Customer Experience Strategy: Research Outcomes

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**Introduction**

Managing a business is not an easy task, especially when the business involves dealing with customers. A business person has to be very vigilant about the market situation and the emerging trends in the market so that he can maintain a profitable business in the market. These trends and market situations are created and monitored by the customers and business people are almost unable to control it. Customer is the king of the market and has the power to turn the situation of the market in any direction in no time. Hence the satisfaction of the customers is the ultimate goal of every business person, whether they are running a sole proprietorship or a big multi-national corporation.

 Various examples of customer expectations and customer satisfaction can be seen in daily life. We come across a number of questionnaires, surveys and interviews in which the producer or the advertiser asks us or the ultimate customers to suggest changes in their products or services so that they can improve the quality of products or the standard of the services that are being provided by them. In the current age of competition, almost every organization is doing this so that they can grab the attention of maximum number of customers in the market. Organizations in Australian market are also not far behind in this practice. Whether they are giving products to the consumers or services in any industry, the competition is never easy. One of the best examples in this respect can be seen in the banking sector. The following study will take the example of Commonwealth bank to Australia (CBA) that how the bank lives upto the expectations of its customers and what strategies it adopts in order to satisfy its customers. Moreover the following study will also highlight how feedback and voice of the customers help significantly in improving the service quality of the banking services.

**Discussion**

**Introduction of the Organization**

The Commonwealth Bank of Australia (CBA) was a federal government-owned and run bank and many people banked with them because they were effectively publicly owned.
The State Bank of Victoria (SBV), unfortunately, was saddled with debt and “given away” by the state government of the day, to the CBA. The CBA was then “privatised” through a public share offer and sold off by the Federal Labor government of the time.

The Commonwealth Bank of Australia was created in 1911 and opened its doors for business in the following year. It was created by an Act of Parliament and was indeed “owned” by the Australian Government. The CBA has had a long history in being the bank for Australia’s public servants and still this day is the biggest Bank in Australia providing work for more than 50,000 employees (Schlagwein, Thorogood, & Willcocks, 2014). Since its inception the CBA merged with a host of smaller banks such as the State Bank of Western Australia, Queensland Government Savings Bank, State Bank of Victoria, Rural Bank of NSW and Colonial Mutual to position itself as the front runner in our Big Four Australian Banks with an annual revenue of some $27 Billion.

Today its shares are worth $71.66 each and they are one of the most popular Australian shares for private and public Superannuation funds. It’s now a public company (and a pretty successful one) and would have lots of legacy customers who originally banked with the publicly-owned forerunner. Being the “largest” bank and an image of being publicly owned and having a specific “national” sounding name would also help it gain more customers. It’s all about the number of customers they have and the deposits they have in the bank.

**Primary Research Method**

 The model that can be put up is a formal Customer Service measurement model, that is often used by Fortune 500 companies (Hassan, Nawaz, Lashari, & Zafar, 2015). The model will pretty much be a base on which a system can be built, newer variables can be added based on different channels and varying sizes of customer bases. The different metrics will be:

**Problem Resolution (PR)**
Was the customer's problem resolved, irrespective of how long it took or how well? (metrics that we will come back to later).

**First Contact Resolution(FCR)**
Was the customer's problem resolved in the first point of contact, if not the rating will go down based on the call-back time? For e.g. If the customer calls for the same issue before 15 days( based on your business model and availability)  from the day he/she actually called for resolution, the FCR percentage will go down.

**Customer Satisfaction Report (CSR)**
Here, customers will rate the service experience, both based on agent and business. For e.g. I might speak to an extremely pleasant agent and like the experience, however, I might not like the high wait time on the automated system. So devise a survey that separates both.

**PR + FCR +CSR = OS ( Overall Satisfaction)**
Based on your business model, you can add or subtract variables.Make sure you consider healthy sample size, for the system to be consistent. Each variable will be independent and will not affect each other. The resulting OS will be your customer satisfaction index. Ideally, variables will be measured in percentages and the resulting OS will also be in percentage as well.

**Secondary Research Methods**

The secondary research methods that can be used in the case of this research is the journal articles, magazines, books and reports that are published by the Commonwealth Bank of Australia. Various financial reports that have been published by CBA will be helpful in showing the customer satisfaction level of the customers of the bank. Various kinds of books can also be helpful in determining the customer satisfaction level of the customers and how they can be improved in various kinds of services.

**Identification and Differentiation between Two Kinds of Customer Segments**

Focus on Customer:

Customer Relationship Management (CRM) in the banking sector manages to put the client at the point of convergence of the association to take into account his/her needs, fulfil them, and in this way expand the benefits of the association. Managing an account CRM enables brokers to comprehend the necessities of the client and coordinates it with individuals, innovation, assets and business forms. It centres around the information accessible in the association and utilizations it to enhance the association with clients. Saving money CRM uses data and expository devices to improve the client goal (Bhat, & Darzi, 2016).

Improved Profitability:

CRM in the banking sector empowers money related foundations to give representatives better preparing that encourages them to confront clients all the more effective. It accomplishes a better framework and at last, adds to better general execution. The side-effects of keeping money CRM are client obtaining, maintenance and productivity. Money related organizations that don't execute CRM will without a doubt end up with lesser benefit combined with a sharp decrease in the number of clients.

Satisfied Customers:

It is necessary to make a client feel as though he/she is the special case that issues. this will go far in fulfilling and holding them. Budgetary organizations require arrival on a venture and it has been demonstrated that an expansion in consumer loyalty more than contributes a decent amount to ROI. The primary benefit of saving money CRM lies in fulfilment and expanded maintenance of clients.

Centralized Information:

CRM in the banking sector manages to obviously coordinate individuals, procedures, and innovation. Managing an account CRM gives money related foundations an all-encompassing perspective of all saving money connections and client data, and stores it in a solitary information distribution centre where it can be examined later.

**Usage of Voice of Customer (VOC) and Customer Feedback Obtained From Primary and Secondary Research into Account in Forming the Customer Experience Strategy**

The feedback and voice of the customers, investors and the depositors regarding the services provided by CBA can be very helpful in improving the standard and quality of these services. There would be multiple steps that can be taken in this respect:

1. The first step would be to check if the feedback is an isolated one or if the said product/service does have some integrity issues which need to be addressed.
2. A survey (as a part of Six Sigma where applicable/viable) should be rolled out to gather inputs. This is to help confirm if similar feedbacks are coming in. If not, then it would be an isolated issue. Resolve it with the customer via a 1-to-1 communication.
3. In the absence of a survey (unavailable for various reasons), check the product batch. Discuss appropriate resolution options with the manufacturing team or expert SPOC/s.

Those would be some primary ways to attend to complaint feedback. For product improvement, a round of design-oriented discussion should be done. This is product specific. For example, edibles would have a different upgrade requirement compared to mechanicals. Cosmetics, similar would be different from both edibles and mechanicals. The ideal approach towards a resolution would have near similar principles at its core. Customer comfort and convenience should be kept in mind. This may require studies/reports pertaining to the customer group type being served. If the feedback is specific enough, then based on logistical requirements should be studied, discussed and done as per industry regulations, industry-specific.

**How CEM Strategy Will Offer a Better Service to Your Organisation’s Customers**

Like any business retail banks save on costs by centralising a lot of the core operations. While this works for cookie-cutter products, it creates more delays when there is a problem. If cost is not an issue and the only aim is to improve customer service then branches should get more autonomy. That will allow the client-facing staff to be more creative and flexible in the products and solutions offered (Giannakis-Bompolis, & Boutsouki, 2014). All this is easier said than done. In this age of increased regulation and massive banks, no one wants to risk some fresh-faced kid, 2 years out of college based in some small town offering creative solutions to a client. And also, we are fast heading to a cashless society. Even now, most people prefer to avoid going into a physical branch. Hence as Haim Teog eluded, the bank with the best software and most efficient apps will win a share of the market.

**Conclusion**

Hence, in a nutshell, it can be concluded that the customer satisfaction level in the case of the banking sector, especially in the case of Commonwealth Bank of Australia, can be determined using two types of sources, primary and secondary. The primary sources include surveys, questionnaires and direct interviews while the secondary sources include books, journals, journal articles, magazine articles and various other feedback options. This feedback can further help in Customer Experience Management (CEM) and devise appropriate strategies to improve the quality of services being provided to them.

**Survey questions (customers experience with the commonwealth bank Australia)**

**1: Was it easy to access and locate the bank’s branch in your city?**

1. **Yes b) No**

**2: Did the branch staff was aware of the bank’s products and services?**

 **a) Yes b) No**

**3: Was the bank’s staff friendly and behave in a polite and courteous manner?**

 **a) Yes b) No**

**4: Did the branch staff have a professional and presentable appearance?**

**a) Yes b) No**

**5: The branch staff is willing to respond and cateretd to all your concerns on time?**

**a) Yes b) No**

**6: The branch appearance was clean and tidy?**

1. **Yes b) No**

**8: Did the branch has comfortable seating arrangement?**

**a) Yes b) No**

**9: Did the branch has sufficient staff to cater to all the customers?**

**a) Yes b) No**

**10: Did the branch contains sufficient customer-representatives for your needs?**

**a) Yes b) No**

**11: Are you satisfied with the working hours of the bank?**

**a) Yes b) No**

**12: Are you satisfied with the online bank’s services?**

**a) Yes b) No**

**13: Is it easy to access the bank’s online services?**

**a) Yes b) No**

**14: Was the Bank’s call centre staff cooperative?**

**a) Yes b) No**

**15: Are the calls answered quickly by the agent present in the bank’s call centre?**

**a) Yes b) No**

**16: Are you satisfied with your experience with the common wealth bank Australia?**

**a) Yes b) No**

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