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Qualities of a good research design pdf

Corporate executives and consumers have adopted different views on product quality in recent years. Several recent surveys show how wide the quality gap is: three out of five ceos of the country's largest 1,300 companies said in a 1981 survey that quality was improving; Only 13% said it was a decline.¹ Yet 49% of the 7,000 consumers surveyed in a separate 1981 study said that the quality of American products has declined over the past five years. In addition, 59% expected that quality would remain at the second end or decline in the next five years.² Half of executives of major U.S. home appliance manufacturers said in a 1981 survey that the reliability of their products has improved in recent years. Only 21% of U.S. consumers expressed this belief.³ Executives of U.S. automakers cite internal reports that show that quality is improving every year. Ford quality improved by 27% in our 1981 models compared to 1980 models, said Ford executive.⁴ But surveys show that consumers perceive the quality of American cars will decline compared to imported cars, especially from Japan. Mindful of this gap, many American companies have turned to advertising tactics to improve their quality image. There are two trends in such efforts. First, a greater emphasis on advertising is a place on the quality of the word and on topics such as reliability, durability and craftsmanship. Ford, for example, advertises that quality is a work of one, and Levi Strauss offers the idea that quality never goes out of fashion. And many ads now claim that the products are better or better than the competition. The second trend is the shift to quality and extended service programmes. Chrysler offers a five-year warranty of 50,000 miles; Whirlpool Corporation promises that parts for all models will be available within 15 years; Hewlett-Packard provides customers with a 99% lifetime service guarantee on their computers; and Mercedes-Benz makes technicians available for help on the roads after normal dealer service hours. While these attempts to change customer perceptions are a step in the right direction, the quality of a company's image or product obviously cannot be improved overnight. This takes time to cultivate customer trust, and advertising tactics alone won't do the job. In fact, they can have the opposite effect if claims and promises are not delayed and customers perceive them as gimmicks. To ensure the delivery of advertising claims, companies must incorporate quality into their products or services. From a manufacturing point of view, this means the whole company's commitment to fixing bugs at every stage of the process product - product design, process design and production. It also means working closely with suppliers to fix defects from all incoming parts. Equally important, but often overlooked are the marketing aspects of quality improvement. Companies need to be sure that they offer the benefits customers are looking for. The quality should be primarily customer-oriented, not production-oriented or competitive-oriented. In product quality development, companies often fail to take into account two main sets of issues. First, how do customers define quality, and why do they suddenly require higher quality than in the past? Secondly, how important is the high quality of customer service and how can it be provided after the sale? No matter how commonplace these questions may sound, the answers provide important information on how to create an effective quality program designed for the customer. We must not forget that customers, after all, serve as the ultimate quality judge in the market. Performance of production and service connectivity products and customer service are closely related to any quality program; the more attention is paid to the quality of products in production, the less requirements for customer service work to eliminate subsequent problems. Office equipment manufacturers, for example, design products to have less manual and more automatic control. Products are not only easier to operate and less susceptible to misuse, but they also require little maintenance and have internal troubleshooting systems to help identify problems. Long-term investments in quality minimize the need for customer service. In addition to its usual functions, customer service can act as an early warning system to detect product quality problems. Customer surveys, by measuring product performance, can also help you figure out the difficulty with quality control or design. And of course, detecting defects early spare parts later embarrassment and headaches. Success in improving quality at this stage is appropriate to consider two companies that have developed successful customer-centric quality programs: L.L. Bean, Inc. and Caterpillar Tractor Company. Although these two companies are in different businesses - L.L. Bean sells outdoor clothing and equipment mainly by mail, while Caterpillar manufactures earth-powered equipment, diesel engines and processing devices that it sells through dealers, both enjoy an enviable reputation for high quality. About 96.7% of L.L. Bean's 3,000 customers recently surveyed said that quality is the attribute they love most about the company. Bean runs a customer quality program by conducting regular customer satisfaction surveys and sample group interviews to track customer perceptions and unusual perceptions of the quality of its competitors' products and services. Track everyone on your computer customers and complaints and file updates daily. Guarantee all of your products to be 100% satisfactory and providing a full refund, if requested, on any returns. Ask customers to complete a short, coded questionnaire and explain the reasons for the cause Product. Perform extensive field tests on any new outdoor equipment before listing it in the company's catalogues. Even stocking extra buttons for most items of clothing carried years ago, in case the customer needs one. Despite recent financial setbacks, Caterpillar remains fully committed to its quality program, which includes: conducting two customer satisfaction surveys after each purchase, one after 300 hours of product use and the second after 500 hours of use. Maintain a centrally managed list of product problems identified by customers around the world. Analysis of warranty and service reports submitted by dealers as part of the product improvement program. Ask dealers to conduct a quality audit as soon as the products are received and attribute defects to either assembly errors or delivery damage. Guarantee 48-hour delivery of any part to any customer in the world. Encourage dealers to set up side ventures in restoring parts to reduce costs and increase repair speeds. How do customers define quality? To understand how customers perceive quality, both L.L. Bean and Caterpillar collect a lot of information directly from them. Even with such information, however, revealing what consumers really want is not an easy task. First, consumers are not always able to formulate their quality requirements. They often speak in common with the public, complaining, for example, that they bought lemon or that the producers do not make them as they used to. Consumer priorities and perceptions also change over time. Taking as an example cars, market data collected by SRI International show that consumer priorities have shifted from style in 1970 to fuel economy in 1975, and then to design quality and performance in 1980.5 (see Exhibit I.) Changes in importance to U.S. automotive customers in addition, consumers perceive product quality over competing products. As John F. Welch, Chairman and CEO of General Electric Company, observed: Customer... rates us better or worse than anyone else. It's not very scientific, but it's a disaster if you score a low score. 6 One of the main challenges facing U.S. automakers is the public perception that imported cars, especially from Japan, have higher quality. When a 1981 New York Times-CBS News poll asked consumers if they thought Japanese-born cars tended to be of better quality than those made here, about the same way, or not as good, 34% responded better, 30% said the same thing, 22% said not so good, and 14% didn't know. When the Roper Organization set out in 1977 the same question, only 18% said better, 30% said the same thing, 32% said not so well, and 20% did not know.⁷ Next, consumers demand high quality at low prices. When a national group of buyers asked where he would like to see food manufacturers invest more, the highest rated response was the best quality for the same price. 8 In search of such value, some consumers are even chartering buses at the Cohoes Manufacturing Company, a specialty clothing store located in Cohoes, New York, which has a reputation for offering high-quality, designer-label goods at discounted prices. Consumers' perception of product quality is influenced by different factors at each stage of the buying process. Some of the major influences are listed in Exhibit II. Exhibition II Factors influencing consumers' perception of quality Not necessarily in order of importance. Keep an eye on key trends What should companies do to improve their understanding of customers' views on quality? We know no other way but to collect and analyze internal data and track public information. The internal information generated is obtained mainly through customer surveys, interviews of potential clients (such as focus group interviews), reports from vendors, and field experiments. Remember how L.L. Bean and Caterpillar use these approaches to get data on how their current and potential customers evaluate the quality of their products compared to the quality of their competitors. More general public information can be obtained through sociologists, independent research organizations, government agencies and the media. Such sources often help to identify changes in public attitudes. Companies that try to determine the attitude of their customers to the quality of products and services are often too narrowly focused on the value of their products and services; understanding changing views in the broader market can be just as valuable. By the end of the last decade, too many American companies had failed to notice that the optimism of the mid-1970s was increasingly eroding in the mood of pessimism and restraint due to deteriorating economic conditions. Several surveys conducted in the 1970s showed the nature and scope of this shift; 9, for example, Gallup polls showed that while only 21% of Americans in the early 1970s thought the next year would be worse than this year, 55% kept this pessimistic forecast by the late 1970s. Pessimistic about the fact that in the future, consumers have begun to adjust their lifestyles. The rampant desire in the mid-1970s to buy and own more gave way to more restrained behaviors such as the integrity of buying, investment purchases, and the lifecycle of buying. Integrity purchases are the ones made for their perceived value to society, not just for personal status. Buying a small, energy efficient car, for example, can be a sign of personal integrity. Investment purchase is focused long-term products, even if that means paying a little more. The focus is on valued as durability, reliability, craftsmanship and durability. In the garment industry, for example, more and more manufacturers have begun to emphasize the investment value of clothing. And buying a life cycle entails comparing the cost of purchase with the cost of ownership. For example, some may see a \$10 light bulb that uses one-third of that electricity and lasts four times longer than a \$1 conventional light bulb as a better deal. These changes in consumer behaviour reflect the pessimistic outlook of consumers and their growing emphasis on quality rather than quantity: If we are going to buy less, let it be better. By overlooking this fundamental shift in consumer attitudes, companies missed an opportunity to capitalize on it. If they had followed the available information, managers could identify and respond to trends earlier. Ensuring quality after sale As we have offered previously, the quality of customer service after sale is often just as important as the quality of the product itself. Of course, excellent customer service can rarely compensate for a weak product. But poor customer service can quickly negate all the benefits associated with delivering a top quality product. In companies such as L.L. Bean and Caterpillar, customer service is not an afterthought, but an integral part of the product offering and is subject to the same quality standards as the manufacturing process. These companies understand that a first-class customer service operation can be an effective means of achieving the following three goals: 1. Differentiating the company from its competitors. As more and more customers seek to extend the lifespan of their durable goods, the perceived quality of customer service is becoming an increasingly important factor in making a purchasing decision. Whirlpool Corporation promises to stand on its products rather than hide behind its distribution channels; It has parlayed a reputation for effective customer service in a clear competitive advantage that strengthens its image quality. 2. Creating new sales leads to and hinders the transition to alternative suppliers. Maintaining regular contact with customers in order to deliver them new information and collect suggestions to improve the product can provide continuous satisfaction to existing customers and increase the chances of meeting the needs of potential buyers. 3. Strengthening the dealer's loyalty. Companies with strong customer service programs can also expand their distribution channels more easily to include points that may not be able to deliver a high level of customer service after a viewpoint of their own. Customer Service Audit To be Effective, customer service requires a marketing plan. Customer service follows as a product line that needs to be packaged, evaluated, delivered and delivered to customers. Assessment of the company's current customer Customer service audit is essential for developing such a plan. Customer service audit asks managers the following questions: What are your customer service goals? Many companies have not set targets for their customer service operations and have no clue about the role customer service should play in their business and marketing strategies. Each company needs to know what percentage of its revenue it expects to receive from sales services and whether the goal is to make a profit, break even, or - for reasons of competitive advantage - to maintain a loss. What services do you provide? It's helpful to develop a grid that shows what services your company provides or can provide for each of the products in your line. These may include customer training, financing mechanisms, confirmation of orders and tracking, pre-delivery preparation, inventory of spare parts, repair service, and handling claims and complaints. How do you relate to competition? A similar grid can be used to chart customer service provided by your competitors. Customer surveys can identify areas of customer service where your company is rated higher or lower than the competition. In areas where your company is weak, can you invest to improve your performance? Where are you strong, how easy are competitors to match or exceed your performance? What services do your customers need? There is little value in developing superior performance in customer service areas most customers consider only marginally important. Therefore, an important component of the audit is to understand the relative importance of different customer services to current and potential customers. Individual customer segments can often be defined according to the priorities they give to specific services. What are the demand models for your customers? The level and nature of customer service required often change over the life of the product. Services, which are the top priority at the time of sale, may be less important five years later. Companies need to understand the patterns and timing of customer demand for each of their products. These they can chart as Exhibition III shows. Exhibit III Postpurchase requirements for servicing two Product B products in the exhibition is a safety control system, an electronics product with multiple moving parts. A high level of service is required as soon as it is installed to train operators and debug the system. After that, the need for maintenance is rapidly reduced to only periodic replacement of mechanical parts, such as commonly used door switches. Product B is a car. The maintenance requirements are significant over the course of the period because of the client's sensitivity to any aesthetic and functional defects, and also because the repair is free (for the client). However, after the warranty period, service Outside of the basic service will be more extensive for B than for A, as there are more mechanical parts to wear out. What trade-offs are your customers willing to make? Excellent service can always be extended - at a price. You need to know your company's costs of providing different services to customers through different delivery systems (800 phone number, customer service agent, seller) at different levels of performance. At the same time, you have to establish what value your customers are establishing at different levels of customer service, what level of quality of service they are willing to pay, and whether they prefer to pay for services separately or within the purchase price of the product. Customers are likely to be very different in price sensitivity. The manufacturer of the print press, for example, has found that publishers of daily newspapers, because of the sensitivity of the time of their product, are willing to pay a high price for immediate service repairs, while the book publisher, being less time pressure, can afford to be more price conscious. The customer service program will depend not only on effective implementation, but also on sound analysis and research. After reviewing multiple customer service operations across different industries, we believe that managers should focus on the following seven guidelines for effective program implementation: 1. Educate their clients. Customers should be taught how to use and how not to use the product. And with the help of appropriate training programs, companies can reduce the chances of calling highly skilled service personnel to solve simple problems. General Electric recently established a network of food education centers that GE home appliance buyers can call free. Many consumer problems during the warranty period can be handled at a price of \$5 per call, rather than the \$30 to \$50 maintenance cost of a technician to visit the consumer's home. 2. Educate your employees. In many organizations, employees view a customer with a problem as an annoyance rather than a source of information. A marketing program is often needed to change such a negative attitude and convince employees not only that customers are the chief judge of quality, but also that their criticism should be respected and acted immediately. An internal marketing program should include detailed procedures to guide customer-employee interaction. Few people will quarrel with the general acceptance of an aesthetically appealing and pleasant style. But the fact is, say critics, once such a style has been adopted and adopted, why spend so much effort on the production and sale of an arbitrarily modified design? Similarly, few would argue that we Completely eliminate or ignore consumers' desire to obtain status; status is considered too much part of the Motives. However, certain means of obtaining status may be much more beneficial to the country as a whole than others. Should we, or we can, direct our production and sales efforts with the over-all benefits of the country in mind? In the past, businessmen, in particular marketers, have stated that to maintain a high level of consumer spending, rapid obsolescence is needed, based on arbitrary changes in style. In opposition, critics argue that this issue should not be missed by saying that our entire economic system is based on some aggressive marketing. Why, they ask, can't marketers be as aggressive with worth calling as with superficial style changes and prestige selling appeals? As Erwin D. Kahnham, President of the United States Chamber of Commerce and editor of The Christian Science Monitor, put it in Mission of Management in a New Society: There has also been an inflation of goods, ideas, taste, design - a surge of anti-functionalism that looks like materialism at worst, for which business will also have to pay a price. Take, for example, the automotive industry: Tail fins are, of course, the most common scapegoat. Does an expanding economy really require such a rapid rate of obsolescence?... Why not functionalism really be the decisive criterion in the development of cars or anything else? Do we need so much horsepower? Recalling Henry Thoreau, someone said there should be a Walden station wagon - a simple, efficient, functional, economical American car. But let's not be obsessed with the practice of automotive marketing. The problem is much wider than this ... I believe that the whole business needs the hard, complex pressures of a competitive market in which price is the dominant factor, so that it will again produce for economy-minded customers. I think business does a more functional and efficient job in difficult times than in mild times. And if we want to continue to have a deficit funded by prosperity, we must create the disciplinary equivalent of fierce competition, simplicity and functionalism. From Planned Obsolescence of the GBR September-October 1977, page 14. 3. Be effective first, a good second. Given the choice, most customers would rather have an effective solution to their problem than a smiling face. The two are certainly not mutually exclusive, but no company should hesitate to centralize its customer service work in the interest of efficiency. For example, Federal Express has recently centralized its customer service function to improve quality control between customers and employees, make it easier to monitor customer service, and allow field staff to focus on operations and sales. Fears that channeling all through three national centers to defuse the service and annoy customers used working with a field office sales representative was unwarranted. Standardization of service response systems. A standard response mechanism is essential for dealing with requests and complaints. L.L. Bean has a standard form that customer service personnel use to cover all phone requests and complaints. As noted earlier, the documented information is immediately fed into the computer and updated daily to speed up the follow-up. In addition, most companies need to create a response system to address customer problems, in which technically complex people are called upon to have problems not solved over specific periods of time at a lower level of employees. 5. Develop a price policy. High-quality customer service doesn't necessarily mean free service. Many customers even prefer to pay for services in excess of the minimum level. This is why lengthy warranty periods often have limited appeal; Customers recognize that product prices should rise to cover additional warranty costs, which can mainly benefit customers who abuse the product.¹⁰ More important to success than free service is the development of pricing policies and multi-service contracts that customers consider fair and easy to understand. As a separate market exists to service mail in many product categories, launching a customer service operation as a profit center is becoming more common. But the philosophy of selling a product cheaply and making money on a service is likely to be doomed to failure in the long run, as it indirectly encourages poor quality products. 6. Attract subcontractors if necessary. To ensure quality, most companies prefer that all customer service is performed by full-time staff. However, when efficiency is compromised, the company should consider subcontracting selected service functions to other members of the distribution channel or other manufacturers. Otherwise, the quality of customer service will decline as a result of cost reductions or attempts to artificially stimulate demand for customer service to exploit weak capacity. For example, Docutel, a manufacturer of automated tolls, overtook customer service for Texas Instruments because its small hardware base, scattered across the country, was unprofitable. 7. Rate customer service. Whether a customer service operation is considered a cost center or a profit center, quantitative performance standards must be set for each item in the service package. Make an analysis of the discrepancies between the actual and indicators. American Airlines and other companies use such deviations to calculate service personnel bonuses. In addition, many companies regularly ask customers for information about service operations and staff. In conclusion, we must emphasize that the responsibility for quality cannot rest solely on manufacturing Marketers also need to be proactive in promoting quality perception. Marketers were too passive in quality management. Successful businesses today will use marketing techniques to plan, design and implement quality strategies that extend beyond the plant. A version of this article appeared in the July 1983 issue of Harvard Business Review. Reviews. qualities of a good research design pdf. qualities of a good research design in research methodology

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