

How Unreliable Delivery System Affects E-marketing Effectiveness

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Abstract. Electronic commerce, widely known as e-commerce, has been at the heart of business growth for a while now, and it does not seem to be slowing down or decreasing in its importance in any way. Rather, it has become the must-have of every small, medium and large businesses, firms, corporations and multi-corporations. All kinds of industries have embraced electronic medium when doing business both locally and internationally. Although the growth of e-commerce has been constantly on the rise, nevertheless; the improvement of the delivery system still has a long way to go to match the rapidly emerging prospects in e-business.

Keywords: E-commerce, delivery of service quality, current delivery failures, retailer and customers responsibilities, reliability of EC, delivery effectiveness.

1. Introduction

Since 1991, when the commercialization of the Internet began, the World Wide Web has been the home of every business person or organization. Buying and selling have been made easy, and the purchasing power of customers has increased. Gone are the days when organizations and firms called the shots, controlling every single price and quality of products in the marketplace. However, with the emergence of e-commerce, a variety of options are there for customers to choose from. There has been a wide range of competition in terms of price and quality, and customer service, feedback and the customization of products in all areas have really taken off.

Furthermore, one important aspect of electronic commerce does not have to be forgotten so soon because it stands as a benchmark to the completion of a business process. In the Web business, everything is interconnected from the computer FTP (file transfer protocol that enables users to transfer files between computers. Telnet lets users log onto their accounts from remote sites to TCP/IP and HTML. Hyperlinks to the information in data form are processed and broken down into smaller units.

Amazon and EBay both dominate e-commerce in its early days, providing means for consumers to access and buy a variety of products under one unify umbrella without wandering around traditional markets, and trying to remember the price and special benefits of a product or services from the previous retailer you stopped by. In addition, e-commerce allows people with physical deficiencies to get products or services of any kind without leaving their houses or been a burden to their caretakers. Amazon provided a purchase of all kinds of books and music from all sectors, scholars' materials, business books, novels, poetry, news tellers and a whole lot more while EBay provides an online system where buyers and sellers meet to exchange old or new products either scarce or present commodity in trend for a cheap price[20].

Furthermore, as the rate of customers increased on both sites increased so did the question of how to meet the demands of each buyer to keep the online incentive bubbling, courier services were all involved in

it as it seems like a new market for both DHL, FEDEX, UPS and the local post office. Even so, despite their involvements in electronics commerce, the problems surrounding delivery of products and services for both tangible and intangible commodities still lingers like wild fire.

2. Delivery Service Quality

Delivery is the most integral part of the whole system. A business on the World Wide Web is solely incomplete if the recipient of that information or product does not receive its product or service. A business is complete in either traditional or electronic form when the delivery of the product/service is felt and there is a sense of satisfaction between the seller and the buyer.

The efficiency and dependability of delivery systems need to be perceived by customers to enable ongoing patronage and growth of electronic marketing [8]. Furthermore, there have been signs of flexibility from leading courier services in order to cope with the ever-growing pace of e-commerce, including the introduction of new courier services, but the levels of unreliability are even greater than before. A clear example of such unreliability occurred during Christmas day shopping where the online purchase increase due to the event [9], [16].

The level at which unreliable delivery system has affected both small, medium and large business is unspeakable, according to Zeithaml et-al; [19] “Delivery of service quality” states that “delivering consistently good service excellent is difficult but profitable for function organization”. The subject on unreliable delivery is an ever growing process since e-commerce popularity has never stopped heating the upwards, customers find it as a way to manage their time effectively with less stress but unreliability has been the issues keeping e-commerce users at bay.

3. Current Delivery Failures

Wesley [20] in regards to 25 March, 2011”3DS delivery failure” the Eurogamer claimed that customers who have purchased the Nintendo 3Ds would not get them on the agreed date, due to the porous delivery system. In addition to the event, the online store Amazon issued a follow up statement that confirmed the authenticity of the claims from its customers. Despite charging an extra fee for an expedited delivery for the products, Amazon still has difficulties satisfying customers. Moreover, Bowen “Problems with delivery delay on-line shopping” point out one of the major reasons for delivery delays can be traced to stores not having the latest or high tech ordering devices[6].

More so, online shopping was a system developed to ease the pressure off traditional shopping, but the growing trend of ineffective delivery from retailers has left people asking if it’s worth the hype surrounding it. CE [4] In addition, 22 July, 2008 highlights that lack of delivery; cost the UK economy a huge sum of 1. 6 billion pounds yearly, delivery failure has cost Tesco a too [11]. The problem of cost in the government sector arises when workers take time away from work waiting for items bought online due to the unreliable delivery system.

Beck [13] note that shopping online is a system that was designed to be a “Point, snap and obtain”, rather the system has generated its own problem; resulting to huge loss of money, and contributing to high rate community. 22 July, 2008. 81% of people that used ecommerce in UK did not receive it. Research in e-commerce shows that 94% of people said they will not patronize a retailer that failed to deliver their products/services [4].

Although, the relationship between customers and sellers has been tagged as “unethical”, traditional commerce made people believe “customers are always right” which over the years has been the backbone of some unprecedented approach towards buying and selling [10]. Most customers are somewhat lame in their giving excuses, as Bloch claimed in; “Dealing with complaints and aggressive online clients” [16], [9]. There is also needs to set up awareness and understanding between the customer and the retailers to avoid any unnecessary discrepancies that will occur [10].

4. Customers and Retailers Responsibilities

The effectiveness of a delivery system is not the duty of a retailers and delivery team alone, but that of the customer too. Customers need to play their own crucial part to help facilitate the effectiveness of the delivery system [4]. While shopping on the web market, there are information's such as address a retailer need from its customers in other to perform delivery, but in most cases customers ignore that information or label the information as irrelevant. Such sensitive can prove a deciding factor at critical times. For instance, on website to determine if the customer's delivery address is a house or apartment, for an apartment; a spot on a retailer website suggests that the apartment number be placed beneath the address, Many customers disregard such simple step.

Apple [1] prove, it's the retailer's responsibility to call a customer after a transaction is made in other to verify the delivery address to avoid any wrong delivery or delay but in most cases retailers do not consider it relevant they somehow believe all customers are familiar with their address or procedure. Ruling out the fact such as the customer might not be a computer literate but desire to perform an online transaction, maybe due to the interest he/she has in the online service. In addition, retailers do not consider the fact that some on-line buyers might be new to the area and do not know the complete address of the new residential area or house address, while some might have forgotten they recently move to a new location, apartment or a new house; mistakenly filling out the old address on the said retailer's website. There is indeed various reason why a retail outlet should call customers after an online transaction is placed. Although the retailers might argue that there isn't enough time to carry out an additional follow-up after a transaction is placed, which might have its own cost, as they say "it's better to be safer than sorry". According Bruce Weinberg, assistant professor of marketing and e-commerce at (BUGSM) comment on Beck [13]; "People shop online because it saves them time, but there isn't any time saved when they miss a delivery". While another was quoted saying; "Many American companies offer commodities by mail order (Hard copy, Soft copies and mementos and a handful offer an electronic "shopping service" - you give them a list by computer, and they go shopping for you. However, no retail chain has the capacity to perform complete service."

5. Reliability of E-commerce

In other words, there is a major issue both customers and retailers sometimes ignore, from customers view; they need the commodity to meet their needs, while from the retailer wants to boost its sales record, in doing so both parties tend to forget the issue of nature; such as weather while engaging in e-commerce trade. The rate of risk in winter period is usually massive as the case may be today; the huge pileup of snows prevent trucks, mini-van and even car owners and motor bikes from movement [18]. At least casualties were recorded in previous winter in the US, where a woman was frozen to death in her own car and others stranded in a -4 degree cold. This is a tremendous obstacle that both customers and retailer have no control over. While so many retailers have deployed ways of succeeding in winter period despite the huge problems that it's facing; customers should at least be reasonable in such a situation. A frustrated customer on scamsaway.com a complain website said "I rechecked the UPS tracking site and my delivery has now been moved to two days henceforth, the day AFTER Christmas I understand that weather is bad. However, FedEx, and U.S. Post Office (USPS) have been making deliveries since yesterday, and USPS is making deliveries on Christmas Day to make sure everyone gets their deliveries in time"; even customers know bad weather can trigger a delay, It will be better if customers can put aside their self-centeredness and try to be a realistic customer.

Consumingexperience [4] contradict the findings of July, 2008; according to the result of the poll that was carried. This question was asked "has the delivery problem put you off from acquiring online" the findings were overwhelming as 69.8% said [7]. No- the shopping center hordes are unspeakable, while 30.2% said yes. I don't want to leave it to chance. This poll was conducted in UK; more customers performed their Christmas shopping on-line despite anxiety of bad weather ruining the chances of delivery [4], [16].

6. Delivery Effectiveness

Bowen [5], most customers and home builders are making efforts to eradicate the problems facing unreliable delivery, but the question that baffles Hadavi, "why we miss the delivery date"? Witness who

electronic bins have been in place for drop offs in homes/ apartments; to avoid undelivered products/ services of items worth hundreds of dollars, or watch the items displaced or dispatched on the yard. This step is good not just because you get to have your order delivered, but also because it safe and secured until you get home; and you alone will have the combination which the retailer will send to your email to unlock the bin[11].

Caswell [16] “New shoppers are not discouraged by e-commerce failures”. “Shopping with a trusted on-line store will help eliminate unreliable service”, as much as I would like to agree with him, my disagreement will be emphasized in terms of bad weather, how will a reputable online retailer deal with the issue of unforeseen circumstances? The question still remained unanswered only if he provides legitimate information about this event that I will adhere to his reasoning [12].

Similarly, the information in the articles used for these reviews; they were informative and analytical in all aspects, they are also academic bound for both learned and a lay person. A pure outlook on the real life scenario will enable a lay man understand the principles and delivery issues that were discussed in the review. “Amazon accused of 3DS delivery failure”; it laid emphases on both present and past event, which was helpful to base this review on current delivery lapses [20]. Furthermore, improvement on analysis would be welcomed on “Have the delivery discourage you from e-shopping” more detailed facts would be welcomed [7]. Process should be added to improve reader knowledge and how they arrived on their facts.

7. Discussion

A positive reputation means excellent business. Many businesses today have suffered huge set back due to the bad reputation in their business practices. Bad business means, there is no continuity, which is how customers see in today’s business. Once they are disappointed, they run to your competitors, no room for explanation. Words spread like wildfire; before it can be retrieving; a great deal of profit would have been lost to restore the image of that business. This is the problem every growing or already established businesses face in e-marketing. Customers play a huge role in making a business grow. Without customers, there will be no market.

Good business leaves means both parties involve are ecstatic, looking forward to engaging in future dealing with each other. The beauty of swift and good delivery is attained. Every satisfaction in any product delivered on time has a positive effect on the next order customer purchase, It gives birth to reliability; satisfaction, continuity, cost efficiency, expansion and high returns in revenue for the company.

Likewise, cost effective wise; it’s important that an organization fulfills its obligation to its customers, no matter what the quantity or service applied for, customer retention should always be at the heart of businesses. Online retailers, in particular, should find a way to be on time in terms of speedy delivery or response to customers complains. To avoid law suits, it’s advisable that e-retailers seek a swift solution to solve the calamity of lost or undelivered products. It’s better to spend more on effective means to eradicate the problems of unreliability concerning services and delivery than lose a huge sum on settlement of in court for a law suit filed against the company.

8. Conclusion

As the problem of delivery continues to grow, customers are becoming irritated while retailers and delivery services are having sleepless nights on how to create a better way of reaching out to customers. I will like to point out that if there is more retail or pick up outlets within the parameter of every city; the rate of undelivered products or services will be minimal.

Furthermore, adopting the new metallic bin system will be a good way to eradicate the problems of a few of the many problems faced by undelivered packages if, and when these bins are in place, there is a good sign it will help eliminate fears of undelivered products.

Also, festive shoppers are likely to spend more online if retailers create effective ways to meet customers growing delivery demands. Perhaps offering a combination of convenience and value will hold the key to the continued success of e-commerce. If they can’t initiate this move to maximize their shareholder profit, at least; let them create a beneficial way to promote the continual growth of e-commerce for the future.

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