RUNNING HEAD: MARKETING AND PR

Interim assessment - Case study

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# Lush Positioning Strategy

Lush positions itself as a luxury brand offering superior products and services to its customers. The overall positioning of the brand is luxurious, colourful, indulgent, ethical, fun and pampering. The quality of Lush products is perceived as high as it responds to the personal novel needs of its customers and enhances their experiences. Customers are prepared to pay for the products they believe as superior and premium. The price of Lush products is higher than that of other cosmetics and related products available in the market but less than some other players as Body Shop. Lush have their own brand stores, they do not distribute to the local sellers, and utilizes exclusive distribution to uphold the high-quality image of the brand.

The retail outlets that portray a positive and decent image preserve this quality perception. The stores are distinctive and have a deli layout, having soap bars displayed in the form of chunks, facemask in the cold pots in tables like salad bars. This in-store experience is an essential element of the brand positioning strategy. Customers touch and smell the products and samples displayed at the stores and this in-store design is associated with the positioning of the brand. The “Lush” experience created by the company at its touch points builds a positive positioning image of the brand as a pampering, fun and guilt-free experience for its consumers.

The views feelings events and judgments formed by the overall experience of customers are interconnected and make an experience a long-term memory eventually creating the loyalty for its customers owing to the consistency in brand values, store image and product attributes. An analysis of the strategic approaches for global brand positioning reveals that Lush espouses homogenous market position for all of its customers in the world (Hassan and Craft, 2012). Lush customers all over the world are environmentally sensible, fun loving and brand conscious, ready to pay premium prices for the handmade quality products.



# Lush Target Market

 The target market of Lush is mainly women aged 18 to 45 and the majority of Lush products are targeted the women of this age group, though Lush products are not gendered specific. This is due to the reason that Lush products emphasize the beauty and skin care mainly for women. Lush target market also consists of customers who are willing to try new things and share their feedback on the blogs, social media websites and different platforms. Customers buy the products because of the smell, colour and uniqueness. In addition, one segment of the target market of Lush is the group of customers who look deeper into the company's policies and business practices. Lush products are freshly made and they hire people instead of machines. Every part of the product is taken into consideration regarding the impacts it produces on the environment and society.

 Most of the Lush products are free of packaging and naked. The target market knows that Lush understands the needs of their customers and do the right thing. Therefore, the Lush customers are those who are more environmentally and communally aware. They have belief in brand that their products support a good cause and they can participate in that cause by consuming Lush products. Most of these customers also want to become part of campaigns in favour of environmental protection and eliminating animal harm. Lush assists such customers by allowing them to take part in these campaigns.

Lush also attracts young customers to whom it appeals by using attractive smells, colours and fun packaging. Walking to a Lush shop seems like entering a candy shop. In addition, the friendly customer service focused on customer care and satisfaction attracts the middle to high-class customers to this brand. The stores are mostly located in the posh and stylish areas to display the brand image, targeted at middle and high-class people. Overall, the target market of Lush consist of young and middle-aged women, eco-friendly and conscious consumers belonging to the middle/upper class.

# My Attitude towards Lush Products

The tricomponent model was suggested by Rosenberg and Hanland and this model comprises of three elements in the psychological process, former is cognition, second is impact and the third one is conation and action (Chih et al., 2015). The cognitive component is based on the knowledge already stored about an object. The effective component deals with the emotions and feelings about the brand or object while the conative component deals with intention to take action or behave with respect to the brand or attitude object. This model largely evaluates how these attitudes are shaped (Apolonio, 2019).

Being a girl always interested in taking care of myself, I have always been involved in trying new products related to bath and body and skin care. “Me time” is the only way for me to relax, my experience with Lush products have been very good as always, though I switch between brands. After using Lush products including their bath bombs, cleaners and shampoo bars. My attitude towards organic and natural products of Lush has always been very positive. My experience with the company always remains in my mind whenever I seek some new skincare and bath related product.

Whenever I visit the Lush store and get in touch with any of the touch points with the brand I get excited and willing to try the new products with yummy colours and innovative products. Getting in contact with any of the touch points reminds me of my wonderful experience with the brand and excites me about the new products. My positive experiences, attitudes and emotional arousals linked with the brand persuade me to buy the products. Even if I do not buy, I always develop intentions to buy Lush products for the reason that they appeal to me so much.

# If Lush were to release a campaign with a call to action such as ‘Pick one up now, you deserve an indulgence', which of the three Freudian systems would it be appealing to? Explain with reference to Freudian theory.

The science of marketing has been established from other fields such as sociology, psychology, economics and social psychology. The psychoanalytic theory of personality developed by Sigmund Freud has major implications for the field of marketing (“Consumer Behavior Theories: Psychoanalytic Theory - Husson University,” n.d.). It distributes human psyche into three elements named as id, ego and superego. ID operates on the principle of pleasure and is denoted to as the unconscious mind. Ego, on the other hand, is the conscious mind and it develops from ID, it provides one with the sense of continuity and identity. The third one is superego, which deals with the ethical and moral extents; it affects the ego based on morality parameters. If Lush is going to initiate a campaign having words, "Pick one up now you deserve and indulgence”, it will appeal to the “ID” from Freudian system.

Since ID is the subconscious mind and it works on the principle of pleasure, therefore it is responsible for impulsive and basic decision-making. The slogan employed by Lush would directly appeal to the ID and it will trigger an emotional response. Word utilized in the slogan such as "indulge" and "deserve", recaps consumer of the pleasant experience and caters to the subconscious mind. Other words act as a call to action mechanism and trigger an obedient response in most of the consumers, such as “now” and “pickup”. Marketers have used this very popular marketing strategy across the world. It is clearly visible from such a marketing campaign that Lush is not reluctant to address their customers who believe in the brand as the responsible and honest one. Customers will respond to such call to action by the brand and such a strategy will be successful in drawing the attention of potential customers to the brand appealing the "ID".

Difference between actual and ideal self-image

Consumers always create an image of themselves based on the synopsis of their thoughts and feelings with respect to their self-image. These self-images not only reflect the shopper's personality but also impacts the buying choices made by them. Self-image can be of many types as identified by the researchers and marketers such as actual self-image, ideal self-image, social self-image and expected self-image etc (Abdallat, 2012). An actual self-image is the opinion of buyers about themselves. This perception does not have to be obvious to others and it sticks to one's thoughts. It is highly influenced by some factors such as media, family and friends, etc. On the contrary, an ideal self-image is the way shoppers want to perceive themselves or wish they saw themselves. An ideal self-image is also impacted by the cultural values, role models, things one appreciates.

Consumers always prefer products that have congruity with their self-image, including the actual self, ideal self and ideal social self-images. Lush has created a brand image to link the concept of ideal and actual self-image to ensure that customers can develop an association with the brand. Its slogans and tag lines make a reference to making moms proud, having answerability and trusting that consumer can never be wrong. It creates an image of an honest brand, that feels very pleasant and interesting to consumers. Customers whose ideal and actual self-image link with these values possessed by Lush are more attracted to it.

Customers view themselves as honest buying from a brand that cares for the environment and society, creates fun and excitement in self-care and bathing and fills life with perfumes and fragrances. I always buy from the brand that makes me believe who I am and help me to achieve who I want to be. I feel beautiful and happy when I take care of myself and believe that using skin care product will help me to achieve how I want to look, and it makes me buy these skin care products.

# Lush customers as consumer innovators

There are different factors that make a consumer an innovator. Innovator consumers are those who have a creative mindset towards the products and services or a brand. Such consumers are inspired by the innovations involved in the products. Most of the Lush customers are inspired by the natural and handmade products. Though Lush customers also include consumers who are willing to give a try to new products and have a mindset of buying new stuff (Eun Park et al., 2010). Different aspects related to Lush products influence consumer’s buying decisions such as its environmental policies, no animal testing, charity works etc. Only those consumers dare to buy new products by Lush who are innovators and want to experiment with new things, despite the fact that they are not tested on animals.

The marketing messages by Lush are centred on the words such as "New Arrivals", "Limited Edition", "Now in Stores", and "More". These messages are related to the new addition of flavours to the existing product line and freshly made products which urge buyers to go for a purchase. In addition, innovative customers make purchases to become part of environmentally safe products. One such example is of Lush whale soap in Australia to support sea shepherd which inspires customers to support a cause by buying Lush products. This is how Lush attracts its customers to support any new cause with a new addition product which is purchased and supported by the innovators.

Innovators are familiar with the quality and feature Lush or some other offers in its products and they dare to make purchases of new innovative products. In view of the advertisements developed by the company, the message in advertisements is focused on product characteristics and it emphasizes that product is an addition to the existing range with a unique fragrance. On the other hand, if customers are non-innovators not much focus is placed on newness in the products and its characteristics.

# Lush Brand Personality

 Brand Personality is interpreted by the human features that the advertisers and marketers use to attract the customers towards a brand (Apolonio, 2019). The features of actual and potential customers of the brand are allocated to the brand and the brand personality is generally referred to as the brand style, values it possesses, brand name and its logo etc. Aaker considered that a brand could work like an individual or a character. Since customers exploit the brand personality as a way to demonstrate their own personality, therefore, marketers are not publicizing the product but the brand personality that helps customer to achieve their own desired personality. Aaker brand personality framework describes the profile and qualities of a brand in terms of five core dimensions that include and different aspects of sincerity, excitement, competence, sophistication and ruggedness and different aspects of personality that comes from these core areas (Schiffman et al., 2010).

 With reference to the Aaker brand personality framework and the case, Lush communicates the brand personality of Sincerity, for being authentic, joyful, and down to earth. In addition, the brand brings excitement for its customers with attractive and fun colours, new fragrances, by being daring to innovate and imaginative. Last, of all, the brand illustrates competence as Lush is intelligent, successful and reliable. Since Lush is famous for being environmentally friendly and honest for its social concerns regarding human and animal rights and using organic ingredients. In this way, it assists its customers to achieve this personality by buying Lush products and participating in the campaigns. Its limited edition products and Emotional Brilliance line of cosmetics demonstrate its brand personality. By its slogans and tag lines, it displays an honest, pleasant and kind personality to the customers by making moms’ product, considering that customer is always veracious and having a sense of answerability.

# Current situation of the brand

 The current research on the positioning strategy and target market of the brand, it can be arbitrated that the key target market and positioning strategy of the brand remains the same. However, since the brand is growing and becoming global the geographical segmentation is changing but the company adopts a universal approach and targets customers who are committed to ethical buying and are obsessed with natural and pure products. Lush know the core values of its buyers and incorporates accountability over a luxurious and classy brand image. Lush adopts the strategy of competitive positioning by making organic products using fruits and vegetables like ingredients.

 Lush achieves an edge due to its image as an environmentally friendly brand, which produces minimal waste in the form of packaging. Products do not contain any animal byproduct and can be used by all the vegans. Lush is also committed to its manufacturing process, its products are made by hand and ingredients are obtained from the local communities. Overall, the positioning strategy of the brand remains the same and its target market also shares the same attributes primarily that are females, mostly vegan and cherishing socially responsible businesses.

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