

Management Marketing - OPPO

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Abstract

The study below is on the product assortment or the different products sold by a company. The company that has been chosen for the study is OPPO. OPPO is a Chinese mobile communication and consumer electronics company. Chen Mingyong established the company in 2001. However, it got registered globally in 2004. The headquarters of OPPO is in Guangdong, China. The company offers smartphones, amplifiers, headphones etc. The mission and vision of OPPO are to provide the customers with products that are exclusively designed to suit their needs (Oppo.com, 2018). In the first part of this study, the marketing mix of the company has been discussed along with the marketing communication and distribution channel strategy. The assortment of the product and the brand inventory have been discussed in the second part. The direct and indirect competitive brands have been compared as well. Two recommendations have been made based on the study.

Keywords

OPPO, Management marketing, analysis, Chinese mobile, company.

1. Introduction and Company Overview

When OPPO (China) was founded in 2004, Chen mingyong became the CEO and led OPPO to become the industry leader. OPPO has been focusing on the technological innovation of mobile phone photography, creating the era of "mobile phone selfie beauty". More than 200 million people worldwide are using OPPO camera phones. Oppo within the enterprise emphasizes the core values of "duty", "duty" includes five aspects, the first layer: "isolate external pressure and temptation, maintain normal mentality, return to the origin of things, grasp what we should do the reasonable direction", the second layer: "duty request dared to question, dare to challenge, through critical thinking, captured the essence of things." The third layer: "the duty is to ask yourself rather than ask others, when problems occur, first seek responsibility for yourself"; the fourth layer: "the duty standardizes the attitude of cooperation with others, I do not make others cheap"; the fifth layer: "the duty is higher than integrity, even if there is no commitment, should be done." "Extremely beautiful" is the essence of OPPO brand, which conveys OPPO brand's pursuit of perfection and determination to achieve perfection. The ultimate beauty not only represents the pursuit of perfection, but also represents the pursuit of beauty and art.

2. Marketing Analysis

Task 1

A company conducts marketing analysis so that it can understand the specific market for its product. Besides, the company can also improve its current products based on marketing analysis (Burns et al. 2014). There are different marketing analysis strategies that OPPO uses that are described below.

A: Positioning

The Chinese mobile communication company OPPO has captured the global market within a very short period of time. Currently, the company has its business running in almost twenty-one countries. OPPO is a well-known brand in places like South Asia, Africa, United States, South East Asia, Middle-Eastern countries, Europe and Australia. The primary consumers of OPPO mobile phones are from India, Myanmar, Pakistan, China, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka etc. Therefore, the company has designed its products to suit the need of the customers from different regions. The company has focused on the geographical location to place the products efficiently (Henkel et al. 2016). In order to differentiate the positioning strategy, OPPO offers the customers with the customised user interface. OPPO is the first company that had built an eight-megapixel camera and offered that in the smartphones. The positioning strategy of OPPO is also based on the target group of customers. The company designs its mobile phones and develops the features to target the youth instead of the middle-aged consumers.

The multi-tasking ability along with the fast service of OPPO have allowed the company to gain popularity in the Chinese market. The specifications of OPPO phones ensure that the users get the smoothest experience ever. Besides, the company sells the phone both online and offline, which allows that company to offer its products in a medium to high price range (Heinberg et al. 2017). However, OPPO also has some mobile phones that are expensive than its other models. The company wants to target a huge range of customers through its cost-effective as well as expensive phones. The company has secured the first place as the leading Chinese mobile communication company in 2016. It has also increased its sales in countries like India by 750%, which is a huge amount of money (Malonda and Pangemanan, 2018). The company is presently looking forward to position OPPO as an innovative and technologically updated brand. Thus, the company has launched one of its most expensive smartphones in India recently. OPPO is in the third position in India with a market share of 7.4%. The company wants to achieve the first position as India is one of the most promising markets for the smartphones of OPPO. In order to utilise its positioning strategy to the fullest, the company has also never worked with the same creative partner for a long period. Welcoming new partners has ensured that the company can attract the mass with a creative way each time.

B: Product strategy

OPPO is a famous Chinese company that has established its foothold in the world of mobile phones. The company has surpassed many other companies with its excellent product strategy. Currently, OPPO has a market presence, and its products are valued in the global market because of its standard product assortment (Sorge and Streeck, 2016). The company initially started with MP3 players. However, it soon diversified its products assortment and started manufacturing smartphones. Currently, the main product that OPPO launches is mobile phones. However, the company also has amplifiers, headphones and Blu-Ray players. OPPO has designed its products as per the requirements of the consumers. The company has slim smartphones that are easy to carry and look good as well. The target customer range is primarily the young women who like their smartphones to be sleek and beautiful looking. OPPO has also focused on building 'selfie' cameras that created by using the most updated technology (An, 2017). Dual 'selfie' camera, rotating camera etc. are some of the specifications that the smartphones from OPPO consist. In spite of the fact that the smartphone industry is a highly competitive market, OPPO has survived the competition successfully. The company claims itself to be 'selfie expert'. This is a different product strategy that OPPO follows, and this strategy has differentiated the company from its competitors as well. Most of the smartphone customers complain that the battery of their mobile phones drains quite fast. The current generation is strongly dependent on smartphones. Therefore, it is necessary for them to have a smartphone that offers better battery backup so that they can perform important tasks as well as use it for entertainment. The battery of the OPPO smartphones is also long-lasting. The company recently launched its F9 model that has a battery power of 3500 mAh. Besides, the new technology also

allows the user to flash charge the battery. The company claims that the battery of the phone can be charged up to 75% within 30 minutes. OPPO is the first company that introduced Voltage Open Loop Multi-Step Constant-current Charging or VOOC system (Wijyaningrum et al. 2018). The 'selfie' camera of the F9 model is 25 megapixels, whereas the rear camera is 16 megapixels only. The other electronic products that the company sells fall under the OPPO Digital segment. OPPO also produce its own video and audio decoders for the expensive products of the company.



Figure 1. Product assortment of OPPO

Source: (Oppo.com, 2018)

C: Pricing strategy

OPPO has been able to secure its own place in the mobile communication market. The company has faced challenges while entering the market as the mobile communication market is already competitive. Even now, OPPO constantly faces competition from the existing competitors and the new entrants. However, the company has been able to make its place secure through its pricing strategy. As mentioned earlier, the primary target customer range of OPPO is not the middle-aged people but the youth (Chong et al. 2015). Therefore, the company offers most of its smartphones in medium to high price. The phones are technologically updated, and new features are launched with its every new model. The smartphones of the company also offer great user interface within the medium price range. However, OPPO also has some high-end products that have unique features. These products are of great value to the customers as well as for the company. On the one hand, the smartphones offered by OPPO are less expensive than its high-end rival companies such as Apple, Samsung etc. On the other hand, the price of the phones is higher than its affordable rivals such as Xiaomi, Vivo etc. (Islam, 2018). Although the prices of the smartphones are higher than the affordable brands, the features offered by OPPO attract the customers towards the brand. The company has been using penetration strategy with its pricing policy to enter the market and secure its position. The products from the OPPO Digital segment are one of the most high-end products that come under premium pricing strategy in North America. The price of the headphones is around 399 USD, which is quite expensive. Moreover, the price of the headphones is higher in the European countries than in the United States. The price of OPPO headphones in India is around 50,000 INR.

D: Promotion strategy

OPPO has always focused on promoting the company as a global brand. Thus, the company has taken its public relation quite seriously as well. OPPO uses two types of promotional strategies (Setyawan, 2018). On the one hand, the company has used advertising campaigns that highlight the features of the products. On the other hand, it uses the sales promotion method. While the customers purchase a smartphone from OPPO, they get a hardcover and a screen protector free with it. OPPO uses conventional promotional methods such as using billboards, television advertising, magazine and newspaper advertising to promote its products to a large number of people. Besides, OPPO also utilises online tools such as Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, Twitter

etc. The official page of OPPO on Facebook has over 38 million followers. OPPO hashtag has been used in Instagram in more than 2.1 million posts. The Twitter account of OPPO India has over 57,000 followers. Apart from this, the company also uses online selling platforms to sell its products. A lot of customers visit the company website on a regular basis as well. The company also uses the direct selling method for its promotion strategy (Lu, 2016). The employees of the company are trained in a way so that they can approach the potential customers and sell them the products of the company. Many a time, OPPO arranges events or attends events that take place in the shopping malls. Thus, the employees of the company promote the products and sell them directly to the customers. OPPO has experienced a huge change in the Malaysian market since it started direct selling its products in the country.

E: Channel strategy

According to the company personnel, OPPO has reduced its cost on promoting the distributors and retailers. Instead, the company is focusing on generating a return on investments. The company wants to generate as much revenue as possible. Therefore, the reduction in the distribution channel has been an important and necessary step for OPPO (WANG, 2014). Currently, the products, especially the smartphones of OPPO are sold in the online as well as offline stores. However, a few months ago, the company has reduced the number of offline stores that it has been attached with. The company personnel informed that OPPO would focus more on online selling than offline selling. Besides, the company has also partnered with Shoppe and Lazada to sell its smartphones through its website. Thus, the profit margin of OPPO is expected to reach a higher level. Although OPPO faces stiff competition from some of the affordable brands that have the same target market, the channel strategy of the company provides it with a competitive edge.

In India, OPPO is the third leading mobile communication company. However, in China, OPPO has secured the second place by surpassing Apple and the Chinese brand Xiaomi. The nationwide network of OPPO allowed the company to sell more products than its rivals. OPPO has nearly two hundred thousand physical stores in China that helped the company to reach a great number of consumers. While the company has reduced the number of stores in India, it has increased its physical stores in China. The reason behind this strategy is that in China, 95% of the sales revenue is generated from the physical stores and not from the online shopping websites (Xing and He, 2018).

F: Market communication

The marketing communication tools help a company to promote its business in the international market. OPPO also uses marketing tools so that it can plan and implement its marketing strategies. The company invested 42 million Malaysian Ringgit for promoting business through advertisements (Dagar and Khan, 2018). The company uses television advertising strategy to target customers. Besides, the online promotional tools such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram etc. also help the company to communicate with the customers directly (Wijaya and Kusumawati, 2018). The company has increased its market share significantly since the launch of its two of the most sold smartphones - F7 and F9 models. Apart from the general promotion strategy, OPPO also utilises celebrity endorsement and sponsorship. The company has gained a huge profit, especially in India by including both cricket and film stars in promoting the brand. The young generation of India is attracted to the Bollywood stars. Therefore, OPPO has hired celebrities such as Sonam Kapoor and Hrithik Roshan to endorse the brand. OPPO has also sponsored many popular television shows in India like Super Dancer, The Voice of India, Nach Baliye 8, Koffee with Karan etc. Hollywood and Bollywood movies like Marvel's Doctor Strange, Spider-Man, Bahubali etc. are also sponsored by the company. The company has also sponsored the Indian Cricket team for a period of 2017 and 2022. OPPO is the official partner of the famous Spanish football club FC Barcelona. The personal selling method followed by the company allows the customers to purchase OPPO

smartphones directly from the employees. The employees often attend the different events that take place in the shopping malls and approaches the potential customers to sell their smartphones. As mentioned before, the company focuses on its public relation. Thus, the company officials often come up with press releases and interviews.



Figure 2. Marketing communication of OPPO

Source: (De Mooij, 2018)

Task 2

Product Assortment and Brand Inventory: An overview of how all products and services are marketed, branded and sold by the company:

A: Assess all brand elements (logos, symbols, characters, packaging, slogans, and trademarks).

Logo: Logo is a small design that a company uses to identify the product assortment of the company. OPPO uses a vector logo, which is designed in Adobe Illustrator format. It is the short form of 'opportunity'.



Figure 3. OPPO Logo

Source: (Oppo.com, 2018)

Symbol: Symbols are images that represent a company universally. Symbols are especially helpful for the company to enter the market where the language of the logo cannot be understood by the customers. The symbol of OPPO is a small boy with headphones on his head.



Figure 4. OPPO Symbol

Source: (Oppo.com, 2018)

Brand character: A company demonstrates its essence through the brand characters, which are the values of the company. OPPO primarily focuses on providing high-end smartphones for the

high-income range of customers. Besides, the selfie camera of OPPO is the unique selling point of the company, which targets the younger generation who are interested in taking selfies. OPPO is the first brand to launch flash charging technology that can charge the smartphone faster than ever as the per requirement of the customers (Akhtar et al. 2016). The brand is looking forward to using its

Packaging: OPPO uses plastic packaging for its smartphones. Generally, the packaging is of white colour with the logo of the company embellished on the top of the packaging. The case is square with a rounded corner, and it is quite thin. However, the packaging of OPPO Find 7 is a little different from the other smartphone packaging. It is black matte in colour.



Figure 5. Packaging of OPPO F7

Source: (Oppo.com, 2018)

Slogan: Sometimes a company may use short phrases that are memorable and help the company to stand out in the crowd of similar products. OPPO also has come out with some slogans such as “It’s your turn”, “Selfie expert” and “Designed for life”. The slogans of OPPO refer to the fact that the selfie camera of the smartphones of OPPO is its unique selling point.



Figure 6. Slogan used by OPPO

Source: (Oppo.com, 2018)

Trademark: A company uses the trademark to represent itself or its products (Ekman and Huila, 2018). Symbols, logos, words etc. can be established as a trademark. The owner of the trademark of OPPO is Sky Capital Limited. It is registered under the application number 1760308 and class 11.

B: Examine the inherent attributes of the product/idea/service (pricing, communications, distribution policies, other relevant marketing activities).

The idea of OPPO was to enter the industry of smartphones with its first motorized camera. The camera on the smartphones of OPPO could rotate up to 206 degrees. However, the company soon established itself as the leading brand to offer exclusive selfie camera features. The smartphones of OPPO came with 5X optical zoom and periscope-style cameras. OPPO F3 Plus came with the camera for taking group selfie as well. As mentioned before, the target market of the company is the younger generation who are technologically-savvy (Fileri and Lin, 2017).

OPPO Find X has 20 megapixels rear camera and 16 megapixels front camera, and it is one of its kind. OPPO is the first company in the world to launch flash charging technology in its F9 phone. However, the after-sale service of the company is not up to the mark. Although the company has established numerous service centres across the world, many customers complain that the handsets do not work only after a few days of purchasing those.

OPPO targets the high-income youth, and thus, the pricing of the products of OPPO is on the higher side as well. As per the claim of the company, OPPO offers premium quality smartphones with the best selfie camera in the market. The company communicates with its customers through social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, Twitter etc. It also conducts direct selling as a part of its communication strategy. OPPO follows a proper distribution channel. There are offline distributors, retailers and wholesalers along with the online selling websites that the company use to sell its product assortment. OPPO also has its own physical stores in various countries. The company's marketing activities include celebrity endorsement of the brand, sponsoring films and sports teams. OPPO is associated with the Indian national cricket team, and it is the official partner of FC Barcelona as well (Boscor, 2016).

C: Compare and contrast the direct and indirect competitive brands and their products for points of parity and points of difference.

The first direct competitive brands of OPPO are the Chinese companies such as Vivo, Huawei and Xiaomi. On the other hand, the four of these brands compete against the global brands Apple and Samsung (Sjamsuedin and Saerang, 2014). Both Apple and Samsung occupy one-third of the premium smartphone sale globally. Huawei and Xiaomi offer affordable smartphones that are hugely successful in the international market. Although Vivo is owned by the same owner of OPPO, the company targets the same customer range as OPPO. OPPO has created Find X model that can compete with Apple and Samsung in terms of the screen to body ratio. OPPO's sliding camera is a great feature that has raised the competitive advantage of the company as well. It can be noticed that OPPO and Vivo have applied similar marketing strategies by choosing celebrity brand endorsement. Both the companies have sponsored films and sports teams. While OPPO sponsored the Indian national cricket team, Vivo is the official partner of FIFA World Cup.

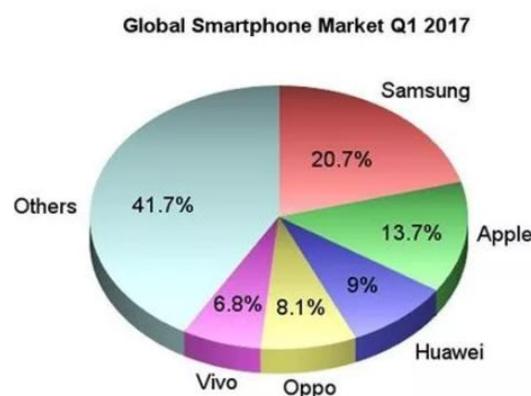


Figure 7. The competitive smartphone market

Source: (Smith, 2017)

There are many companies that have come up with smart cameras that can be in direct competition of OPPO. While OPPO excels only in its camera features, the customers who want technological advance smartphones may not buy OPPO. They may choose other brands and opt for the smart camera to fulfil their camera-related requirements. These cameras even have built-in Wi-Fi connectivity. On the other hand, some of the telecom service providers such as

Vodafone also have their own phones. These phones are budget-friendly and widely available as well. Besides, the service providers offer their own service with their phones, which attracts a huge number of customers. Tablets are becoming popular electronic gadgets. Different established companies like Samsung, Apple etc. have their own tablets. Tablets are in direct competition because people can use them for a variety of purposes. Most of the tablets all the specifications of smartphones such as graphics processor, camera, additional storage slot etc. Besides, many companies have launched calling-tablets that are even more effective than smartphones (Kraus et al. 2018).

3. Recommendations

A: Propose how the marketing of the product should be evolved or reinvented in future years. Justify your reasons.

As mentioned before, OPPO has medium to high range of mobile phones. However, if the company wants to survive in the competitive market, it must come up with some affordable products instead of focusing on the premium mobile phones. Thus, the brand will also be able to recover the market share that it lost to the leading brands like Xiaomi and Huawei. OPPO can also increase its marketing budget to some extent and launch some campaigns during the Asia Cup (Zhu, 2014). As per the officials of OPPO, the focus of the brand will be on the offline channels as these still offer increased chances of revenue for the company. The company has not entered the affordable smartphone market. However, to survive the competitive market, OPPO will have to offer innovative handsets to attract more customers. Instead of focusing on budget phones, the company can offer medium ranging smartphones with innovative features. The company can invest in hiring a qualified research and development team that will be able to work on innovating new ideas and technologies for OPPO smartphones. It has already launched some revolutionary technologies such as pure image technology and flash charging. The developing nations offer a price sensitive smartphone market. People tend to purchase mobile phones that are affordable. However, there are many consumers who are willing to invest in premium smartphones that have the innovative technology. The choice and buying pattern of the customers are constantly changing, and an assortment of different range of products can help OPPO to gain the competitive edge. The company has already launched its motorised camera phone. The company is also the first one to offer Pure Image that has an array of features. Recently, OPPO has launched its F9 model that is the first smartphone to have Voltage Open Loop Multi-Step Constant-Current Charging flash charging technology (He, Tung and Shin, 2017). It is evident that the company has started to work on changing its image as a selfie camera phone only. However, the amalgamation of innovation and competitive pricing will ensure that OPPO reinvents itself in the future years.

B: Propose other possible alternatives and key marketing issues that you may consider in the future.

There are many Chinese smartphone companies like OPPO and Vivo that have gained their prominent market all over Asia within a significant period. However, there is a doubt whether OPPO and Vivo will be able to survive in the highly competitive market. OPPO has branded itself as the 'selfie expert', and it has marketed its smartphones as the best smartphones to take a selfie (Sagimin and Priyani, 2018). The marketing strategy of the company has proved to be fruitful in gaining the significant amount of market share within a short time. However, the quality of the smartphones and the after-sale service are not up to the mark. The company has started to witness a downfall despite its marketing techniques. While the competitors of OPPO and Vivo are launching innovative technologies, these companies are focusing only on their cameras. Therefore, it can be assumed that the brands may fail to increase their market share unless they focus on introducing new technologies and mitigate the after-sale issues as well.

In order to address the issue and gain hold of the Asian as well as international market, OPPO and Vivo should sign a merger (Muller, 2016). Both OPPO and Vivo are present in the offline channel and online market. The product line of both the companies is also similar. Vivo and OPPO target quite similar consumer market as well. However, the price strategies of the companies are different. While Vivo has some budget-friendly phones, OPPO offers a mostly premium category of smartphones. The number leading mobile communication company in Asia owns nearly 22% of the market share (Li, 2018). OPPO and Vivo individually did not own 10% market share ever. In some quarters the brands may have noticed a market share of 12%, but it did not last till the next quarter. If OPPO and Vivo merge, the newly merged company can own an average of 18% market share. Thus, the merged company will be able to secure the second position as the leading mobile communication company. The merger will also secure the strategical space of both the companies as the individual entities will not disrupt the target market anymore.

4. Conclusion

The marketing strategy of OPPO has been discussed in the first part of the study including marketing communication, promotion, channel strategy. In the second part of the study, the focus has been given on the brand elements of OPPO such as logo, symbol, trademark etc. The products attributes along with the direct and indirect competitors of OPPO have also been discussed. The last part consists of recommendations that the company can use to sustain in the competitive market.

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