector is a major driver of household consumption, contributing 53.56% to the gross domestic product (GDP) (source: DDTC News 2022). It can be concluded that the retail industry significantly contributes to Indonesia's economy (Kawulusan et al., 2023).

MR D.I.Y. is one of the most popular forms of retail business today. MR D.I.Y. is a retailer of household equipment and accessories based in Malaysia. The company also operates MR DIY, MR

TOY, MR DOLLAR, and DIY Express stores. The company sells products in at least ten categories, including hardware, household appliances, electronics, furniture, automotive accessories, stationery and sports items, toys, gifts, computer or mobile accessories, and jewelry and cosmetics. MR D.I.Y. offers an average of 18,000 product variations at relatively low prices. MR D.I.Y. opened its first store in Indonesia in 2017 and now has over 700 stores spread across the country (Kawulusan et al., 2023).

Generally, every business aims to seek profit, and this goal cannot be separated from marketing activities. Marketing activities are now increasingly focused on customer satisfaction. Marketing itself should be planned in advance to better target consumers. Potential consumers will consider various factors, including product quality, which makes them very satisfied and more likely to choose our products over competitors (Martini et al., 2021). Therefore, stimulation from the company is essential as it is one of the important factors that can influence the purchasing decision of MR D.I.Y. products. Each company must design the right strategy to win these purchasing decisions.

Consumer desires are influenced by the most important factor in purchasing decisions (Aldini et al., 2022), based on the quality of the products offered by the company, which is found in the marketing mix. The marketing mix includes product, promotion, distribution, and price, and these factors offered by the company significantly affect consumer purchasing decisions (Barcelona et al., 2019). Among the various factors in purchasing decisions that interest researchers, product quality is noteworthy. Product quality is something that can satisfy desires and needs offered to the market to be owned, noticed, used, or consumed (Firmansyah & Haryanto, 2017).

Product quality is also one of the important aspects considered by potential buyers when purchasing something, whether it be goods or services. Thus, companies must prepare high-quality products so that these products become more popular compared to competing products. If a company possesses this quality, the product will meet the needs and expectations of potential buyers when deciding to purchase an item. To enhance high-quality products, companies must continuously work hard to improve and create new innovations regarding product quality in the purchasing decisions of potential consumers (Sari & Prihartono, 2021).

The consumer's purchasing decision regarding a product is crucial because making a purchase leads to post-purchase evaluation (Kotler, 2007: 201). According to Kotler and Keller (2007: 203), measuring product quality includes: product choice, brand choice, dealer choice, purchase quantity, timing of purchase, and payment method (Fatlahah, 2013). According to Kotler & Armstrong (2001: 226), the purchasing decision is the stage in the purchase decision-making process where consumers actually buy. Kotler and Keller (2007: 203) identify six decisions made by buyers: product choice, brand choice, dealer choice, purchase quantity, timing of purchase, and payment method. Research by Zsofia Kenesei & Sarah Todd (2003) indicates that purchase frequency is an indicator for measuring the level of purchasing decision-making. In this study, the measurement of purchasing decisions includes purchase quantity and purchase frequency (Fatlahah, 2013). Kotler describes in (Aldoko, Suharyono, & Yuliyanto, 2016) that a purchasing decision is about buying a highly desired brand, although two components may exist between purchase goals and purchase choices. Philip Kotler & Kevin Lane Keller (1997) detail several indicators in determining buyer choice, including problem recognition, information search, alternative evaluation, purchase decision, and post-purchase behavior.

2. METHOD

This service method uses Deep Interviews and Educational Outreach (Education and Training) to determine whether the quality of products marketed by MR D.I.Y. can influence consumers, especially students at UINSU, in their purchasing decisions. Through in-depth interviews with the Branch Manager of MR D.I.Y. on Jalan Pancing and consumers, deeper insights can be gained regarding

consumer perceptions of the product quality from MR D.I.Y., which is categorized as less satisfactory, and the issues faced by the Branch Manager, who has yet to maximize their product quality, resulting in lower consumer satisfaction. The population for this service is UINSU students who visit MR D.I.Y. The sample for this service consists of 30 people to group.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Through the service conducted over 15 days and involving 30 consumers, it was found that consumers had a negative perception. It was noted that the Branch Manager of MR D.I.Y. was not meticulous in checking product quality before marketing, which affected consumer interest in MR D.I.Y. as consumers sometimes received non-functional or damaged items. Therefore, education and training for the Branch Manager and staff of MR D.I.Y. are necessary, focusing on the theme "Improving Product Quality and Customer Service." This training will cover topics such as product quality standards, quality control, handling customer complaints, and effective communication. The aim of this training is for MR D.I.Y. to pay more attention to the quality of the products they market.

In conclusion, through the training and collaboration that have been carried out, it can be observed that MR D.I.Y. has become more aware and diligent in checking the quality of the products they market. By ensuring the quality of MR D.I.Y. products, this positively impacts consumer purchasing decisions. Consequently, this will have a positive effect on MR D.I.Y.'s sales levels and brand image.

Discussion

Product quality is a key element in marketing strategy and product development. In a highly competitive business environment, ensuring that products are of high quality is one of the most effective ways to differentiate from competitors. When a company successfully maintains high-quality standards, it not only attracts more customers but also strengthens its brand and enhances customer loyalty. This is important because customers who are satisfied with product quality are likely to make repeat purchases and recommend the products to others. Thus, good product quality directly contributes to increased sales and strengthens the company's market position.

Consumer purchasing decisions are heavily influenced by their perceptions of product quality. Consumers tend to choose products that they perceive to have higher value compared to alternatives. This assessment is often based on how well the product meets their needs and expectations, including aspects such as durability, reliability, functionality, and additional features offered. Therefore, focusing on improving product quality becomes crucial for management. It is essential to understand consumer preferences and expectations so that companies can adjust their products to better fit market needs.

Moreover, the strong relationship between product quality and purchasing decisions reflects the importance of quality management throughout the value chain. This encompasses not only the production process but also the selection of raw materials, supplier management, and after-sales service. A high-quality product results from a well-managed series of processes, starting from the selection of quality raw materials, careful production processes, to stringent quality control. Effective after-sales service also plays a vital role in ensuring that

consumers feel satisfied and receive the support they need after making a purchase. By managing quality holistically, companies can ensure that every aspect of their products meets or even exceeds consumer expectations.

Companies that can consistently maintain high-quality standards tend to have a sustainable competitive advantage. This advantage lies not only in their ability to attract new customers but also in their capability to retain existing ones. In the long run, this can lead to increased brand loyalty, which is highly valuable in a competitive market. Brand loyalty is one of the greatest assets a company can possess, as loyal consumers are generally less price-sensitive and more likely to make repeat purchases.

Overall, this analysis emphasizes the importance of focusing on product quality in business strategy. To maintain and enhance market share, companies must continuously innovate and ensure that the products they offer not only meet but also exceed consumer expectations. Innovations in products may include quality improvements, the development of new features, or enhancements in production efficiency. All of these aim to provide added value to consumers and ensure that they have compelling reasons to choose those products over competitors' offerings. In doing so, companies will not only attract more new consumers but also retain existing consumer loyalty, ultimately leading to increased profitability and long-term business growth.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings from the community service activities, it is evident that to enhance consumer purchasing decisions through product quality, MR D.I.Y. needs to focus on selecting high-quality products that meet consumer expectations. Additionally, improving quality control standards and ensuring that every product sold has undergone a stringent verification process can also increase consumer trust in the brand. When consumers feel confident that they are receiving quality products at a fair price, they are more inclined to make purchases. Moreover, good product quality has the potential to enhance customer loyalty, as satisfied consumers are more likely to return and make repeat purchases in the future. Thus, by improving product quality, MR D.I.Y. can strengthen its market position and create positive long-term relationships with its consumers.

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