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The Book of Market Research Ideas

With 13 illustrated India Case Studies

eMpulse

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✻ First Chapter ✻

THE BATTLEGROUND OF TOMORROW



We all realize that marketing is a two-fold process and engages the company providing the product or service at one end and consumer or customer on the other. Therefore any product or service has to meet the expectations of the customer to sell in the market. The goal of marketing is to create awareness and position the company's products and services to meet the needs and expectations of the target customer, understand the preferences for the companys brand, and also track competition. Companies today have to increasingly depend on marketing tools like Market Research as marketing is a complex task in an increasingly complex, interconnected, and fast-moving world. This becomes all the more a critical component of the global commerce infrastructure.

The underlying principle of Market Research is to understand the market potential, get an idea on the discernment and preferences of the target segment, and know the competition. Actions from a Market Researpdfch study can help ameliorate sales efficiency, enhance advertisement effectiveness, develop better brands and products, and improve customer service.

Conducting Market Research in India is partially science, partially art. Market information that is needed by companies is very sketchy. Internet and other communication tools that are mature in developed world are not systematically available. At the same time the market is growing at an unprecedented rate which changes the market landscape. There are pockets of Indian market where the most sophisticated data collection methods are being deployed, while some other segments use the techniques from the 1960s. There are too many moving parts to this system. Large multi-billion dollar companies, with large research budgets, conduct research at big budgets, but in the same market, small and medium size businesses are trying to compete with these large players and they need market information.



Market Research is Art & Science.

Information To Succeed

Everyone needs market information to succeed. eMpulse has been helping many small and medium sized companies with Market Research in India using innovative techniques that combine secondary research with primary research to deliver results. In todays competitive business scenario, every company, small or big, Indian or multinational, family-owned or professionally managed, would like to make better business decisions. It has now been accepted that the best way to make better business decisions is through professional support rather than gut feel and experience.

Market Research is becoming increasingly popular as far as business decision making is concerned. Companies commission Market Research because it is a very actionable methodology. The findings of Market Research are directly linked to profits and growth of the business.

Market Research in India is at a crucial phase as far as acceptability is concerned. Although many companies accept the importance of Market Research, decision making related to commissioning a Market Research study can sometimes be long and time consuming. Market Research in India is mainly used for India Product Launch, India Brand Launch, India Market Monitoring, and India Brand Monitoring. Some of the India Pre-Launch studies include Indian Market Potential Evaluation, Market Segmentation, Concept Testing, Demand Estimation, and Pricing. Brand Monitoring, Advertisement Research, Customer Satisfaction Surveys, Internet Traffic Analytics, Operations Monitoring, and Mystery Shopping are some of the India Post-Launch studies.



The meme 'MR is expensive' is a myth.

Many of the Indian executives think Market Research is expensive and not as a necessary expense. This is not always true because Market Research is always customized based on the needs and budgets. It is also said that cost of wrong marketing decisions based on incomplete or inadequate information can sometimes be higher than a Market Research study. Market Research in India is now considered as a value-for-money proposition since every Market Research study throws up a couple of insights which can be very valuable. Some of the experienced marketing executives feel that they know everything about their market. This was a good assumption for a long time since Indian market was static for the most part. Now most marketing teams say that Market Research is an indispensable tool for decision making because of the dynamic nature of the Indian market.

For Market Research in India, companies have an option to engage a Market Research agency to understand their customers or can use their own sales team. Using internal teams can be a budget-saving option, but also caution has to be used since collecting information internally always leads to bias and it needs to be ensured that the extent of the bias is not so great as to lead the company in the wrong direction.

It is prudent for the company to participate in the overall research process and not just during the final presentation. Market information is brand battleground of today. Market information is gained using Market Research. And high-level actions like customer data acquisition, research analysis, and reporting are done to help understand the Indian market.

There are now companies that are developing tools to skim real-time data from the Internet to hint at what will happen in the future. These tools are designed to analyze the content of pages to track the invisible connections between people, places, and events described online. That makes it also possible to look for specific patterns, like product releases expected from organizations in the near future, or to identify when a company plans to invest or expand into other markets. Various tools are capable of extracting events, people, and companies from text, but aligning that information in time is a trickier task

The Old and New Economies Are Merging Creating Complex Dynamics

To understand the current Indian market, it is important to understand the evolution of the market in India over the centuries. India was a very prosperous economy in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries until the European traders entered the country attracted by the prosperity of the region. The economic relationship between the European traders and India led to political linkages and eventually the British started to rule India as a colony and the prosperity within India began to diminish. Along with it, both political and personal freedom started to diminish for the Indian citizens and this happened for about 300 years until the Independence of the country in 1947.

The architects of the new India after the country's independence in 1947 developed the concept of a self-sufficient economy. India introduced a model of self-sustenance and placed barriers to foreign businesses entering India. The state built a fundamental infrastructure for a socialist economy that included dams, the water distribution systems, the agricultural research, earth moving equipment, railway equipment, and aircraft industries. These were all driven by public sector corporations and were protected from international competition. These state-controlled industries created monopolies that defined the reason Indian markets did not need any market research because India was an economy which was insulated from global competition and in many industries competition between local companies.



The old stable market is not consumption driven. Whereas, the new economy is hitched to the global markets.

By the 1980s Indian policy makers started to look at the success of globalization around the world and benefits of foreign competition. Indian leaders led by Dr Manmohan Singh decided to open up the economy to the world to take benefits of globalization. So starting in early 1990s, there were

a series of deregulation measures. Further, India's emergence as a preeminent player in the IT and telecom sectors created a prosperous new India which also resulted in birth of a new Indian consumer. So currently there are two very distinct markets which reside in India. There is the old stable market, which is not consumption driven. And the new global economy which is not immune to the changing dynamics of international markets. These two economies are merging and creating lot of complex dynamics within the market.

There are a lot of global companies which are coming into India and creating new jobs. The new wealth is creating new consumption patterns. So it is very important to understand the markets in the old economy, the new economy. It is important to understand the old generation, the new generation, and the bridge generation. This is the context in which Indian companies have to rely on Market Research in India to help them navigate through the market.

This book will give an overview on the various stages of a typical Market Research Study conducted within India. Explain the methods of data collection in Market Research and its implications within the Indian Market. It will explain how to prepare good and effective research instruments. It will describe the typical challenges encountered during data collection in India and how to process primary data collected through cases. Extra emphasis is given on field data quality since that is a topic of concern in Indian Market Research studies. This book will give you the cases of this entire process including the mindsets and the challenges.

✻ Second Chapter ✻

Marketing Research Demystified



Due to the unorganized nature of data availability in the Indian market, research is a combination of advanced analytics and artistic innovation. Interpretation of the data needs high levels of research savviness. We believe it is critical to discuss the clients' needs and learn about the business situation as well as the dynamics of the clients organization. Only then can one design a research approach that is relevant and efficient in terms of both costs and timelines. Companies undertake research to give insights into markets using segmentation studies and demand-estimation studies. Research is conducted to understand customer's usage and attitude by conducting customer surveys. Research is performed to understand products by using positioning studies, product tests, and brand image tests. Further research is also undertaken to understand advertising effectiveness using methods of communication research and concept tests. Research is conducted into service-quality measurement. The research methods used are one-on-one interviews, in-depth interviews, focus groups, choice modelling, customer visits, experimentation, secondary research, web-based studies, online surveys, and big data analytics. Raw data is analyzed and converted to information and then matched with the capabilities and strategies of the company to provide an actionable roadmap for achieving business goals.

A typical research process is made up of initially defining the problem situation and its objectives. The data that is obtained by using various data sources and research approaches is then analyzed. Raw data is converted to information and then matched with the capabilities and strategies of the company to provide an actionable roadmap for achieving business goals.

Stakeholder interviews precede MR design.

In India, there is a need for rigorous approach to quality assurance. It is critical to discuss the companys needs and learn about the business situation as well as the dynamics of the clients' organization. Only then can we design a research approach that is relevant and efficient in terms of both costs and timelines. The diagram below shows the typical Market Research roadmap.

The following 11-step process explains the research process used for a typical Market Research project in India. At the beginning of the research, it is important to understand the research objectives.

Many leading Indian Market Research agencies provide custom market research solutions to Indian and global companies. When selecting the agency, evaluation criteria for selection of an agency should focus on balancing three basic metrics for any project, which are Quality, On-Time-Delivery, and Price. These are the three value parameters that Indian Market Research customers are demanding. An agency that does not believe in sacri-

ficing one metric at the expense of the other is a better choice for customers. The selected vendor should not cut corners on quality and on-time-delivery performance.

2.1 How To Select A Market Researcher In India?

Most Market Research agencies are based out of major metropolitan cities of Bengaluru, Chennai, Kolkata, Mumbai, New Delhi, or Pune. Many of these firms use extended partners to provide Market Research services in Ahmedabad, Bhubaneswar, Chandigarh, Gulbarga, Hubli, Hyderabad, Jaipur, Kochi, Ludhiana, Mangalore, Mysore, Nagpur, Patna, and all other Indian cities. A Google search can provide the company with the right profile for one's needs.

Successful research agencies within India need to be very innovative because of the unorganized nature of the industries compared to developed nations. A combination of theoretically sound methods coupled with savvy research execution is required by the vendor.

A firm that cannot conduct an entire marketing research project in-house must select an external supplier for one or more phases of the project. The firm should compile a list of prospective suppliers from such sources as Internet search, trade publications, professional directories, and word-of-mouth.

Before selecting a MR vendor check fitment.

When deciding on criteria for selecting an outside supplier, a firm should ask itself why it is seeking an outside marketing research support? For example, a company may not have the resources or expertize to carry out a particular type of Market Research study or company might want to hire a professional Market Research agency to get an objective assessment before making a business decision.

Some of the criteria that has to be used when selecting the research vendor include: What kind and how much experience does the supplier have? Has the agency had experience with projects similar to this one? Do the supplier's personnel have both technical and non-technical expertise? In other words, in addition to technical skills are there personnel assigned to the task sensitive to the client's needs and do they share the client's research ideology? Can they communicate well with the client? Do they have industry expertize? Are they responsive to customer's needs?

Managing Your India MR exercise

- **Identify and clarify company's research objectives**
  Usually, before the researcher becomes involved, decision makers have prepared a formal statement of what they believe is the problem. At this point, researchers assist decision makers in making sure the problems have been correctly defined and that the decision maker is sure of the information requirements.

- **Define research problem**
  The researcher must reformulate the problem in scientific terms. That means the researcher must redefine the problem as a research question. Redefining the problem into a research question is the most critical step in the research process because how the research problem is defined greatly influences all of the remaining steps. One the initial questions to ask is if the marketing strategies need to be modified to increase satisfaction among our current and future customer segments? Then based on that, redefined research questions could be: What operation aspects do people believe are important in selecting a retail outlet?; How do customers evaluate the company on operation aspects?; What are the perceived strengths and weaknesses of the company?; How do customers and non-customers perceive the companys outlets?; What is the demographic and psychographic profile of the companys customers?

- **Confirm research objectives**
  Research questions or objectives need to be confirmed with the decision maker after it is framed. The basis for this is that if the objectives are achieved, decision maker will have the information to solve the problem.
  Before moving to next step, decision maker and researcher must evaluate the value of the information on whether it can tell the decision maker something not already known and if the information will provide significant insights?

- **Determine research design and data sources**
  Research design serves as a master plan of the methods used to collect and analyze data. In this phase, researcher must finalize the type of data to be collected, data collection method, sampling method, schedule and the budget.
  The quantitative market research tools include face-to-face interviews, which are a type of data collection methods, where the interviewer meets the respondent face-to-face and carries out the interview. Also quantitative methods include telephone interviews, which again are a

type of data collection methods where the interviewer carries out the interview with the respondent on the telephone. Another quantitative method is online interview, which is a type of interview where the questionnaire is hosted online and the respondent completes the survey at the respondents convenience.
Qualitative Market Research tools include Focus Group Discussion (FGD), which is a group discussion of approximately 6-12 persons guided by a facilitator, during which group members talk freely and spontaneously about a certain topic. A FGD is a qualitative method. Its purpose is to obtain in-depth information on concepts, perceptions, and ideas of a group. Another qualitative method is an extended interview, usually on a one-to-one basis, in which the interviewer explores a topic in considerable depth. The interviewer may follow an unstructured approach using a discussion guide to remind him of the salient issues to be covered, or a semi-structured approach with a more detailed checklist of questions.

- **Determine sample plan and sample size**
  When the defined target population is large, Market Research study involves the selection of a sample from the overall membership pool of the defined target population. Researchers must use a representative sample of the population so the resulting information is generalizable.

- **Design questionnaire**
  A key part of the Market Research process is to design the data collection instrument or questionnaire in a manner so that it is easily understood by the respondent and administered to them.

- **Validate questionnaire**
  Researchers must always pretest the questionnaire. Pretesting is done with a sub-sample of respondents with a profile similar to those who will be asked to actually complete the survey when the data collection commences. This will help researcher on issues such as clarity of instructions and questions, sequence of topics and discussions, and anything that is potentially difficult and confusing.

- **Collect and prepare data for analysis**
  The key data collection methods are questioning and observation. Once the primary data is collected, researcher needs to perform several activities before doing data analysis. This includes coding, data entry, and data cleaning.

- **Analyze data**
  Researcher begins the process of turning raw data into structures that

can be used to generate useful information for the decision maker. Analysis procedures vary widely in sophistication and complexity from simple frequency distributions (percentages) to sample statistics (mean, median and mode).

- **Transform data structures into actionable information**
  Information is created for decision makers. Researchers interpret the results of the statistical analysis. Interpretation means integrating several aspects of the findings into statements that can be answered to answer the initial question.

- **Prepare and present final report**
  This is a very important step in the end-to-end market research process. In many cases, the researcher not only submits a written report but also makes an oral presentation to the decision makers.

✲ Third Chapter ✲

Case Study: Setting up an India plant



Key Takeaways:

1. A typical full service research has both qualitative and quantitative components. MR tools like Depth Interviews, Focus Groups, Survey and secondary research is used in a full service research study.

2. A full service market research will help mitigate the risks involved in a major business decision. Better market insights will provide the information needed to make the right go-nogo decision

3. Typically a full fledged market research is conducted before the company makes a major investment decision. This provides the necessary input needed from the market side for the decision.

4. A reputed agency that the company has relationship with could be approached for a proposal on the research. Based on the proposals from various service providers, the most suitable agency can be selected

Challenge

With the rise in the number of 24/7 control rooms in India, a leading Canadian industrial equipment company that has been successful in many countries around the world wanted to expand its business in India. This global

major is in the design and manufacturing of custom control room solutions for mission critical and other technology-intensive environments specializing in custom console, millwork, and audio-visual enclosure solutions for the manufacturing sector. Having an exciting range of products, designed to minimize user fatigue and discomfort especially in the control room environments, it wanted a strategic direction to enhance its presence in India.

Why it Matters

In todays hitech world ergonomics plays a very important role in the office environment. In fact, ergonomics has become an integral part of the design of office space and control room equipment. According to Hal Hendrick of the Human of Factor and Ergonomics Society (HFES), who is remembered as the father of macroergonomics, Good Ergonomics is Good Economics. HFES calls ergonomics as human-system interface technology. Human-system interface technology deals with the interfaces between humans and the other system components, including hardware, software, environments, jobs, and organizational structures and processes. It is true that proper ergonomics has shown positive benefits on the operators and hence the employers.

A control center today is a critical station and the operators are responsible for monitoring and supervising very complex systems and environments and the failure of the operators can result in potentially catastrophic consequences. Several network critical centers vouch that the selection of a Console, or technical furniture, is a very vital component of any mission critical facility design.

The Canadian console maker was selling its products in the Indian market. However, the management wanted to make big investment decisions in the market. They wanted to find out if the company should set up a manufacturing plant to serve the customers in India. To help its decision, it was critical to answer questions such as: What should be the brand positioning? Is India price sensitive market in this category? Do the product lines match the requirement? What should be sales process that needs be adopted?

The question was whether to invest in an Indian plant.

MR Action

The company had the initial business intelligence information about the Indian market and wanted to validate its information through a comprehensive

market study. It commissioned eMpulse with the basic objective of having an actionable plan for the marketing objectives of its product by understanding the customers. It also wanted to get insights into the features of the products that will make the product more attractive to potential buyers, in turn increasing the net income. The company also wanted to develop a strong brand presence for its products. It also wanted an effective brand communication plan in addition to delivering the product features.

It meant that eMpulse had to develop the scenarios for the new launch under two major phases. While the first phase is related to the market evaluation and decision phase, the second is associated with the product-launch phase. The typical information areas for the research included estimation of the market size, projected growth for the next five years, market trends, pricing strategy, business model followed by key players, customer/channel preference of brands, perception and awareness of key brands, and key purchasing decision variables.



Depth interviews revealed the buyer potential.

eMpulse conducted a comprehensive secondary research to understand the local Indian market and international markets for similar products. eMpulse analysts evaluated the competition companies. Depth interviews were conducted with key decision makers of the company's potential clients. People interviewed comprised executives from gas and electric companies, network-operation centers of financial institutions and stock exchanges, security-operation control rooms of police and traffic managers, wireless facilities of telecom operators, emergency response networks of hospitals, transportation network-operation centers of the aviation industry, transmission control centers of electricity companies, launch control rooms of Indian space agencies, amongst others.

A quantitative survey was conducted to get the statistical validity. The potential market opportunity was sized. The eMpulse executives conducted internal innovation sessions to develop the product launch frameworks. These were combined with research data and various scenarios were developed. The scenarios were narrowed down using the Pugh Concept Selection process. Using the chosen framework, a detailed actionable plan was developed and delivered. The plan was further refined based on nuances of the companys needs.

"They [eMpulse]gave us a very good understanding of the market that helped us refine our strategy," said the international sales head of the company. The company needed a dealer plan and a go-to-market strategy to enter India.

The strategy for the company was to

1. Hire dealers and develop partnerships
2. Add sales executives
3. Develop the infrastructure to support customers as the sales pick up
4. Open showrooms and factories.

Results

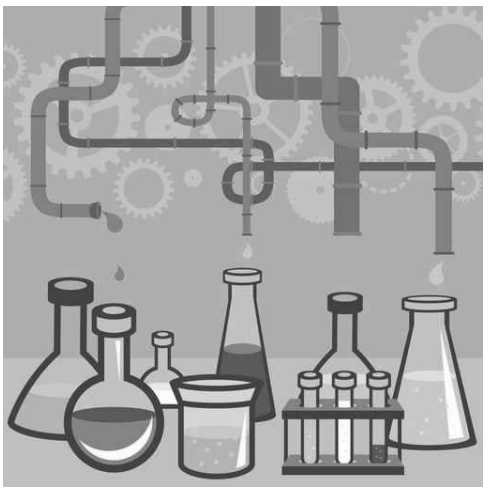
Based on the detailed action plans provided by eMpulse researchers, the Canadian console maker was able to make a data driven decision on the re-entry and growth strategy for the Indian market. The company re-launched in India with added rigor setting a foundation for increased profitability for the parent corporation in Canada. The key findings from the study was that setting up a plant in India would need very large investments and the return on investment was minimum. Further the Custom Duties and local levies in India would also make import of parts very expensive. The company decided against local manufacturing and went through the dealer route. The company today has two important distributor partnerships, one in the north and the other in the south. The company has now appointed a country manager as its sales in India have reached the needed volumes.

Lessons

1. The Canadian console maker could derive a lot of value from focused market survey of its market even though it was already serving the market
2. Statistical modelling and Market sizing proved to be an important tool in decision making
3. When you match secondary research revealing business conditions with customer voice, you will get vital data points for drawing up strategies.

✲ Fourth Chapter ✲

Actionable Insights Gained from FMCG Consumer Research



Key Takeaways:

1. A well designed survey that is either administered face to face, online, or by telephone can be used based on the customer segments. A detailed analysis of the results of this quantitative study provides the necessary insights

2. For FMCG products the brand building budgets are very large. It is important to make sure that the innovative internal decisions for the brand are based on the voice of the customer

3. Any time there is a change of brand marketing strategy, it is good to conduct a well designed market research study to validate or disprove an hypothesis. Also, ongoing monitoring of the voice of the customer is critical

4. An internal or external research team has to be built on a long term basis, so that there is knowledge within the research team of the nuances of the brand strategy of the marketing team

Challenge

A three-decade old indigenous FMCG company, with a strong track record for quality products and in-house RD in fabric care, utensil care, and clean-

ing, wanted to aggressively promote its new detergent powder with nano enzyme technology. This product was touted to be the first of its kind to be introduced in India. The powder contained nanoenzymes that can penetrate deep into the fibers and clean out the toughest stains. It was a unique product with advanced micro-stain-fighting technique with the triple power of removing the stains, keeping the bacteria out, and knocking out bad odor.

Why it Matters

The company, which is the market leader in the cloth whitener category, has aggressive plans for the new brand and aimed to take this brand to the next level and compete belligerently with the other premium range of brands. So the company roped in India's leading cricket legend to endorse the new brand and the parent brands.

A big brand ambassador would bring premiumness .

Across the diverse Indian geographical markets, the cricket maestro's endorsement of the brand was aimed to improve visibility and to a certain extent positively impact the image. Having the cricketer as the brand ambassador at a time when his brand equity was at the top was believed to be a very smart marketing move. And the company with a strong distribution network was aiming to change its positioning strategy. It aimed to position the new brand in the premier segment.

MR Action

The owner of the brand, which wants to surge ahead by entering untapped markets with innovative products and catering to the common man through its market analysis, took the services of eMpulse to measure the impact. eMpulse studied the efforts of the FMCG. Here's the twist.

For a new product launch the research typically starts with the evaluation of the product and services followed by the understanding of key company parameters including company's fundamentals and financials. Some of the methods used to understand the company parameters are net income modelling, company strategy analysis, cash flow modelling, and market opportunity evaluation.

Then research is conducted using the various market research tools to understand the customers and the competitions customers. Some of the steps involved in getting the customer data are instrument design, data collection, coding, data entry, data cleaning, Poke Yoke and inspection based

QC, data analysis and final reporting. Based on the above, a product and brand strategy is developed. This is an iterative process where a few rounds of research, followed by information synthesis is conducted.

Results

With a quality product from a reputed company and a great brand ambassador, one would have imagined that the campaign would fly and the product would perform well in the market place. But that wasn't the case though the company has the distinction of making a mark in the virtually non-existent category of liquid fabric whitener with products that are reasonably priced, conveniently packaged, extensively distributed, and supported by strategic communication. Normally, prior to the launch of any product one tests with the potential customer and seeks the feedback and then places the product with customer so that they use it. This is the stage when they measure the impact. The agency after receiving the initial feedback goes back and asks for reactions using depth interviews. Client changes product features based on opportunity.

Lessons

In the current case, though the FMCG was market-research savvy, it ignored the pre-launch market research and test. It preferred to take the post-launch test. At this stage, when it was decided to measure the impact of the campaign, the customers opined that the advertisement was clutter free, but they couldn't connect with the brand ambassador.

On further research, it was discovered that the connection between housewives and cricket is not strong. Most of the housewives probably preferred cinema actors. This discovery led the company to change its advertising options. The advertisement today talks about the efficacy of the product in a rational way and the functional aspects. The customers believed that the brand would be liked by the loyal customers of the FMCG and the MRP is less than those premium segment detergents. An observant customer added that the cricketing legend, who is a brand ambassador of the FMCG, has his own toothbrush and toothpaste products, which are not selling well.

✻ Fifth Chapter ✻

Concept Testing Research For A French Carpet Tiles Company



Key Takeaways:

1. Typically the concept is presented to the decision makers either as a sample or concept card. Feedback from the customers are captured and synthesized to provide recommendations.

2. Decision on product features can be challenging. It is good to get 360 degree perspective on the topic, including the consumer's point of view.

3. Product upgrades are necessary to keep up with the market changes. Any time there is a need for a change in a product, both large or small, a study is recommended.

4. Product features that are proposed to be introduced are developed and they are exposed to the decision makers. Then structured sampling plans are used to decide on probability of success.

Challenge

A French designer and carpet tiles company, which is also present in India, is actively pursuing the opportunities to introduce new ranges of products all the time. It is looking for ways to innovate; finding new methods, materials, and designs to inspire customers; and push the boundaries of conventional

flooring. The company has been working with eMpulse to gauge the potential for its products and recommend the product-positioning and pricing strategies for any of its product introductions. When it wanted to launch Bitumen-backed carpet tiles, it commissioned a study to do the feasibility study for the new product range and get the voice of the customer.

Why it Matters

The concept of Carpet tiles is relatively new in India. A couple of decades back, the Indian office was just about having a desk and chair. From there, offices graduated to modular furniture and now to modular things like carpets. Carpet tiles allow the flexibility of changing things around.

These tiles are technologically advanced, aesthetically pleasing, and environmentally sound and are easy to install. They are also known for their anti-static properties; they reduce the noise, and last for 10-15 years. The flooring, according to the company, plays a huge role in office design; about a quarter of the emphasis is on visual impact on the floor.

The growth of the IT and IT-enabled services has been the major driving force behind its products in India. This sector alone accounts for about 60 percent of its customer base. The rest of its business comes from Indian companies, especially those who are looking for global presence. It also has a huge potential in the airport walkways, the banking sector, financial institutions, telecom, and the hospitality sector.

Flooring plays a huge role in office design.

MR Action

As the company was looking to expand its product portfolio for the hospitality sector, particularly the Five star hotels, it wanted to evaluate the reactions to the product. eMpulse talked to the GMs, maintenance personnel, purchase officers, architects, and cleaning crew to get insights on whether the company's range of products is suitable for the Indian market. It sought views from them on if they liked the products and their willingness to pay for the products.

Results

The results were very forthcoming. There was positive response and there was a good demand for the product range. They company was helped to do the market sizing and they are now planning to launch the Product for the hospitality sector in India

Lessons

Even the best company, which has total belief in its product quality, requires to check its product concept before introducing into the market

Talk to every stakeholder who will come in contact with the product. In this case, it ranged from facilities managers, purchase officers to cleaning crew.

✻ Sixth Chapter ✻

Understanding The Needs Of Real Estate Customers



Key Takeaways:

1. A full service market research that helps evaluate all aspects of the project. These projects typically involves Depth Interviews, Focus Groups, Surveys and desk research.
2. Indian real estate market is shifting rapidly. It is also a high investment area. The customers segments are varied with different needs
3. Before launching a big real estate project, it is prudent to conduct a comprehensive market study to understand the reactions of the project by the customers.
4. Agencies with real estate experience and understand the local geogrophy in context will be the best choice for a study of this nature

Challenge

A new generation real estate company in Bangalore, which was coming up with a new project in the city, wanted to take the market research approach and seek professional advice to launch the project. The young CEO of the company wanted to understand the consumer insights in apartment buying process, preferences on size and quality of the apartments, and get feedback

on his proposed project concept. The developer also sought help to evolve a brand positioning and marketing strategy. It commissioned the study before its project concept was to launch as it would enable the firm to fine tune and re-package the project if needed before its launch.

Why it Matters

Bangalore is among the top five populous metropolitan areas in the country. The city is experiencing a steady increase in its population, growing nearly at 3.25 percent annually and the city's population is likely to breach the 10 million mark by 2021. Bangalore has a favorable high quality of life and social diversity. Obviously, the demand for retail, commercial, office, and residential real estate in Bangalore is rising by the day.

Seeing the market potential in the residential real estate market, several entrepreneur-backed real estate companies have launched successful residential layouts in Bangalore.

Interestingly, though the real estate sector is growing in a big way, the industry is choked with several second and third tier companies. Most of these companies do not commission market researchers to devise their strategies before investing though the cost of research is minuscule as percentage of the project cost.



Cost of MR is miniscule when compared to RE projects.

MR Action

eMpulse employed a qualitative research technique that allows person-to-person discussion to get increased insights into people's thoughts, feelings, and behavior on this project. This mode was selected to encourage the respondents to talk at length freely. The respondents for this project were those with an annual household income over Rs 10 lakh and planning to purchase an apartment within the next six months.

eMpulse started this exercise by drawing up a comprehensive market study plan and getting the sponsor's approval. eMpulse analysts spent several hours understanding the strategic direction of the company and its value proposition. Meanwhile, the back end research team at eMpulse conducted a thorough survey of construction and real estate market in general. Depth interviews were conducted with key decision makers such as architects, interior designers, and flooring suppliers. Analysts also met a sample population of prospective end users. Another team focused on doing the project site

due-diligence and review of the market potential–evaluating the potential of overall development opportunity and reviewing the project concept.

This multivariate data was then analyzed by eMpulse and a final report with actionable recommendations was delivered.

Results

The market study revealed several interesting trends. Majority of the respondents said that the key parameters they would consider while deciding to buy a new apartment were quality of construction, less-crowded complexes, vaastu-compliance, good locality, and better access. And most of them reiterated that brand or name of the builder is very important and credibility of the brand was going to be a key influencer.

An important outcome of the survey was that most of the respondents were willing to explore investment in the property if the builder met all the parameters and offered a pricing range much lower than the branded properties.

Based on these finding the real estate developer was asked to

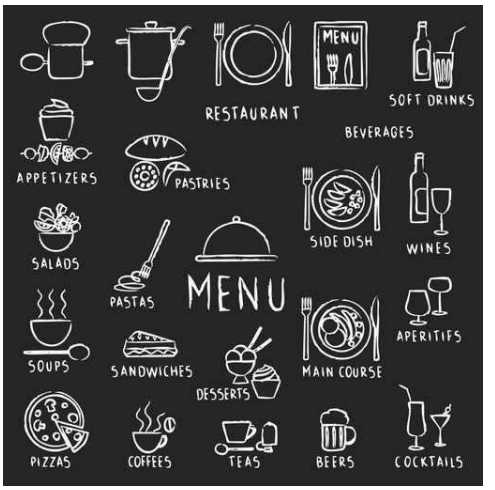
1. Focus on developing feature-rich homes
2. Exhibit the potential for a combination of luxurious high and mid-end units
3. Build brand awareness and convey credibility
4. Highlight all the statutory approvals from key agencies.

Lessons

1. Market study helped the real estate developer to get the insights from the prospective customers
2. The developer changed the strategy as per the requirements of the customers while building the new apartment complex
3. Establishing the brand identity of the development was very important as the realtor till then had sold apartments primarily to friends and family
4. This recognition in the customers mind is achieved by effectively developing and communicating a brand.

✻ Seventh Chapter ✻

Focus Groups To Refine Products Before Launching A Global Food Product



Key Takeaways:

1. A focus group done in a research kitchen setting will help provide the reactions of the customers from each target segment.
2. Food and related products have very specific reactions from people in different parts of the world and also within a local area. Designing the food product to match the palatte is crutial to success of the launch.
3. Whenever a new formulation or a modification is done on a food product, it is advisible to conduct a market research.
4. A reputed qualitative research provider with access to a research kitchen will be a good choice to perform this study.

Challenge

A unique and leading brand from the UK that is known for introducing vegetarian nuggets, which taste like chicken, wanted to expand into India. This brand has proprietary food that replicates the texture and taste of meat. As India has a vast sect of its population who are vegetarians, the company considered India as a major opportunity and commissioned focus

group study to understand the market potential, eating preferences, and regulatory framework in order to introduce its products in India.

Why it Matters

All the products from the company are made from Mycoprotein. They come under the health foods category as the key ingredient is Mycoprotein, which is a nutritious quality meat-free protein. Mycoprotein is a member of the fungi family and therefore considered to be naturally low in fat and high in protein and fiber. This ingredient is grown by fermentation and the process for the production of this is similar to that followed in making bread, yoghurt, and beer. This meat alternative is good at absorbing the flavors and very tasty. The company's foods are considered to be healthy as the key element used in the preparation is a protein, has low saturated fat, and is cholesterol free.

The products are sold both in the form of ingredients used for cooking as well as ready-to-cook varieties. These are available all over Europe and many other countries and the company wanted to enter India. Since its products are seen as health foods, it wanted to not only get the big picture about the entire scenario of functional foods in India and regulatory mechanisms, but also delve on the matters related to the food preferences of Indians and get a feedback on its unique food concept and whether its products would be accepted in the country.

Pitching as health food the company wanted to concept test.

MR Action

The purpose was an early stage feasibility study to launch a new product. The method adopted was qualitative research involving a focus group study. The study by eMpulse involved bringing a select potential customers from different segments together including people from canteens, supermarket chains, nutritionists, medical professionals, and chefs. The group had to discuss the food and concept.

A kitchen was set up for live simulation and to carry out blind-fold test. The focus group had 12 participants. The group tasted several forms resembling chicken breasts, meatballs, and diced roasts. They also tried several variations that could could go well with the Indian cuisine. The group also discussed issues related to health and allergies. What was more challenging in the process of research was actually trying to bring the ingredients into

India as these are food products and needed several clearances to be brought here.

Results

The focus group ended up throwing several findings. The participants were pleasantly surprised to realize that vegetarian food can be exciting. They agreed that the food was really good and it tasted like chicken though it was made from Mycoprotein. The took a "go" decision to enter the market in India.

Lessons

Focus group methodology is a technique that is used to seek innovative insights to marketing campaigns or launch of products and services. It is primarily qualitative research that can be used to enhance products and services or refine advertisement campaigns. This is an open-ended technique to get the views or feedback from the target group.

It is one of the more productive methodologies as it involves about 6-10 participants, who are engaged into a discussion by a moderator from the researcher agency to get additional details. This method is not very expensive and most of the focus groups in India are either done in hotel rooms with CCTV or retrofitted conference rooms with CCTV, though there are some established focus group facilities within the major metropolitan cities of India. Only large research agencies use global standard two-way mirror based focus group facilities.

Some of the steps involved in a focus group research include preparation of facilities and logistics; research plans and discussions guides; facilitation of the discussion activities; transcription of the focus group interactions, and finally generation of a report.

Focus group is an intensive and effective method. The focus group participants are recruited by the field manager or field agency. Once the participants arrive, a highly qualified moderator conducts the sessions. Sessions are recorded on CCTVs and transcribed by transcriptionists. The moderator provides a top line report at the end of the session to the client. The research executive on the project or the moderator writes the final reports with actionable recommendations once all the focus groups are completed.

✻ Eighth Chapter ✻

Collecting Large Volume Market Data In India Using A-Feet-On-Street Field Team



Key Takeaways:

1. A full service market research that helps evaluate all aspects of the project. These projects typically involves Depth Interviews, Focus Groups, Surveys and desk research.

2. Indian real estate market is shifting rapidly. It is also a high investment area. The customers segments are varied with different needs

3. Before launching a big real estate project, it is prudent to conduct a comprehensive market study to understand the reactions of the project by the customers.

4. Agencies with real estate experience and understand the local geography in context will be the best choice for a study of this nature

Challenge

Social media and mobility are redefining the way people are searching and using the information. A couple of years ago location of search query was one of the most important attributes. Today, however, the focus is on search

through the location of the user. All the leading social media and Internet search companies have placed a lot of importance to location based search. So quality of data of the location becomes vital.

Why it Matters

The earlier day Business Yellow Pages is moving online and to the mobile. The reason this is moving online is not only because of better and swift return of search results but also because of more accurate and reliable search results. Maps and location search on the mobile in India is proliferating in a much bigger way as India is an example of haphazard growth of towns and cities. This makes it very difficult to find an address in India based on the postal address. So geo or GPS-based searches are more meaningful and accurate. In Bangalore, the city municipal corporation (BBMP) has geo-tagged the houses, apartments, and commercial establishments for improving tax collections and providing better benefits to the denizens. The idea here is not to brag about the innovations or the technology but to state that there has been a massive effort put together by companies to collate the data physically, validate the addresses, check the genuineness of the establishment, location, etc. The task is not that simple as the data to be handled is very voluminous and data needs to be thoroughly verified.



Geo tagging means huge data to handle.

MR Action

eMpulse has been involved in one such large data aggregation project for a company that has been very focused on location based services. It was initially entrusted with the work of doing secondary research by this large conglomerate to collate the data of business establishments. The activity under the primary research involved the companys staff to go to every business establishment that has an individual address and feed the business and geo information of the set-up real-time. eMpulse staff would go to the establishment, stand in front of it and capture key data, and associate it with the geotag. In order to have a uniform set of data, eMpulse staff would have to take the visiting card, validate the addresses, and phone details. That person has to also find out if the business establishment is using the email for personal or business purposes. The staff also has a business pad to fill up, which includes the working hours and weekly off details. The staff then needs to capture the image of the visiting cards, the business pads, and front

view of the shop using a 3G smartphone. This information is then entered and uploaded into the backend.

Results

Quality Control (QC) should be very rigorous and elaborate. The QC team calls up almost up to 85 percent of the data enlisted by each of the callers. The key here is the scrutiny and sanctity of the data. The QC member goes through even the minutest of details in the QC process. For example, it is mandatory that only business owners or authorized representatives are to be listed. Further every listing should spell out if the email associated with the listing is a business email or a personal email. Similarly the business listing needs to capture the name of the establishment only and shouldnt include details like marketing taglines or phone numbers or URLs in the business name entry. Accuracy is the mantra.

Lessons

The quality of data is the key to success of any organizations goal of empowering the businesses establishment to know where its customers are and how to reach them. This mode helps searchers to take informed decisions on various needs of theirs like for example the restaurants, hotels where they can go to for a specific food or so or the laundry or shoe repair services.

Data aggregation is very challenging exercise as India is a nation of small entrepreneurs and it is estimated that there are over 30 million small businesses in India. Interesting only a small fraction of these entrepreneurs is listed online. It is a humongous task as it is difficult to get accurate data about searchers and visitors.

✻ Nineth Chapter ✻

Training The Internal Company Team To Be Market Research Savvy



Key Takeaways:

1. A full service market research that helps evaluate all aspects of the project. These projects typically involves Depth Interviews, Focus Groups, Surveys and desk research.
2. Indian real estate market is shifting rapidly. It is also a high investment area. The customers segments are varied with different needs
3. Before launching a big real estate project, it is prudent to conduct a comprehensive market study to understand the reactions of the project by the customers.
4. Agencies with real estate experience and understand the local geography in context will be the best choice for a study of this nature

Challenge

A successful and vibrant integrated chemical company in India wanted to strengthen its marketing approach. This company has a large sales force and a broad range of customer groups to reach out to. It, however, did not have a robust system to capture the voice of the customer and embed the

customer feedback into its marketing strategies. In the past, it was running a lot of market research in an ad hoc way or skipping it.

Why it Matters

Loyalty retention and expansion of its base of satisfied customers being the central philosophy of this company, the sales team is mandated to learn from the customer and work with them as partners to develop products and services around core issues and also meet their future needs. However this is very challenging considering the fact that it operates in two broad areas and distinct markets. Its business is in R&D, manufacturing, and marketing of agrochemicals and specialty & performance chemicals.

The Agrochemicals business focuses on crop-care solutions and it covers fungicides, insecticides, and herbicides, among other things. This business is very intriguing since the customer is a farmer, who operates at a panchayat level. The problem and needs of the farmer at every district level needs to be identified and monitored to provide appropriate solutions.

Its Specialty Performance Chemicals business, on the other hand, manufactures and markets leather, coating, paper, textile chemicals, additives for PVC industry, and chemicals for the construction industry. This division, which operates through a network of zonal and regional offices, mandates its product manager and R&D scientists to interact with the customers to understand their specific needs and designs.

The concept needed to be tested at village level.

MR Action

As each of the business unit is responsible for new market developments and identification of new products for fulfilling the needs of the customer, eMpulse was sought to help it to set up a market potential system so that the company's customers are serviced through regional heads, heading a strong team of qualified sales staff and marketing executives positioned in important regions who takes care of sales, marketing, and product development. The nature of the industry is such that it calls for a specialized service to the customer, the farmer in this case. These programs have to be well planned with clear understanding of local needs like awareness about seed treatment, awareness about concept of prophylactic sprays of fungicides, effective cultivation of locally important crops, etc. Further a pivotal link between RD and Marketing was to be strengthened to evaluate new products and technologies

as well as to demonstrate capabilities of new products and formulations to farmers, traders, and the strong marketing team.

Results

The success of any company depends on how it arrives at the basic market potential. The company initiated a systematic approach to determine the market share on every important crop in the district. This Market Potential System also helps to identify new opportunities and understand the needs and requirements of farmers in a much better way. The field staff now is in constant touch with the market and customers to accomplish this goal. eM-pulse conducted a comprehensive training program to help its sales force to appreciate the techniques and build competencies in the system and develop internal market research capabilities.

Lessons

Companies today are aware of the importance of market research in taking business decisions, especially in a competitive, globally-connected, and dynamic business landscape. However, what is becoming increasingly evident is the fact that several of these companies are laying emphasis on training their sales and marketing division with market research techniques. The marketing and analytic teams are being equipped to serve as business advisors or consultants.

The key is about how to interpret data rather than about how to design and collect the data. When one interprets customer feedback, or data from surveys and focus groups, the natural tendency is to interpret the data in a way that is consistent with one's own belief or bias. That should not be the case. It is important to put oneself in the mindset of a client and ask questions that they would like to ask. It is about how clients would like to see answers? Hence behaving like a consultant and offering them market research and industry expertise becomes important. Further making the report read well in terms of ease of understanding and simplicity is key. It is important to focus on the key takeaways from the market research study as a huge deluge of information will not help the bottomlines if the data is not viewed thoughtfully and interpretted in a meaningful way.

✻ Tenth Chapter ✻

Understanding Your Customers Using Big Data



Key Takeaways:

1. A full service market research that helps evaluate all aspects of the project. These projects typically involves Depth Interviews, Focus Groups, Surveys and desk research.

2. Indian real estate market is shifting rapidly. It is also a high investment area. The customers segments are varied with different needs

3. Before launching a big real estate project, it is prudent to conduct a comprehensive market study to understand the reactions of the project by the customers.

4. Agencies with real estate experience and understand the local geogrophy in context will be the best choice for a study of this nature

Challenge

It merchandizes best of the Indian and international fashion brands under one roof at absolutely great prices. It has air-conditioned stores varying between 70,000 and 1,50,000 square feet and stocks a wide range of products including apparels for men and women, infant wear, accessories, cosmetics, footwear, sportswear, luggage, and home linen. It promises value shopping for the customers. It is not about factory-second sales; its not about a garage sale; and neither is it about selling cheap. Its USP is providing an ambiance

and experience associated with leading brands at amazing prices. The vital element for the success of this strategy lies in how it organizes its shelves and manages the velocity of its merchandize to improve its bottomline.

Why it Matters

The retail sector in India is undergoing a major transformation. The focus is on enriching the customers experience of touch and feel of the products and allowing them to compare and try the products before buying. Further, the customers have a wider range of products to choose from. All this has catapulted the scale of operations at the level of front-end stores, at the back-end, and in supply chain network.

The company deals with leading brands like Adidas, Allen Solly, Arrow, Dockers, Gini Jony, Levis, Louis Phillip, Nike, Pepe Jeans, Provogue, Reebok, Reid Taylor, and Wrangler. As part of a diverse Group, it wants to not only bring down its cost of warehousing through a consolidation process with the Group, but also reduce the losses due to delayed or wrong delivery of its products in the stores. It has a robust system to capture the data at all points of transaction and transit.

Acquiring the insights about the customers in not an issue any more for the company. The problem that it confronts today is that it has enormous data on hand and this makes it difficult for it to discern the trends and make sense of the customer data. It commissioned eMpulse to do Big Data Analytics and help it to improve its profits.

Voluminous data made decisions tougher.

MR Action

In the retail industry, shelf space is extremely critical. The daily questions that the operations team encounters include: What products do I keep? How long and where do I display? These are extremely critical issues as the shelf space links directly to profitability. eMpulse worked on mining the data related to the velocity of the merchadize movement, planogram (what is displayed in which part of the shelf), and visual merchandizing (refers to displaying) and provide strategic advise.

The analysis provided interesting insights on the velocity of the merchandize. For instance, it was observed that a men's range of shirts which sold within two days of being displayed had a high probability of selling all its merchandise in that category within a month. Or, women's night dress is taken off the shelf if the sale does not happen for a month. This trend from

the huge data helps in proper categorization of the products and making it available prominently on the shelf

Results

Big Data has a very profound affect on retail and the marketing strategies. The trends emerging from the Big Data analysis can serve as building blocks for a better control of the system and processes and maximize the potential benefits. The study provided rich insights into retail merchandizing, marketing, and operations. On the merchandising front, the retailer was helped with the elements of pricing, promotions, and assortment management. The brand also received key findings on trends related to customer lifecycle management and the marketing mix of products. It is also getting advise on areas to improve like in the supply chain in-store availability management.

Lessons

A well performed advanced analysis provides insights that will help increase the companys net income. Advanced data analytics has its own list of challenges. Because of the large file sizes and large data elements, navigating the data files using popular analytics software might not be possible. Big data needs experienced data analysts who not only are business savvy to conduct the right kind of analysis, but also are able to navigate through the data effectively. Hardware capability is also an important aspect to consider while working with Big Data. Many times custom hardware set-ups are needed to manage big data projects.

Additional analytics can be conducted on data available in company computer data warehouse. Using this data, analysts can conduct Data Mining and Data Modelling. Also, analysis is conducted on Market Research data collected for primary research. Analysts typically use innovative model that provides very good value for money.

Advanced data analytics can help the marketing team with marketing spend ROI optimization, segmentation and product mix decisions, media spend optimization, demand and supply forecasting and balancing, customer churn reduction, risk modelling, pricing optimization, and other marketing specific information needs to enable maximizing revenue and net income.

Most cash register and ERP databases generate millions of line of data over a short period of time. More than one database is integrated together while conducting big data analysis. Most companies do not try to get any insights out of this Big Data because of the challenges involved in manipulating the data. They typically ask the IT department summarize the information

into standard reports which become small data files that can be manipulated using MS Office or similar software.

✻ Eleventh Chapter ✻

Private Equity Investment Decisions Supported By Market Research Insights



Key Takeaways:

1. A full service market research that helps evaluate all aspects of the project. These projects typically involves Depth Interviews, Focus Groups, Surveys and desk research.
2. Indian real estate market is shifting rapidly. It is also a high investment area. The customers segments are varied with different needs
3. Before launching a big real estate project, it is prudent to conduct a comprehensive market study to understand the reactions of the project by the customers.
4. Agencies with real estate experience and understand the local geography in context will be the best choice for a study of this nature

Challenge

A private equity (PE) firm in India is actively scouting for micro and small cap opportunities in the listed company space. It works closely with entrepreneurs with management capabilities and capital during the investment horizon. Since the company is targeting investments mainly in consumer-driven sectors, it needs not only investment opportunities to evaluate but

also help grow the businesses by providing professional management and business expertise.

Why it Matters

The vision of the PE is to create world class companies out of India's mid-cap businesses by developing and nurturing them. But a vast majority of the mid-cap businesses in India are family-owned businesses. They have unique and distinct values. And they are all always on look out for new business opportunities. These businesses want to have a trusted partner who can advise them and also help them create a strong business by building a professional management and leadership team. The strength of this PE is its ability to understand the culture of family business and provide professional management to create value, scale up business, and generate high returns for investors.

The PE follows a three-dimensional route to make an investment decision. This is to assess the potential of the sector, potential of the business idea, and strength of its internal capabilities. The fund makes investments in new economy sectors such as education, food, healthcare, and infrastructure services. It does an extensive due-diligence on specifics like the business model, value-chain dynamics, and demographics before investing in a business idea. It also assesses its internal and ecosystem capabilities to add value to the business.

The PE focused on family run business.

MR Action

Since the PE is focused on making investments in those family-owned businesses where they can actively engage with at both strategic and operational levels and on a sustained basis. In other words the investor would like to actively control the operations of the portfolio company. There is hypothesis on the market and the operational sides. The opportunity for the PE is on the market side. Growth hypothesis can then be leveraged latter. The fund took the support of eMpulse for a project to do due diligence on an investment opportunity.

Results

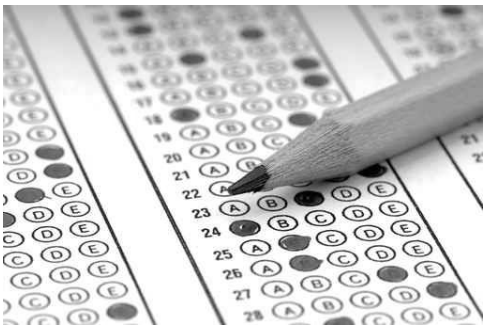
The PE companies are always looking out for investment. The PE got help on the market side evaluation, during investment to back their market side hypothesis and after investment to grow. As PEs buy stake from promoter companies, they need help for bring professional management skills and good leadership team, help grow the business more professionally, and increase sales by knowing the customer better; identify new opportunities; investment areas.

Lessons

Good agencies will follow the comprehensive research roadmap. The various modules of the roadmap are typically built on solid Market Research fundamental principles. The objective of this unique integrated approach is to provide a comprehensive actionable report that will bring substantive return on investment from the research. Given the unorganized nature of market data in India, it is important to take a Consulting Approach to information collection rather than a typical questionnaire led primary research approach that lead to inconclusive outcomes. Therefore for agencies will follow a method that triangulates information gathered from the Demand Side (end users), the Supply side (competitors), and relevant Secondary Research. This will provide a robust output that will help in clients decision making process.

✲ Twelfth Chapter ✲

Launching A New Product In The Education Sector



Key Takeaways:

1. A full service market research that helps evaluate all aspects of the project. These projects typically involves Depth Interviews, Focus Groups, Surveys and desk research.
2. Indian real estate market is shifting rapidly. It is also a high investment area. The customers segments are varied with different needs
3. Before launching a big real estate project, it is prudent to conduct a comprehensive market study to understand the reactions of the project by the customers.
4. Agencies with real estate experience and understand the local geography in context will be the best choice for a study of this nature

Challenge

Education is one of the top most priorities for every family in India and higher education becomes all the more entrenching. Every parent aspires to get his or her child reach the top and an MBA is the route for a vast majority of the students who want to ink their future in the corporate world. The student joins MBA for better career, good jobs, and more money. However, the challenge is that there is a significant gap between what the industry expects from a student passing out from an MBA institute and what he

learns there. An education company in India wanted to bridge that gap between industry expectations and Tier II-college MBA-student skills by launching a credible certification program and skill assessment modules.

Why it Matters

Since the education company saw an opportunity in the certification program for MBA students from small towns and cities, the main goal for the market study was to understand the feasibility and market potential for a bundled MBA certification program.

The concept needed to be tested with students.

It also wanted to find out the decision parameters of customers for this product so that it can be designed to meet the needs of the customers. Another key objective was to work on refining the leadership strategies of the company to help it move from a very successful B2B company to a B2C company and its implications on marketing strategies and internal business processes. Summarily the key goal of the research was to test the product acceptability for employability. It was all about things that could make students employable, improve the interview abilities of students, and enhance personal networking and referrals, among other factors.

Action

eMpulse conducted a comprehensive Quantitative Research comprising a Face to Face Interview (FTFI) with the target respondents. The respondents consisted of students, employers, and institutions. The study found out that most of the students were choosing MBAs for better career opportunities, jobs, and salaries. Further, most of them would like to join an institute if it had a good placement record. The skill certification and assessment module were seen as opportunities for better placement record and the concept is very well received by the student population. It also had the opportunity to fill the need for what the employees are looking for in group discussions, interviews, personality tests, and aptitude tests. If employers trust these certifications it will make their process more efficient. The overall awareness of the certification brand was very low and there was a need to develop a plan for brand recognition before the success of the product could be achieved.

Results

The bundled MBA product idea was opined by the interviewees as a product with a high potential for success. However, a strong brand position and loyalty had to be built up to en-cash on the opportunity. Towards this a fairly large nationwide brand campaign had to be run to develop the brand position and refine the concept of the brand concept. Further as the customer segment, the student, is price sensitive, accurate pricing that maximizes profits (balance between revenue and cost optimization) needed to be developed. One of the key recommendations was to develop dual tiered product.

Lessons

Individual certification is a good thing but the credentials of the company that is offering the certification is very important. Further, it had to address the employability issue and devise a package to assess the students in different aspects like communication test, personality test, analytical test and logical reasoning, diagnostic test, some personality tests so that students can get an overall idea about themselves. The research helped the company to devise a product that is very useful for the students and which tests almost every aspect that is needed in today's competitive world.

✻ Thirteenth Chapter ✻

Brand Management Using Mystery Shopping In India



Key Takeaways:

1. A full service market research that helps evaluate all aspects of the project. These projects typically involves Depth Interviews, Focus Groups, Surveys and desk research.

2. Indian real estate market is shifting rapidly. It is also a high investment area. The customers segments are varied with different needs

3. Before launching a big real estate project, it is prudent to conduct a comprehensive market study to understand the reactions of the project by the customers.

4. Agencies with real estate experience and understand the local geogrophy in context will be the best choice for a study of this nature

Challenge

Its among the worlds largest telecom service providers operating a national mobile network in India. Its strategy is to engage the customer through a uniform brand experience throughout the country, irrespective of region and language differences. At the heart of its customer-experience focus is a program to continuously understand and deliver value to each of its customers, engage them in a relevant and meaningful way, and communicate with them in a language that they would understand.

Why it Matters

This telecom Group has a large customer base of over 400 million customers and operates in over 30 countries spread across five continents. In India the Group has a customer base of over 150 million mobile subscribers and accounts for over 20 percent market share.

This Group is considered to have the widest presence of exclusive retail in the country, servicing over a million walk-ins, selling 33 percent of the total postpaid, and 8 percent of prepaid acquisition every month. However, this is very challenging considering the fact that retail in India is very unorganized. Further there are over 5.93 lakh villages and an overwhelming 90 percent of these villages have a population of less than 10,000. Almost three-fifth of this number has a population of less than 10,000 and the teledensity in the rural sector is only around 35 and it is a predominantly prepaid market.

The Group has three types of exclusive retail stores in India. One, company-owned franchised stores and rural stores run by business associates. All the stores are designed to have same branding and customer experience. There are approximately 465 company-owned and company-managed retail outlets and over 7000 minis across the urban and rural India.

Brand experience across regions needed to be uniform.

MR Action

The Group initiated a Mystery Shopping Audit with the help of eMpulse Global Market Research to monitor whether the organization's set brand and value standards to customers are followed across the stores uniformly. The audit studies the pulse of the market in line with its global best practices of measuring the customer delight. Mystery Shopping is a system to monitor and lead the customer satisfaction initiatives of a corporate entity across all points of customer interaction. The study identifies not only the key drivers that that make relative impact but also the areas for improvement and focus.

The Mystery Shopping involved the eMpulse staff to go as customers to these stores. It is important that the auditors go there posing as laymen and use the common man's terminology to state their problems for missing call alerts or so on. These auditors are trained to understand the culture, practices, and service standards of the retail outlets. They observe the way the retail outlet staff behave with the mystery auditors and explain the charges, explain the entire process, and serve them. Executives of the shop need to switch to local languages and explain things like the activation, deactivation,

audited, deviation, and fatal error related issues in the language convenient to the customer. They are also observed for the standard procedures like the appearance of the security and the staff, besides the checking the store interiors, exteriors, kiosks, hotline check, and token system, amongst other things. The auditor records the entire conversation on the phone.

Results

The audit is a continuous process and the key observations from the review include that the brand awareness of the Group in all the areas that it operates in is ubiquitous and has a strong attraction level. eMpulse tests top 50 customer interaction scenarios and rates the response from each store it audits. In Karnataka alone the company does about 250 audits per month. The market research firm needs to monitor the brand compliance and help the Group with metrics to maintain the standards and the consistency of the brand and report any deviations.

The telecom Group has also been able to make changes in its processes as the industry continues to evolve with increasingly sophisticated products and services.

Lessons

1. Mystery audit is one of the more advanced methods of data collection
2. Mystery Shopping audit data when collected and statistically analyzed can point to any deviations and suggest changes in process to meet local needs
3. Most companies with large brand value use Mystery Shopping as tool to ensure that their sales and service outlets are projecting a uniform brand standard and offering same customer experience
4. Typically many of these researches are done on an on-going basis with well defined sample to cover the entire network

✻ Fourteenth Chapter ✻

Dipstick Study For A Healthcare Equipment Launch Decision



Key Takeaways:

1. A full service market research that helps evaluate all aspects of the project. These projects typically involves Depth Interviews, Focus Groups, Surveys and desk research.
2. Indian real estate market is shifting rapidly. It is also a high investment area. The customers segments are varied with different needs
3. Before launching a big real estate project, it is prudent to conduct a comprehensive market study to understand the reactions of the project by the customers.
4. Agencies with real estate experience and understand the local geography in context will be the best choice for a study of this nature

Challenge

Reliability of diagnostic kits and portability of microscopy based diagnosis for malaria detection are major concerns and it is a major opportunity. A leading well-being and diversified global healthcare company wanted to carry out preliminary concept testing in order to get reactions to it malaria detection kits in India.

Why it Matters

Malaria is one of the seven major infectious diseases having a major socio-economic burden. India accounts for almost one-third of the cases related to Malaria in South East Asia. Diagnosis and treatment of Malaria is free in the government sector in India. Around 60-70 suspected samples are tested by each lab technician in a day using microscopy method.

Though the primary objective was to conduct preliminary concept testing, the company also wanted to understand the status of Malaria in India, the government policies, and strategies for Malaria control, competition, get feedback on the company as a brand and player in the malaria diagnostics space, besides estimating the business opportunity for the product.

The market potential depended on government policies.

MR Action

eMpulse did a qualitative research for this company. It carried out over 20 interviews in cities like Bangalore, Bhubaneswar, Chennai, Delhi, and Mangalore and spoke to the key directors who were monitoring the malaria programs both at the national and state level. Analysts interviewed entomologists, district malaria officers, pathologists, health inspectors, researchers, and lab technicians in these cities.

In their interviews, eMpulse found that the cost per test varies between Rs 100-200. Importantly shortage of the diagnostic equipment is a key concern. Further the key disadvantage of the current diagnostic procedure according to the district level malaria control officers was the time taken for confirmation.

Results

The preliminary reactions to the concept of the company were positive, both in the government and private sector. Another feedback was to keep the prices of the diagnostics kit at almost comparable prices as the microscope test.

Another interesting finding was that the usage of rapid diagnostic test kits for malaria diagnosis in the government sector is very limited and limited quantities of rapid diagnostic kits were being supplied to remote inaccessible high-risk pockets. The cost was also high, and not affordable by many poor patients. Government is the biggest buyer of the diagnostic kits and it was

willing to look at newer solutions. However, there was a clear expectation from the new solution. The key attributes they were interested in were devices that are simple to interpret, are rugged, work stably in different climatic conditions, and are cost effective. The other expectations were that the diagnosis time should be very less, cost of both the equipment and test should be very reasonable for it to be considered seriously by the government.

The key findings were:

1. Malaria diagnostics is largely dominated by unbranded and small players as far as equipment and devices are concerned. And the entry of the company, which was a healthcare giant, was a favorable view on the brand value

2. It was not the brand that was the concern, but quality and pricing

3. The company had the opportunity to enter malaria diagnostics business with cost-effective products

4. The company got a feedback to develop devices that are simple to interpret, work stably in different climatic conditions, and are cost effective.

Lessons

A good brand and a great product needs to be backed by market intelligence. Conducting a well planned survey covering every key stakeholder in the market ecosystem is key. Remember eMpulse spoke to entomologists as well. In pre-launch scenarios, like in the console maker case study, it's good to have a mix of in-depth interviews and questionnaire driven Market Research on a well defined sampling.

✻ Fifteenth Chapter ✻

Taking The Transport Service Closer To Its Rural Customers Using Market Research



Key Takeaways:

1. A full service market research that helps evaluate all aspects of the project. These projects typically involves Depth Interviews, Focus Groups, Surveys and desk research.
2. Indian real estate market is shifting rapidly. It is also a high investment area. The customers segments are varied with different needs
3. Before launching a big real estate project, it is prudent to conduct a comprehensive market study to understand the reactions of the project by the customers.
4. Agencies with real estate experience and understand the local geography in context will be the best choice for a study of this nature

Challenge

One of the premier road transport corporations in the country has more than 7,500 of its buses plying on roads under its service. On an average about 25 lakh commuters use its fleet every day. Though the transport

corporation operates very efficient and profitable services in the urban and semi-urban centers, it was facing stiff competition on the rural routes that it was operating. The competition was primarily from private operators, maxi cabs, and autorickshaws. It wanted to consolidate its market position and gain market share in that sector.

Why it Matters

Contrary to common belief that state-run transport corporations are not service and quality conscious, this organization is one among the very few in the country which is market-driven and nimble, despite the fact that it has a network of over 70 bus depots and 140 bus stations across the state. It has close to 37,000 staff.

The state corporation, which has an operational jurisdiction in 17 districts in a southern state of India, has a strong presence in rural area. Most of its operations is in that sector. It has over 800 buses pressed into service in the mofussil and grameen routes. The mofussil services operated by the corporation cover about 25 lakh kilometers of distance daily.

The state service ran a tough competition with private operators.

But the private passenger transport companies operating in the rural sector have increased the quality of passenger transport service by introducing sleeper and air-condition facilities for long distance travel and are offering equally good services at lower fares. They also cover the distances in much shorter time than the state buses. Though each of the operators have a distinct customer base, passengers are increasingly gravitating towards the private operators for their travelling needs. In this backdrop, the state transport corporation is making all efforts to retain its current set of customers and gain market share. The corporation proactively commissions a market research survey to consolidate its current position in the rural segment by understanding the areas of dissatisfaction of the passengers and address them so that they continue to use its services.

MR Action

Since the objective of the state transport corporation was to increase its market share, the challenge for eMpulse was identifying and developing a strategy that would attract the commuters, who were boarding the private-run buses and vehicles, toward the buses of the state-run corporation. eMpulse took the twin approach of profiling and understanding its existing customer

base and profiling the competitions customers so as to help the road transport corporation formulate strategies to realize its goal of consolidating its position and gain market share.

The perceptions about the state-run operator were very important to be collected. Why were the commuters not using the corporation? Who were the main customers of the two by occupation? What were their ages? What were the preferred modes of transport for the commuters in the region and why? How important are issues like punctuality, frequency, safety, reliability, and fares for customer? The research methodology most importantly involved interviews with all the key stakeholders. The commuters of the state run operator, the commuters of private operators, the personnel of the state operators, and the staff of the private operators participated in the study. Almost 1,000 people, spread over four sectors where there was stiff competition, shared their feedback.

Results

With the aim of helping the state transport corporation to consolidate its customer base and increase its market share, eMpulse researches specifically gathered data on the number of rural schedules, load factor, and average revenue per occupancy both for the state road transportation and the competition. The study also calculated the average revenue per month both in case of the state operator and the competition and estimated he market share of each of the transporters. Though the state road transport corporation was a strong brand in the rural markets, it had to formulate a strategy to launch an advertising campaign to attract commuters in that segment of the market, with an emphasis on safety, punctuality, reliability, and entertainment facilities. The state transport corporation launched several initiatives after the study. Most popular among these were the launch of flexible fares and introduction of entertainment in the buses plying on the rural routes. The state transport corporation won the prestigious Digiratti Award for its marketing campaign. The award recognizes the efforts of the operator to attract passengers through digital marketing and social marketing campaigns.

Lessons

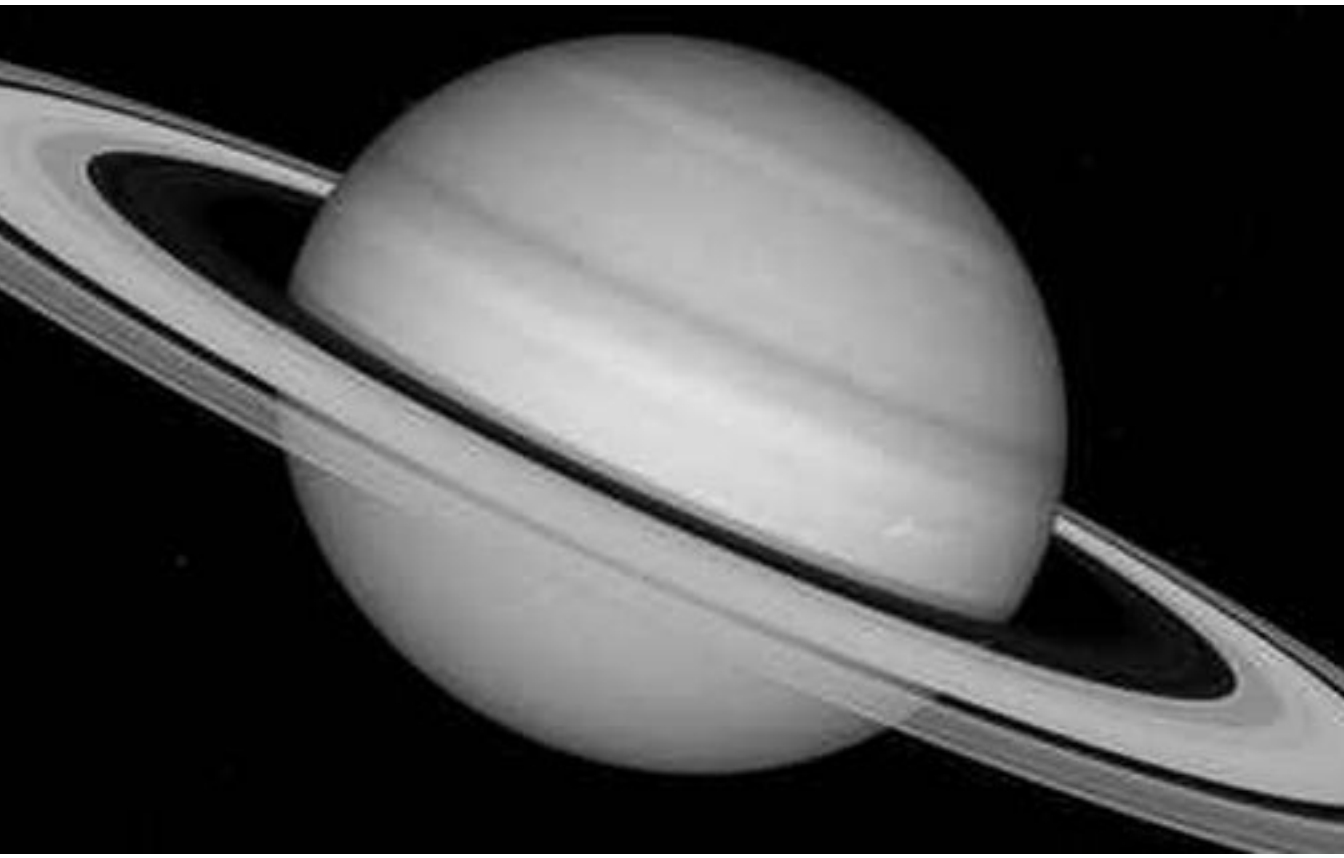
Determining the Market Size is very critical in the Indian market because of the rapid changes within the economy during the current period of time. Market Map is a specialized tool which helps clients make decision on the scale at which to operate within the Indian market. Given the unorganized nature of market data in India, it is important to take a Consulting approach

to information collection rather than a typical Market Research questionnaireled primary research approach. Researchers should follow a method that triangulates information gathered from the Demand Side (end users), the Supply side (competitors), and relevant Secondary Research. This will provide a robust output that will help in clients decision making process.

Customer satisfaction studies are also very critical to ensure that the products and services are performing as planned within the Indian market. Since the market is changing rapidly it is very critical that the customer satisfaction is monitored after the sale is made. The objective of customer satisfaction study is to understand customer satisfaction at various post-sales customer touch points in terms of areas of satisfaction or dissatisfaction and who or what affects customer satisfaction. This allows the company to come up with actions to be taken to eliminate or reduce dissatisfaction.

✻ Sixteenth Chapter ✻

Aligning Business Processes to Customers' Voices



It is important for Market Research studies to use a strong framework while conducting research. One of the examples of a framework is eMpulse Delivery Model (EDM^{TM}). Typically every good research is custom designed to clients specific needs, but the general framework for the research is guided by frameworks like EDM^{TM}. This introduces quality and ensures that no critical component is ignored in the research project.

16.1 eMulse Delivery Model (EDM^{TM})

The EDM^{TM} framework ensures that a balanced treatment is given to all the key components that need to be addressed in a study. The central component to EDM^{TM} framework is the customerthe current customer and the prospective customer. Also, the researcher needs to understand the environment in which the market exists. A thorough understanding of the competition to the company has to be gained by investigative research methods. The customer information and competition information is studied in context of the company information and an actionable plan is developed using this framework.

The market conditions and extraneous environment in which the customer exists form the platform in which the research is conducted. The study is designed to bring in customer voice in the context of their environment. Then a customer engagement plan that is robust to the market conditions can be developed. Meetings with company leadership are conducted to understand the company vision, strategies, and financial situation. Typically a SWOT (Strengths, Weakness Opportunity, and Threat) analysis is conducted for the company. The company's capabilities in terms of existing products and services, sales and marketing culture, cash flow, net income, velocity of design, and agility of manufacturing are evaluated. The actions that are recommended should have a very good alignment with these realities of the company.

A SWOT analysis reveals a company's capabilities.

16.2 EDM for Product Launch

For a new product launch, the research typically starts with the evaluation of the product and services followed by the understanding of the company's parameters including company fundamentals and financials. Some of the methods used to understand the company parameters are net income modelling, company strategy analysis, cash flow modelling, and market-opportunity

evaluation. Then research is conducted using the various Market Research tools to understand the customers and the competitions customers. Some of the steps involved in getting the customer data are instrument design, data collection, coding, data entry, data cleaning, Poke Yoke and inspection based QC, data analysis, and final reporting.

Based on the above, a product and brand strategy is developed. This is an iterative process where a few rounds of research, followed by information synthesis is conducted. The tools used in this section are concept generation, Pugh selection model, reality validation, metrics dashboard and action plan development. Once the plan is developed, then the project is ready for the execution phase. A rigorous action plan is developed which is executed by the company. It is important to ensure that the triple constraints are managed for action execution and results have been monitored for return on investment.

16.3 EDM for Brand Monitoring

The brand and market actions that was a result of the EDM^{TM} for product and service launch, is implemented, monitored, and upgraded to ensure that the performance levels are maintained at the highest levels. The customers, competition, environment, and the company capabilities change constantly. The rate of change is slower in steady-state economies, while it is rapid in growing economies like India.

The market actions are implemented and checked for effectiveness. Then on an ongoing basis the customers, competitors, and environment are monitored to ensure that the health of the brand is sustained. This step is called Market Pulsing. Various techniques like mystery shopping, surveys, and secondary research are used. Based on the results of these studies, actions are refined and new corrective actions are captured and executed. This ensures that the company is agile in knowing when changes occur and react accordingly.

✻ Seventeenth Chapter ✻

Emerging Frontier of Market Research



Online marketing and sales are one of the fastest growing revenue channels. A significant portion of the GDP is now generated through online sales channel. Even if you do not generate revenue through e-commerce, it is very critical for companies to monitor their online brand health.

Many research companies in India offer services that help in monitoring of competitor Pay-Per-Click (PPC) and Search Engine Optimization (SEO) strategies. They also perform monitoring of online chatter and webpage traffic monitoring. They also conduct Internet traffic analytics and optimization, qualitative research to refine online positioning, and develop lists of marketable products.

Using advanced web traffic analytics these agencies are able to provide clients with great insights about customer base and their behavior within web environments.

Online marketing brings together both the science and art of the commerce driven by World Wide Web. The different phases involved in Internet marketing include online presence design, development, marketing campaigns, advertisements, e-commerce, and revenue generation.

These agencies can help excel in multiple channels of refining one's web presence. The main channels used to reach out to customers in cyber space are PPC advertisements, SEO, banner advertisements, E-mail campaigns, and social media interaction.



Social Media: Short lifespan, high visibility.

These service providers utilize SEO techniques to help ensure that prospects are able to find a company's website. Once a visitor is on the website, it is possible using web analytics to keep them there if one understands their behavior. Statistics such as pages visited, time spent on pages, documents viewed, and click patterns are key in converting prospects into customers. They also monitor the company's brand on the World Wide Web and provide regular reports. Some of the chatter channels through which brand health is typically monitored are Facebook, LinkedIn, MySpace, Twitter, and YouTube.

Many social communities have a short life span, but they also have high potency to impact a brand. Some of the tools that are used to monitor the online communities that impact a company are Google Alerts, Twitter Keyword Monitoring, Blog Trackers, Facebook Lexicon and other similar tools and techniques.

These agencies also conduct qualitative research to help companies position their online presence. This will help them develop a online presence that

is driven by customer information. Some of the qualitative services provided that help with online marketing and website development include qualitative analysis for SEO optimization, qualitative analysis for PPC advertisement optimization, and qualitative studies for website development.

✻ Eighteenth Chapter ✻

About the Authors

18.1 Vijay Palanna

Vijay is Managing Director of eMpulse India. He has over 25 years of experience in the Indian Market Research industry and one of the leaders in the field. Vijay has worked at many of the leading Market Research agencies in India including ORG-MARG and Icon Added Value. Vijay has great abilities within the entire Market Research domain, right from client relationship management and research designs to back end activities like data collection, data processing, and business interpretations of analysis data. He is one of the best when it comes to making practical data driven interpretations using sparse market data. Vijay has managed large multi-location projects and also handled diverse clients across multiple sectors. Vijay holds a Masters Degree in Arts from Bangalore University and has completed various advanced courses in the field of Business and Marketing.

18.2 Dr Rajkumar Palanna

Raj is an investor partner at eMpulse. He has over 20 years of experience at global Fortune 500 companies. He has worked in the Insurance, Retail Banking, Investment Banking, Leasing Services, Mortgage, Automotive, Aerospace, Medical, Medical Insurance, Service, Textile, Oil & Gas and other business domains. In his career he has held various leadership roles including senior director, director, manager, consultant and program Manager. He has multilingual skills, with working knowledge in five different languages. Raj is a Visionary strategic thinker with a PhD, MBA & MS. He has the unique ability to combine advanced concepts and practical re-

ality. He has worked with many CEOs and their direct reports at leading corporations. He is considered one of the best-in-class for applied statistical analysis and interpretation. He has a track record of achieving multi-million dollar cost savings from company operations. He has extensive knowledge and experience in globalization of businesses. Raj has been a visiting faculty at top universities including University of Southern California & Oklahoma State University

18.3 eMpulse India Introduction

eMpulse India is a boutique market research (MR) firm that provides custom market research solutions to its clients. The strong background of the leadership team and the employees allows us to deliver very high quality service, but at the same time the small size of our firm allows us to provide the price competitiveness that cannot be found in large market research giants. eMpulse India can handle a variety of jobs ranging from simple MR job to complex brand consulting. We offer the basic Market Research services with a one stop shop mentality. We have expertise in the entire MR value chain and have operations capability in all segments of the MR value stream. eMpulse India is part of eMpulse International with expertise in many international markets. eMpulse India benefits from the expertise learned by the exposure to of eMpulse associates to latest advancements in MR techniques. The services provided by eMpulse India are:

- Acquiring market data
- Analysis of data
- Marketing and brand consulting
- Market and brand monitoring.

eMpulse strives to provide high quality market research. To learn more about eMpulse India you can visit website www.empulseglobal.com.