E-Commerce for Coffee Shop

Name

Institution

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Executive Summary

The Adams coffee shop has been in operation for a long time, but it has not managed to achieve the target sales of 500 customers per day. It is because few people know about its existence due to its failure to advertise (Wei, 2016). However, the company has realized its need for growth and is currently conducting research to come up with the best means of capturing a wider market. From the research, it is evident that the most successful coffee shops use social media and internet facilities to advertise their products and improve their performance. Platforms like the Facebook and Twitter have favored the coffee shops in a big way, with firms like Starbucks offering free WiFi to their customers (Wei, 2016). Additionally, such media attract many followers, who eventually get interested in the company's products. Apart from Facebook and Twitter, the coffee shop could also use Instagram which is gaining popularity fast.

Therefore, it will be important to adopt the strategy and get the set hardware and software providers to help in the process. Additionally, the shop will need highly competent workers to help in capturing a wider market and increasing sales. In the implementing the project, the participants will need to invest resources in money, time and labor to come up with the best results (Sam & Cai, 2015). Moreover, the company will require enough time to install and adjust the equipment in the most appropriate way. After installation, some areas perform better than others, which make it necessary to keep updating the programs in the initial stages. For the best performance, a firm should keep observing its competitors strategies so that it does not remain behind or lose its customers.

E-Business Plan for a Coffee Shop

Introduction and Purpose

Advertisement is one of the crucial aspects of any business venture. As such, the methods used for advertisement should be considered to ensure that as many as the targeted groups are reached effectively (Hassan, Nadzim, & Shiratuddin, 2015). Consequently, the services offered are relayed to consumers in an efficient and effective manner leading to the growth of business.

Adams Coffee Shop is a theoretical business that deals in the sale of different types of coffee and snacks to its customers in the local town. The coffee shop has not been reaching its target for the day which included serving at least five hundred customers. One of the factors is the advertising methods used as they only depend on the signposts outside the shop. Due to the tasty coffee offered, some referrals have enabled the place to survive despite the poor advertisement strategies. Although the business has social media pages, they are not used for any purposes that relate to the business.

Social media marketing is a concept that has evolved with time to realize great results for the business. Indeed, the use of social media networks has been on the rise in the past decade as more people continue to use them for easier and convenient connection (Hanna, Rohm, & Crittenden, 2011). As one of the methods of e-commerce, the coffee shop will benefit from the use of social networks to advertise its products. Indeed the popularity of the place will increase the number of customers that are served each day.

Objectives

The primary objective of the plan will be to investigate the effectiveness of social media advertising in the increase of the number of people aware of Adams Coffee Shop. Under this objective, the sub-objectives will include:

- To find out the influence of a Facebook page on the number of customers aware of Adams Coffee Shop.

- To investigate the effectiveness of real-time feedback on social media on the retention of customers at Adams Coffee Shop.

- To understand the use of social media networks in tailoring the products of Adams Coffee Shop to the demands of the consumers.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of the inquiry is to explore the influence of social media on the effective advertisement of Adams Coffee Shop.

Relevance

Social media networks continue to evolve by day. The number of people connected to the social media networks through their cellular phones desktops and tablets has been overwhelming (Hanna, Rohm, & Crittenden, 2011). Coffee is a standard product that has an assured market if the advertisement of the same is done effectively. As such, this proposal will not only enlighten on the significance of using social media networks for advertising but also reveal the great potential it has in attracting new customers. The e-business plan will provide a platform for most business to customize their pages on social media networks in a way that attracts the customers to try their products. Also, the proposal will add to the literature available on the effectiveness of social media networks as advertisement platforms in the business world today (Culnan, McHugh, & Zubillaga, 2010; Evans, 2010; Jussila, Kärkkäinen, & Aramo-Immonen, 2014).

Literature Review

Analysis of Existing E-commerce Sites

Adams coffee shop being a new entity in the coffee business will have to borrow strategies of online marketing from the legends in this business. Starbucks is the largest retail entity for coffee and to popularize its products, it has built portfolios on social media platforms. On Facebook, it has a fan page to store and update information about their products and market them. The like' feature of Facebook has idealized it as the most popular brand with 36 million fans (Sam & Cai, 2015). The comment feature has enabled Starbucks to analyze consumer needs and preference based on the feedbacks. On Twitter, a microblogging service, Starbucks has created its profile which has huge following. It advertises its products by tweeting and also encourages its followers to share tweets as a form of viral marketing. 'Mystarbucksidea' is the official website used to promote the Starbucks brand. It allows users to register accounts, carry on discussions pertaining various products and post comments. The site administrators respond to comments, and this assures clients that their opinions count. Other big names in the coffee shop business that have developed their websites as E-commercial sites are Café Coffee Day, Barista, Mocha and Costa Coffee (Gonsalves & Dias, 2015).

Review and Analysis of E-commerce Articles

Articles that have researched on E-commerce for coffee shops have used Starbucks as an example perhaps because its sales improved after embracing E-commerce (Wei, 2016; Sam & Cai, 2015). The articles indicate social networks and e-commerce sites are not alternatives, but rather harmonizing tools for e-marketing. The success of coffee shops is achieved by use of online social marketing utilizing Community and Market perspectives. The first perspective takes advantage of the enormous populations on networks to popularize their products while the second perspective aims to build a virtual community with common interests especially the use

of similar products (Mata & Quesada, 2014; Sam & Cai, 2015). The community perspective allows companies to get feedback on their products. E-commerce is thus being revolutionized by implementing new Web 2.0 features in social media to improve customer participation, promote customer relationship eventually and achieving greater economic value. This has led to the advent of Social Commerce where tools that adds e-commerce features to social networks, such as catalogs, payment options, shopping carts, and to allow the creation of electronic stores are being utilized (Mata & Quesada, 2014).

Review and Analysis of Software/Hardware and Service Providers

Adams coffee shop will build its profile on Facebook and Twitter, and this means that the software used will be that of these online social networks. In designing its website, the coffee shop can use Ecwid, Payvment, osCommerce or Magento as software (Mata & Quesada 2014). It will employ IT personnel to help design the website and monitor communication on social media. The management of the coffee shop will purchase hardware devices, operating system software and suitable application programs, mentioned above to make e-commerce feasible for them. The store will open other branches, and there will need to utilize Foursquare. Foursquare as a mobile app will enable consumers to know the physical location of Adams coffee shops and check into the nearest (Sam & Cai, 2015). Since the internet is the primary service provider, Adams coffee shops will provide free Wi-Fi to its customers to enable them access other services alongside theirs, just as Starbucks has done (Wei, 2016). To assess these services, consumers will need to have Web-enabled phones or access to the internet through laptops or desktops.

Analysis, Alternatives and Financial Analysis

Coffee shops are on the increase due to the high demand in the market. Therefore, more firms have been emerging, posing a threat to the existing ones due to the competition. However,

the current companies have remained aggressive by offering better services and looking for

alternative selling strategies to attract new customers as well as and retain the existing ones

(Kardan & Arani, 2016). Among the emerging coffee shops is Adams Coffee Shop which sells

various types of coffee and snacks to the local customers. However, it has been unable to reach

its target of 500 customers per day due to its poor advertisement strategies. For an organization

to succeed in is business, it needs to have the best plans which include the best promotional

methods to make numerous people aware of the existing services.

Research Methods

The investigation will be conducted using a qualitative method that uses an online

questionnaire as well as participant observation. The qualitative method will offer insight into the

effectiveness of using social media sites for the growth of the business through its popularity.

Participant observation will be employed to identify the changes in the number of customers

arriving at Adams Coffee Shop after it was advertised using social media networks.

Discussion

Analysis and Alternatives

Due to the inability to achieve the sales target, Adams Coffee Shop will have to borrow

marketing strategies from the firms which have been in operation for long. An evaluation of the

Starbucks marketing strategy shows that the company has managed to succeed due to its current

updates on the marketing strategies. For instance, Starbucks uses social platforms to market their

products, and it has a numerous number of followers who update other people about its products.

It has more than 36 million followers on Facebook alone, a strategy which has made its sales

increase tremendously. Additionally, the company encourages its followers to retweet its updates

so that the information reaches more people (Enterprise, 2015).

Most of the articles which highlight on coffee shops' e-commerce use Starbucks as an example and usually indicate e-commerce sites as tools for harmonizing online marketing. Additionally, the firms can get timely feedback about their products and make improvements where necessary. In a bid to stay competitive, Adams Coffee Shop had to build a platform on Facebook and Twitter, adopting the use of software like Ecwid, Payvment, osCommerce or Magento (Kardan & Arani, 2016). Additionally, the firm will have to purchase compatible hardware and hire qualified personnel to help in the installation of the software. The Coffee Shop will also provide free Wi-Fi to the customers to enhance the projects' success. However, the customers will need internet enabled phones to access the company's products and services or conduct online business at the shop's premises.

Available E-Commerce Alternatives

Apart from the available Facebook and Twitter platforms, the Coffee Shop could use Whatsapp, Instagram, and Snapchat to attract more clients to the business. Furthermore, it could use software like Snip chart which ensures that the companies cover every shipping and ordering destination. However, it will be efficient if the coffee shop plans to make office deliveries or to sell to people outside the premises (Kardan & Arani, 2016). Also, Selz software might be applicable in the Coffee Shop because it is simple and does not bombard the user with added features. It is suitable for Adams coffee shop because it is the best for beginners. With this application, one can build a list of all their online customers and be able to contact them whenever necessary.

Costs and Benefits of Various Software and Hardware Providers

The software and hardware providers are crucial for any business intending to be updated and profitable. However, it comes with costs like being expensive to plan and implement. Most

of the hardware and software providers tend to inflate their prices, especially when conducting

the business with an inexperienced client. It may lead to substantial losses on the part of the

buyer. Also, the providers might take long to deliver or install their machines to the company's

premises, causing delays in operations (D'Andrea, Ferri & Grifoni, 2014). Therefore, it is

important to transact with a reputable organization that will carry out the process from the

beginning to the end and conduct follow-ups after that to evaluate the project's success.

Moreover, some software may be inflexible, compelling the coffee shop to install new ones. The

flexible software is crucial because the business operates in a dynamic environment and is likely

to face changes which call for updates from time to time. Also, the hardware and software should

be compatible with the firm's plans and layouts. Therefore, the equipment and software

providers should ensure that the company does not incur costs related to maintenance and

incompatibility.

On the other hand, the software and hardware providers focus on a company's strengths,

which is crucial to Adam's coffee shop because it intends to improve its business. Also, they

help in reduction of the company's costs by eliminating some manual operations. If the firm does

not plan to install the services permanently, it may save money by leasing the IT requirements

(D'Andrea Ferri & Grifoni, 2014). Furthermore, the software and hardware providers usually

have experience and are likely to show Adams Coffee Shop the latest productivity tools to use in

their business. Additionally, most of them have their products under one roof which make

transport and installation easier to the purchasing firm. The providers deliver, install and help in

the protection of data and applications, which reduces the costs of purchasing from different

vendors. The best vendors in the market include Apple INC, Hewlett-Packard Company, Dell,

INC, CISCO, and INTEL Corporation among others. The Adams Coffee Shop will require Dell products for its successful operations.

E-Commerce Proposal Implementation

Business success depends entirely on the formulation of strategies and the ability to implement them effectively. Adams Coffee shop has been in operation for a long time, but few people recognize it because it does not have proper strategies in place. For instance, it only uses the signposts at its premises to advertise itself, which limits its customers because only those within the locality are aware of its existence (Huang & Benyoucef, 2013). However, the firm has realized that it needs to grow and has adopted various strategies to enable it to capture a wider market. Research shows that a business can make tremendous improvements by staying up to date with the society's needs as well as creating its products' awareness to the users. Although Adams Coffee Shop has social media pages, it does not use them for business purposes, which could be risky to its growth. Research findings show that with proper functioning social media platforms, it will be easier to increase sales and attract more customers. Additionally, the coffee shop will be able to identify the customers' preferences and deliver customized products to suit the market. Adams Coffee Shop has identified Facebook and Twitter as the best platforms to help in its marketing strategies.

The Alternative

Apart from Facebook and Twitter, other platforms include Whatsapp, Instagram, and Snapchat. Among the alternatives, the best one to adopt will be Instagram because like Facebook, it has a numerous number of followers. Additionally, people using the platform can link their accounts with Facebook which makes it easy to access. The platform also enables users to get Instagram updates which make the awareness program easier (Huang & Benyoucef, 2013).

Moreover, many Instagram users are youth, which makes the potential customer base even larger. With such an alternative, it will be easier to market the coffee products on various platforms.

The Hardware and Software Provider

On the other hand, the best hardware/software provider would be Dell because it offers a variety of products at reasonable prices. The coffee shop can choose the hardware and software according to their needs and costs. Also, Dell's products are long-lasting and have a customer care segment that conducts follow-up procedures to establish the clients' progress (Rodriguez, Smith & Spinac, 2014). In the case of an operational problem, it will be easier to get assistance unlike when operating with local vendors. Also, Dell computers are high performing and rarely break down, which is a suitable machine for a busy organization like a coffee shop. Since Adams Coffee Shop intends to expand, it will need resilient hardware and software to cope with the ever busy environment.

Financing the Plan

The best way to finance this project would be using the company's savings because obtaining a bank loan could be risky at this stage. After the program's success, the shop will be able to recover its finances within the shortest time possible (Talib & Alomary, 2016). Therefore, companies intending to implement new strategies should make savings in advance to ensure that they do not face numerous challenges during the whole process.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Organizations should always endeavor to stay competitive so that they attract more customers and increase their profitability. A firm should conduct research to identify the strategies which suit its industry better and implement them or improve the already existing ones.

Also, Firms should adopt the best hardware and software to increase efficiency during their operations. Currently, everyone is on social media and the organizations utilizing these platforms have experienced tremendous growth. It is because one can advertise their products through their Facebook pages or encourage their followers to re-tweet the available information to reach a broad audience (Talib & Alomary, 2016). Successful firms make their customers a priority, and so there is a need to identify their needs and always satisfy them. With the increasing competition, it is crucial to surpass the competitors' strategies in all areas.

The Adams coffee shop has identified the best advertisement strategies as well as the service providers and e-commerce articles. Therefore, coming up with the most suitable time plan will be necessary to ensure that every detail gets incorporated into the program. For the best results, six months will be enough for installation, and execution of the marketing programs (Rodriguez, Smith & Spinac, 2014). Additionally, the research was thorough and therefore, putting the strategies in place would not be much challenging. The Coffee Shop can use the first three months to test the plans performance and the next three months to amend areas which require urgent attention.

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