

MBA- III semester, Specialisation- Marketing Management, Paper - Service Marketing, Paper code- MC 02, TOPIC-Roles of Physical Evidence

Roles of Physical Evidence

The primary role of evidence management is to support the organisation's marketing programme by making it possible to manage both intended and unintended cues which can give adequate evidences to customers and thereby influence perceptions. Interestingly, the physical evidences also influence employees who interact with customers during the service delivery.

Depending on the competitive situation, marketing objective and the resources, an organization can use evidence for some or all of the above roles, though these roles are not mutually exclusive. Arising out of the above reasons the services organization are expected to use a two-prong marketing communication strategy aimed at not only tangibilizing the message but also the service.

Tangibilizing the service implies that tangibles associated with the service are emphasized in communication as if they themselves form the service. For example, DHL courier service is advertised with a visual of an airport showing a fleet of their aircrafts and Benz trucks. Alternately, you create tangible representations of the service to symbolize. For example, 'comfort' in air travel can be tangibilized using comfortable seats with extra leg-space. This can also be emphasized in advertising.

The second step of marketing communication, tools aim at tangibilizing the message by creative use of evidence in messages, by guaranteeing the service and by encouraging positive word of mouth. By tangibilizing the message, the service organization makes the advertising message less abstract and more credible through the use of physical evidence. For example, "Personal Point" is giving physical evidences as regard to the weight loss of their customers. The other method of tangibilizing the message is to guarantee the service. For example, some of the private airlines emphasize on a higher percentage of on

time arrivals and departures. Hart suggested that though warranties are effectively used in manufacturing goods quite successful, they can equally be applicable in-service industries.

If the quality of the service and the service delivery of an organization are excellent, a service organization then can possibly guarantee it to gain competitive advantage. The third method of tangibilizing the message is to create and encourage a favourable word of mouth. In service sector the consequences of selecting a wrong service supplier are invariably higher and as a result the customers invariably seek the opinion of others. It is in this context the word of mouth is important in giving tangible clues to customers.