

CONSUMERS' BRAND AWARENESS OF SAUBER PROFESSIONAL INC. IN ALABANG, MUNTINLUPA CITY

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ABSTRACT

The major concern of this study is to measure the consumer's brand awareness of Sauber Professionals Inc. in the area of Alabang. Brand awareness plays an important role in consumer decision making. Hence, it is important to realize the current standing of the brand awareness of Sauber. This research discusses the importance of factors that influence brand awareness like advertising, branding and the consumer-buying decision. Sauber Professionals Inc. was selected for this research as its business needed to improve its current market share since it is a newly established company. The study was based on questionnaire method with a minimum of 30 respondents. The survey was used to measure the level of Sauber's brand awareness. This paper explains the brand awareness and consumer behavior from the perspective of consumers, to show if it matters in improving the current standing of Sauber in the market. The purpose of it is to provide and recommend marketing strategies and activities for the said company.

Key words: Brand, Brand awareness and Consumer decision making

INTRODUCTION

Services in the company is that when you are having a contract in the company or the business that will sustain what you needed. As of now, it will be a big impact for one economy since it is one of an indicators of country's progress. Services are like when you are working in the business, one example is having a restaurant and you are having a contract with it to do a specific task, and the said business will observe the services that you will do for its company if it is good or not or if it is really satisfied. In this study, the service mentioned is about contract service for total hygiene management. With the Sauber's company profile (2015), it shows that there are different types of service in total hygiene management which is urinal

sanitizer, toilet seat sanitize, soap dispenser, air fresheners, hand dryers and deep clean service. Total Hygiene is committed to develop service plans, which are absolutely designed to meet the needs of the customers and to concentrate on ensuring that hygienic solutions meet customer's budget requirements. With this total hygiene management thing, the proponents studied about the consumer's brand awareness of specific services industry which is the Sauber Professionals Inc.

The topic of this study was about brand awareness of both current and target customer of Sauber. It is important to know the level of awareness for the recommendation and action to be taken. Furthermore, this thing would also be the measurement on how a business effectively makes a unique identity.

As shown in the company profile of Sauber Professionals Inc., it provides different products and services which are contract cleaning & Total Hygiene Management with general pest control services such as: one-time deep cleaning of commissaries, offices, restaurants, schools, hospitals, malls, beverage plants, bakeries and other facilities. Additionally, it includes crate washing, pallet washing, pots and pan washing, clean-in-place, conveyor and tank cleaning, product area cleaning, condominiums, hotels and institutional stewarding and housekeeping services. For the hygiene services, it has cleaners and sanitizers, hand hygiene solutions and dispensers, housekeeping service, stewarding chemicals and service equipment.

We, the researchers, focused on both current and target consumer's brand awareness about the services in total hygiene management of the company Sauber Professionals Inc.

Review of related literature

Branding and brand awareness

Investopedia (2016) defined "brand" as a distinguishing symbol, mark, logo, name, word, sentence or a combination of these items that companies use to distinguish their product from others in the market. Legal protection given to a brand name is called a trademark.

Brand is what a business known for and an identity for a specific company's value (product and services). According to Verma (2010), brands are important because they are primary instruments of value creation. Brand is the asset that makes the crucial difference between the sterling performing companies. Brand names help consumers identify products that might benefit them.

Verma (2010), marketing branding is important for it provides escape routes to all pervasive parity. Branding offers effective and forceful

opportunity to achieve differentiation that is much less prone to perfect imitation. When a branding done well, the brand will be known and it will surely help for the market's brand awareness and familiarity.

The marketing practice of creating a name, symbol or design identify and differentiate a product from other products according to Staff (2016). It will be a technique, strategy or a way on how a specific brand will be known to a specific target market.

Additionally, Flamberg (2014) said that customers should be steered to a preference center early in the relationship, when their interest and intentions are high. They should be asked for basic contact data and the requisite opt-ins and then be given some choices about what kind of information or incentives they want, how frequently they want them, and which communication channel is best to reach them without annoying them.

Business owners who learn how to identify target audiences of consumers stand a better chance of convincing lenders to support them. Learning to distinguish between different audiences makes it easier to determine what segments of consumers truly support your business and whether they are going to become more than one-purchase customers. Heibutzki (2015)

A definition from business dictionary (2015), stated that branding is a process in creating a unique name and image for a product in the consumers' mind, mainly through advertising campaigns with a consistent theme and aims to establish a significant and differentiated presence in the market that attracts and retains loyal customers.

Therefore, brand loyalty customers are an important source of value for firms. Finally, a high level of brand loyalty insulates the firm from competition because, brand loyal customers do not switch to competitors brands, even when provided with a variety of incentives. Brand loyalty is a measure of consumer attachment to a particular brand. Loyalty can range from absolute commitment to a total lack of preference. Davis (2012)

A solid brand awareness strategy takes planning and is sustained by good content. Positioning your brand to leverage both paid and owned media can drive engagements, grow your online presence, and contribute to your brand's authority within its industry. AOD Marketing (2015).

Consumer-buying decision

In a definition from Schofield (2016), Consumer behavior is the study of how people make decisions about what they buy, want, need, or act in regards to a product, service, or company. It is critical to understand consumer behavior to know how potential customers will respond to a new product or service. It also helps companies identify opportunities that are not currently met.

Consumer Behavior is a branch which deals with the various stages a consumer goes through before purchasing products or services for his end use, according to Management Study Guide (2016). It is a process for a specific customer on why, when or how he/she will purchase a product, why he needs to buy a product or have a service, when he will be able to purchase it or how he purchases the product or services.

Additionally, Perner (2010) said that one official meaning of consumer behavior is “The study of individuals, groups, or organizations and the processes they use to select, secure, use, and dispose of products, services, experiences, or ideas to satisfy needs and the impacts that these processes have on the consumer society”.

Conceptual framework

The relationship between variables presents the process of this study, its starts from determining the customer profile (both target and current) of Sauber, followed by the purchasing preference before buying a value (product and services), the present marketing position of the company including the familiarity/awareness and brand loyalty of the consumer between its competitors and the factors in consumer perception for advertising and buying decision. The last step is the recommendation which is to propose a course of action for enhancing more the brand awareness of the Sauber Professional Inc.

Conceptual Framework

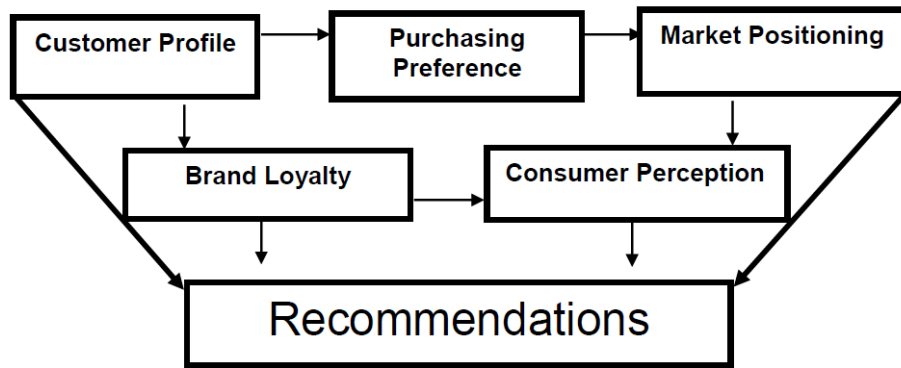


Figure 1. Relationship between Variables

Objectives of the study

The objective of this study was to determine the brand awareness and consumer-buying decision of both current and target customer of Sauber Professionals Inc. and what ways need to develop in order to make a market and brand stronger.

Determine the Sauber's Current and Target Customer profile based on Location, Business Identity, Business Style, Type of Customer, Cleaning & Sanitation Process and Type of advertisement that attracts in purchasing. Preference in purchasing in terms of cleaning products and pest control services. Determine the current market position of Sauber's Professionals Inc. in terms of familiarity of the brand against popular competition; (Ecolab, Diversey, Kalinisan Chemicals, Chemsol and Reinlab; and Brand Loyalty (customer retention) of the current customer. Determine the consumer perception about Advertising and Consumer-buying decision. Recommend and present a course of action to develop Sauber's brand awareness.

METHOD

Research Design

The researchers used the descriptive method for this study to

determine the information and data needed on brand awareness, preference and consumer buying decision for Sauber Professional Inc. through the help of survey questionnaire for the respondents.

Research Locale

The researchers conducted their research in Sauber Professionals Inc. located in Rosario Complex, City of San Pedro-Laguna. The researchers chose this place to conduct their research because it is a big company and worth to go with, and its level now in the industry is a perfect thing for this study. The researchers wanted to help in continuously improving the company's aims in achieving its goal and in satisfying the loyal customers.

Respondents of the Study

The participants in the study were the 30 different dine-in restaurants within the area of Alabang, Muntinlupa City which answered the survey questionnaires as the main tool to gather data. (METHOD) Since the Sauber consists of an outsized number of current and target customers from National Capital Region to Southern Luzon, the proponents preferred only to their average clients that has wide scope of their services.

Data Gathering Tool

The primary data gathering device used by the researchers was a survey questionnaire. This questionnaire was validated to ensure that the instrument used measured what it really intended to measure.

The research instrument was divided into three parts, the first part focused on respondents' consumer buying decision in terms of branding and perception in line with marketing mix. The second part of the questionnaire dealt with the respondents brand awareness of Sauber. The third part emphasized the respondents' consumer perception in terms of brand familiarity, brand loyalty and consumer buying decision.

In order to categorize the responses for the third part of the questionnaire, the proponents used a four-point rating scale with one being the lowest and four as the highest. To interpret the weighted mean of each item in the questionnaire, the following mean ranges with its interpretation was presented below.

Data Gathering Procedure

After the approval of the research topic from the company, the researchers started reading different references. To have a full

understanding about the topic, the researchers consulted different books in marketing Management, encyclopedia, articles/journals, thesis materials and other related literature found in the internet. The researchers looked for concepts related to consumer buying decision and brand awareness. Through extensive reading, the researchers were able to gather enough literature and studies that served as source of constructing questionnaire.

The questionnaire used was transmitted to a usual survey method because it was more convenient for the respondents to answer rather than in a social networking site. They could answer the questionnaires personally at their most convenient time. In addition, non-verbal communication was observed on their face personally manifesting the sincerity to answer the questions.

Data Analysis

The researcher used the weighted mean formula or the four-point rating scale where one as the lowest and four as the highest in order to interpret the result of the consumer perception.

To interpret the weighted mean for each statement, the researchers used the following interpretation:

Table 1. Interpretation

Number Rating	Range	Verbal Interpretation
4	3.50 – 4.00	Strongly Agree
3	2.50 – 3.49	Agree
2	1.50 – 2.49	Disagree
1	1.00 – 1.49	Strongly Disagree

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Profile of the Respondents

The following figures represent the respondents' profile.

Figure 2 shows the data gathered about the respondents' location. There was a total of 30 respondents wherein 20 of them or 67% were from

Alabang Town Center which the company has more of their target customers located. Ten or 33% of the respondents were from Festival Mall. It represents the social class level of dine-in restaurant in Alabang Town Center.

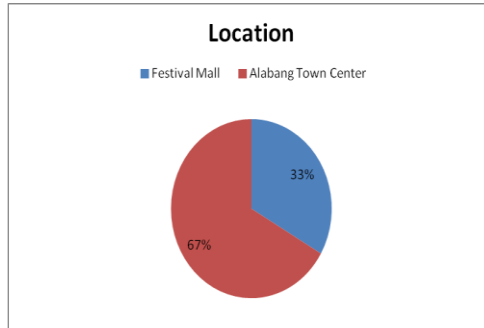


Figure 2. Frequency distribution of respondents in terms of location

Figure 3 shows the data gathered on the type of customer wherein 20 or 67% of the total respondents were target customers while 10 or 33% of the respondents were the Current customer of Sauber's Professionals Inc. It represents that it has more target customers since it is just a newly company.

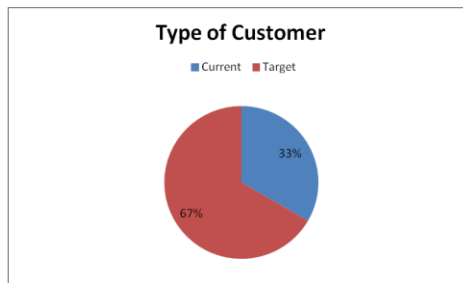


Figure 3. Frequency distribution of respondents in terms of type of customer

Figure 4 shows the data gathered about the cleaning and sanitation process of respondents wherein 16 or 53% of the total respondents answered Outsourced while 14 or 47% answered In-house. It represents that Sauber has a big opportunity to introduce its services.

According to Al-Niaim (2009), Outsourcing improves control and monitoring of the level and quality of service through the obligation to formally specify a contractor for services.

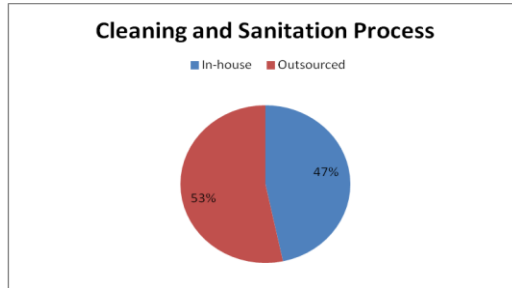


Figure 4. Frequency Distribution of Respondents in Terms of Cleaning and Sanitation Process

Figure 5 shows the data gathered about the type of advertisement that attracts them in purchasing decision. Among the respondents, 20 of them answered word of mouth, followed by print advertisement was answered by 19 respondents. Digital advertisement was answered by 13 respondents. Nine respondents answered TVC, six answered Seminars. Radio advertisement got the lowest result that was answered by 3 respondents. Still the traditional way or “Word of Mouth” is the most influential advertisement in the business world. With that, having a linkages with every people must increase.

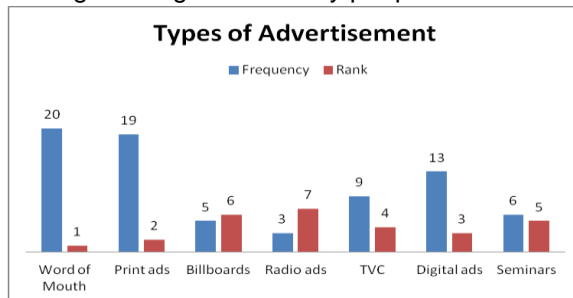


Figure 5. Frequency distribution of respondents in terms of type of advertisement

Figure 6 shows the gathered data about the target customers familiarity in Sauber and competing brands. Fifteen of the respondents answered ECOLAB, which ranked 1, followed by DIVERSEY which ranked 2nd then CHEMSOL ranked 3rd, while KALINISAN ranked the last. Sauber company is quite too unfamiliar as of now for its target customer. Since it is just a newly established company, there is a big opportunity for it to introduce its brand and services.

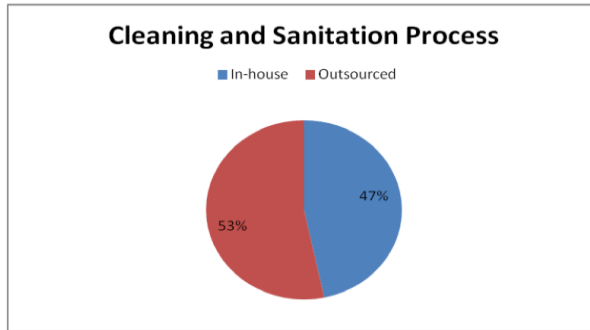


Figure 6. Frequency Distribution of Respondents in Terms of Cleaning and Sanitation Process

Advertising activities can also be one of the signs that consumers will prefer your brand than with the competitors.

Based on Table 2, it is observed that the advertisement that will be used in the Sauber's Professional Inc. are the billboards, tarpaulin and television advertising, which got the highest result of 3.50, followed by newspaper and seminars that have 3.43 result. Billboards and tarpaulins and TVC were the first factors for the consumer perception when it comes to advertising. Since, Word of mouth was the first and most influential in advertising, it can be more effective for the company if it also uses billboards, tarpaulins and television commercial. It will surely be effective and will increase the awareness and customer as well.

Table 2. Consumer's Perception in terms of advertising

Weighted	Interpretation

	Mean		Rank
Billboards and Tarpaulin	3.50	Agree	1.5
Television Advertising	3.50	Agree	1.5
Radio Advertising	3.06	Agree	7
Brochure and Flyers	3.33	Agree	6
Magazine	3.36	Agree	5
Newspaper	3.43	Agree	3.5
Seminars	3.43	Agree	3.5

SWOT ANALYSIS

SWOT stands for the strength, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. It discusses both the internal and external analysis of a company. It will be a big help for supporting in analyzing the company's advantage and to adjust when the threats comes. The following analysis is based on the perception of the researchers.

Strengths

1. It has a well-trained skilled and professional crews and scientist people for the total hygiene management
2. It has lots of industry linkages
3. The CEO/President of Sauber has more than 15 years of industry experience
4. Backed by a manufacturing facility

Weaknesses

1. It is just a startup company
2. It has no track record
3. Lack of brand recognition in the market

Opportunities

1. Low number of players in the Total Hygiene Management (THM) Industry
2. Outsourcing of non-competency activities (like cleaning) of the target market

Threats

1. Customers' poor knowledge about the brand name
2. Stronger brand name of competitors such as ECOLAB, DIVERSEY, CHEMSOL, KALINISAN and REINLAB
3. Competition is starting to learn the THM offering.

SWOT MATRIX

Elements		Explanation
<p>S2, S3, O2</p> <p>S1, O1</p>	<p>They have lots of industry linkages</p> <p>The CEO/President of Sauber has more than 15 years of industry experience</p> <p>Outsourcing of non-competency activities (like cleaning) of the target market.</p> <p>They have a well-trained skilled and professional crew and scientist people for the Total Hygiene Management.</p> <p>Low number of players in the Total Hygiene Management (THM) Industry</p>	<p>Through the help of various industry-linkages and longtime industry experience of the President of Sauber, it can be a big help to have a contract to the target for THM services. Furthermore, it will be a chance to take advantage with this kind of opportunity. Develop a strategy such as improving marketing communication</p> <p>With having a low number of THM company, with the use of some media vehicle for promotion, Sauber may highlight that they have lots of expertise for cleaning and sanitation that provides an effective and high quality service.</p>
<p>S2, T1, T2, T3</p>	<p>They have lots of industry linkages</p> <p>Lack of brand recognition</p> <p>Stronger brand name of competitors such as ECOLAB, DIVERSEY, CHEMSOL, KALINISAN and REINLAB</p> <p>Competitions are starting to learn the THM offering.</p>	<p>Since Sauber is just a new company, it must be pursuing through its marketing efforts or the promotions to establish a brand image and awareness in the market.</p>
<p>W1, O1</p>	<p>It is a startup company</p> <p>Low number of players in the Total Hygiene Management (THM) Industry</p>	<p>Even Sauber is a newly established company, it is a big advantage because of low number of THM Industry. It means that it is in a perfect time starting its business. It needs to work on introducing its brand in the market.</p>

W1, T1, T2, T3	<p>It is a startup company Lack of brand recognition Stronger brand name of competitors such as ECOLAB, DIVERSEY, CHEMSOL, KALINISAN and REINLAB Competitions are starting to learn the THM offering.</p>	<p>It will be a threat for Sauber to have big competitors since it is new THM industry. But lots of opportunities are waiting, it must have a strategy while grabbing it. Perfect timing and adjustment must be considered.</p>
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CONCLUSION

From the previous findings, the researchers have arrived to the following conclusions. The profile of the majority of our respondents are from Alabang, Muntinlupa City mostly, in Alabang Town Center which has a high class level of dine-in restaurant. Most respondents' are local and originated here in the Philippines. The researchers found out that most of the dine-in restaurants are franchised and it is a common business style of a food industry. The respondents cleaning and sanitation process is outsourced. The researchers found out that in terms of attractiveness of advertisement, still the traditional way or word of mouth is the top preference of customers. The respondents' top priority when purchasing a cleaning product and pest control services are Quality and Effectiveness. Most of the respondents are not really familiar in Sauber Company. The researchers found out that an industry like Sauber has a frequency of exposure in advertising "Sometimes". The respondents of the study will retain on a Total Hygiene Company if that company still exists. The respondents also consider the price that a company offers. The respondents' perceptions about the level of agreement in advertising that will draw their attention are the Billboards, Tarpaulin and TV Commercial. When it comes to their buying decision agreement, they prefer to buy high quality products.

RECOMMENDATION

Improve the Marketing Communication

Increase marketing efforts such as business proposal directed to the target market. Since Sauber is a service company, and almost of the target customer has a process of cleaning outsourcing, it means that it will be a big

opportunity for the company to introduce its offerings and it must push through a regular business proposal and talk about the services and terms and conditions between it and the client, especially in Alabang areas where Sauber has a target client here. Additionally, based on the result in the attractiveness when purchasing a product or services, customers would prefer in the “word of mouth”, and it is considered as personal communication or business proposal.

Social Network

Create a Facebook page and website for its services. Sauber Professional Inc. can share its different offerings, activities and achievements and post it in Facebook, since most of the people are more exposed to this site. Make an official website for formality and it will be a one way to introduce the company. Do it regularly and always update. With this, the customers will be more aware in Sauber Professional Inc.

Promotion

Put a billboard in a respective place starting from SLEX up to Manila. Since most of the respondents get the attention through Billboard and tarpaulin advertisement, Sauber must provide and put it around the place of its target customers located from San Pedro up to Metro Manila. It will be placed starting from SLEX. With this, it may result of increasing the number of inquirers. Make a promotion that will testify the services and products of Sauber. Make a promotion such as using a corporate video and TV Commercial that will include all the advantages and benefits that a customer may get. It must be done by the current customers that will stand as the proof. Highlight the positive feedback and experiences about the service and show up also the quality and effectiveness of services and some offerings. All the certification or accreditation may also be considered here because it can also give a good image for the customers especially the target clients of Sauber. Continue to establish a strong image for the industry and offer high-quality and effective products and services in a reasonable price.

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