
Principles And Practice Of Sport Management

For a business the greatest key to success is how well your company is perceived in the public's eye. Marketing is an integral part of any business operation regardless of platform, environment, type of products sold, or services rendered to the target market. Hence, to see fruitful returns customers must have a demand for a particular product or service and businesses must feed those demands. With the advent use of Internet technology, new business models and strategies like Business-to-business (B2B) and Business-to-customer (B2C) have emerged which require the employment of different marketing strategies and tools to attract and retain customers.

As an athletic director for the Drexel Dragons men's basketball team, I am no stranger to the techniques and strategies my team and I deploy to boost larger turnout for our home and away games. The most commonly used are (B2B) and (B2C) in our ticket sales, licensing media and sponsorship rights. Each used to churn out the best results based on the target group and sub-group. In Drexel our ticket sales and publicity rights have two target group, individuals and businesses but you would be surprised at just how different B2B and B2C relate to each group. Licensing, sponsorship rights outsourcing is type of business arrangements. It allows one to make income from all kinds of intellectual property while the owner retains ownership but while grants rights for others uses. It requires royalties in return. In our marketing to B2B companies both teams try to streamline the buying process to save on time and money, though the true cost of sale is higher for B2B than B2C. This is because for B2B more consideration and involvement from other leaders in the sales department is required to deliberate before a final decision can be made, especially when proof of return investment is a necessity.

When marketing to a B2B, more attention must be given to the logic of the product, in this case our publicity rights. To do this sales pitches must revolve around the features of the product because there is little to no personal emotions attached to the purchasing decision. Particularly with selling rights to broadcast our tournament games, broadcasting companies are thirsty for the knowledge and information that your games with an ordinary team will break record viewings, how much more rival teams, on their channel. To them the most effective marketing message will focus on viewings and what returns on investment they can expect with their purchase. While for the Drexel brand, it becomes easier to expand market penetration and reach in different geographies which enhance brand equity.

On the other hand, our ticket sales take a more B2C approach where purchases are not based on logic but rather the emotions of the customer. This is because customers are more concerned about the benefits our products have for them. When our sales reps are out on the field their targets are less concerned about lengthy marketing messages. Their preference gets straight to the point. Tell them about the results and benefits of the product while making the message simple and easy to understand. Here a larger workforce is required to get the job done and has the advantage of targeting specific and numerous geographies and micro segments via direct selling, telesales, online/ social media, store or outlet sales.

Nevertheless, each marketing strategy has its own challenge. With outsourcing licenses and sponsorship rights to B2B companies one can have a good product with excellent revenue

prospects now but no one has an exact control of what the future could hold regardless of the forecasted and predictability matrixes used to suggest future revenue. It takes a voluminous amount of confidence for the outsourced business to lock itself in such a deal. Additionally, these kinds of business must have a sufficient financial muscles or assets if they are considering buying such licensing rights.

For B2C challenges can arise when the selling team is not properly trained or happily employed. A scenario of an ill- trained sales rep would be one who doesn't have sufficient knowledge to read customers emotions. Because it is an emotional strategy if a customer is not giving the right tells for an interest in your product seizing to "down your product through their throat" could just be the point they stop entertaining future advertisements. Moreover, a rep who knows that "no" is just the beginning of the sales process is one who can reevaluate his approach to better tailor his sales pitch to that specific customer. If the sales workforce incompetent to could affect profit margins because high attritions would result in recruiting again and down the line revenue loss.

As the Athletic director for Drexel I have done my research and found out that outsourcing sales operations has been hugely beneficial for the team and the athletic department if you know what you are looking for and understand how it can enhance your bottom line. I think that this is one of the biggest challenges most directors face concerning this business strategy. One key aspect that hinders the successful implementation of this business strategy is finding a partner who is responsive to your needs, will implement your plans faithfully, and who has the skills to deliver. Because this strategy revolves around these values it is important that thorough research is done on partners before final commitments are struck.

The other challenge I think the department faces with outsourcing is the need for external sales representatives to have accurate information about products being sold and how to disseminate it. For B2B, data capturing is an integral part to gaining insights on the consumers. Many marketers and small business owners struggle with data challenges. From creating goals that would help you determine what data you need, to picking systems that execute the marketing plan that your data has already identified and if not done properly could affect conversion rates.

For every business there comes a time when the sales and marketing departments have weighted the options of either sticking with a B2C model or pondered about converting to a B2B business model and how beneficial each would be to their business. I think the most important question to ask is not would you outsource your ticket operations but rather when. The decision to outsource goes beyond the cost of doing so versus the costs of keeping it internal. As an athletic director you have to understand the integral parts of your business and how it generates value.

The three key segments to an athletic department are level of expertise, structure and staffing. These elements together help directors assess when to outsource their ticketing operations. If the university doesn't have an expert in the field of sports management, who has knowledge about both collegiate sports and revenue building strategies I would recommend outsourcing. It is essential that he and his team have the expertise and wherewithal to understand what would need to be done for the for the universities collegiate teams otherwise potential revenue will be lost due to ineffective approaches to boost sales and expand fan-based interests in their games.

Structure and staffing kind of also go hand in hand, in that any decision based on what will enhance the business must be done with minimal disruption. As a state- affiliated organization or public institution of higher learning there is a limit as to the way the university can hire, fire and compensate employee. Understanding that the institution's first priority is equipping student athletes with the necessary knowledge and skills, to affect change in the real world, rather than promoting an entertainment source. Hence having a pipeline of talent to handle internal ticket sales and corporate sponsorship rights in-house and the right leader and right sales team are all crucial factors that determine sales success and upside growth potential.

If all these core elements all not fully in place would I then consider outsourcing ticket operations.

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