

MARKETING AUDIT: PROCESS AND IMPORTANCE**M.R. Palav¹ and Satish Jagtap²**¹Global Business School and Research Centre, Pune²New Arts, Commerce and Science College, Ahmednagar**ABSTRACT**

Marketing audit is a comprehensive examination and analysis of marketing exercises, goals and objectives. The various advantages of marketing audit are – it is a comprehensive analysis; it tells what works and what doesn't, and it makes the process of marketing strategy easier. The marketing audit process needs to be effective in all three aspects, viz., pre-audit should decide on the auditor, timing and goals and methods; audit proper should include rigorous data collection and analysis, and post-audit should ensure conveying the recommendations to the management. Summarily, the marketing audit process is very crucial in order to assess the marketing plan of the organization. A course correction should be done based on the audit results to derive maximum benefits.

Keywords: marketing audit, marketing strategy, data collection, data analysis, SWOT

Introduction

A marketing audit is a comprehensive analysis and examination of marketing exercises, goals and objectives. By carrying out an audit, one can investigate the manner in which marketing endeavors are arranged and overseen, and how they are performing comparative with the goals of the original marketing plan. A marketing audit is basically a great way of evaluating the marketing plan and discover what's working and what's not.

A market audit is helpful for getting back in contact with the brand, products and services and yet again centering the marketing endeavors. It can likewise be utilized to remind the underlying goals and destinations and calibrate the current endeavors to be sure they line up with those original targets (study.com, 2021).

A fruitful marketing audit ought to have the following components:

1. Comprehensive, in that it checks out all the marketing issues of a business
2. Systematic, including a methodical arrangement of steps
3. Independent, so it can't be impacted by the individuals who created and are executing the marketing plan
4. Periodic, conducted with regular frequency. A decent recurrence is yearly or every two years.

Importance

1. Firstly, the significant contribution that a marketing audit gives, is top to bottom

management and assessment of business taking care of viably at the planning, implementing and managing of marketing segment.

2. The organization finds the failures that they never knew existed. The marketing audit does a SWOT analysis telling the strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities during the whole interaction. It pinpoints the ideal market exercises, the practices that need improvement and the strategies that are turning out badly.
3. The discoveries and proposals of the marketing audit makes the method involved with fostering a marketing strategy simpler through its systematic and organized methodology.

Literature Review

There is ample research on the topic of marketing audit. Below are a few recent abstracts.

Zamkova et al. (2020), have posited that, the article states that modern market conditions require e-business entrepreneurs to evaluate quickly their own market opportunities, the effectiveness of management decisions, and, additionally, the business value. The audit of marketing action is made to evaluate it, just as to search and formulate activities to remove bottlenecks in the internal marketing system. The study suggests an algorithm for leading a marketing audit for business entities. It is proved that the objective of marketing audit is a comprehensive examination of the business components, its economic movement sphere,

and, additionally, research into the development of entrepreneurial structure prospects. As a result of the marketing activities, a rundown of effective issues is being developed, which ought to be answered to identify the existing problems and to design the methods of their answer through the marketing audit model. It has been determined that the marketing audit process includes leading stages in concentrating on the current marketing condition; assessment of the disclosed realities and preparation of recommendations on further developing the marketing action of the business-structure. It has been proven that strategic examination & audit in the sphere of e-business includes gathering of the main information about the entrepreneur action. This information comprises of the aspects and information, used in the development of specific objectives and the entrepreneur business-strategy. It was determined that the audit comprises of two primary sections: internal and external audit. External audit, is audit of entrepreneurial marketing environment, that examines the macro-environment and its assignments, while internal audit examines all the aspects of the entrepreneur's movement in the field of e-business.

Hadrian (2020), has argued that, this study examines the problem of marketing-control. The objective of the research is a scientific reflection on the model presentation of marketing audit. Review of the marketing literature on marketing audit presents different conceptual, structural or process models. Yet, these recommendations didn't assume a part critical enough so that auditing would become a widely used marketing control device. That is the reason, author presents an overview of the proprietary marketing audit model which (in conceptual & semantic approach), on account of specifying the strategic nature of this control instrument, can stimulate its advocacy in marketing management practice. The conceptual model presents in a descriptive & graphic form the audit architecture, endogenous conditions (excellence, orientation, tactical & operational control, strategy), components of the audit activities & the planes of the assessment being carried out. The semantic model defines marketing audit as a

legitimate and resulting system, which, by utilizing the possibilities offered by specific control methods, takes into account comprehensive, structured, regular, objective, independent and professional contextual assessment (preparation & implementation of marketing strategies). These models are an upgrade for conversation and further search for ideal methods of marketing control, both on a methodological & pragmatic level.

According to Chmil and Verzilova (2020), effective working and sustainable economic development of trade enterprises in the context of globalization and increased market competition in both worldwide and domestic markets, determine the need to concentrate on their business environment with marketing instruments. The most productive of these is marketing audit. It serves as a reason for picking the ideal strategy for the development of a commercial enterprise, considering its strengths and weaknesses and changes in the external and internal environment. Therefore, contemplate and substantiate the theoretical devices of the audit of marketing activities of a commercial enterprise. The research was carried out based on a systematic approach to understanding the organizational principles of marketing audit utilizing general and special principles and methods. The marketing audit is defined as a process of counseling to identify lost profits from insufficient use of marketing services, which is designed to assess the effectiveness of marketing activities and marketing system of the trade as a whole, to identify problems and hidden potential, and develop an activity intend to improve marketing.

Palav and Jagtap (2020), have opined that, Marketing Audit as a concept has been hailed across the world as a profoundly useful apparatus for helping the overall marketing function. Strangely enough, its application in practice isn't seen a lot. Moreover, the use of a marketing audit in India is quite on a lower scale. A literature review was done to establish the frameworks for the research. This article presents the literature review alongside the gap and consequential questions that emerge.

According to Koval et al. (2020), the point of this review is to direct a marketing audit of the pharma market of Ukraine for acne &

demodocosis medications. The review used marketing methods of survey, analysis, observation methods & reference literature. As a result of marketing audit of retail audit information of drug store sales revealed that the leading sales in bundling is MNL benzylbenzoate, whose share reached in different years from 45% to 32%, which was 1380902 & 647576 packages per year, respectively, in second place – metronidazole, benzoyl peroxide, zinc ointment and sulfur ointment respectively. According to our analysis, it has been tracked down that the highest sales volume (in packs) is of the minimal expense brands, which are the most economically available & have the best therapeutic effect. Therefore, create multicomponent soft medications as cream and gel based on metronidazole, benzyl benzoate & benzoyl peroxide.

Moreover, Maleki and Shabani (2020), Chen and Yang (2019) and Kitchenko and Kuchina (2019) have dealt with various aspects of marketing audit.

Marketing Audit Process

Pre-Audit

1. Determine The Person: The marketing audit determines the key person who leads the audit which has two choices either a self-audit or an audit from outside.
2. Determine The Timing of The Audit: The marketing area is unpredictable and changes happen habitually. Thus, a marketing audit should direct routinely toward the start as well as at different stretches. The organization should change its plan regularly to guarantee that the strategies are forward-thinking and relevant.
3. Establish Objectives and Methods: To direct the individuals from the audit group, the goal of a marketing audit should be known. It gives a reference in distinguishing the subsequent stages and to recognize partners included in the audit directly and indirectly. Further, it expresses the methods, tools and techniques utilized in data analysis and collection by the auditors.

Audit Proper

1. Data Collection: It is a tedious and monotonous part in the whole process. Likewise, it tends to be very costly too. It utilizes research work conveyed from different sources including standardized resources and published data.
2. Data Analysis: This step is the center of the audit cycle, fabricating an image of a marketing project or methodologies by exposing gathered data to analysis. The analysis ought to give knowledge into execution, marketing group abilities, arrangement of objectives, execution and correspondence of marketing plan. Therefore, a few tools of data analysis are as per the following: SWOT, Porter's Model, PESTEL analysis
3. Planning Of Recommendations: Recommendations ought to be founded on the analysis.

Post Audit

Finally, the marketing audit report is introduced to management, for decision making. The suggestions probably won't be effectively accepted by the organization. Therefore, they need to go for long discussions with all gatherings to make them fulfilled and comfortable by making marketing strategy decisions (thekeepitsimple.com, 2021).

Conclusion

Marketing audit is a comprehensive analysis and examination of marketing exercises, goals and objectives. To be successful the marketing audit needs to be comprehensive, systematic, independent and periodic. There are several benefits of marketing audit such as – it is a comprehensive analysis; it tells what works and what doesn't, and it makes the process of marketing strategy easier. These benefits occur if the marketing audit process is thoroughly followed. The pre-audit process should decide on who conducts the audit, the timing of the audit and objectives and methods of the audit. Further, the audit process should ensure that the data collection is proper and data analysis is rigorous. Lastly, the post audit process involves providing feedback to the management and conveying the audit recommendations. Summarily, the marketing audit process is very crucial in order to assess

the marketing plan of the organization. A course correction should be done based on the audit results to derive maximum benefits.

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