

From Product Design to Customer Care: IKEA's Blueprint for Success

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Abstract:

The report aims to introduce IKEA's customer service and investigate its background and strategic objectives. As a national retail giant, IKEA recognizes that home furnishing is not only a place to live, but also provides products, services and shopping experience by understanding consumer needs. The research topics include IKEA's customer service system, service strategy, system standards, customer feedback collection and use, etc. Collect information by publishing questionnaires, contacting the customer service team, and the official website, etc. The results include the development of IKEA and customer service strategy of IKEA, analyze its advantages, such as customer-centered and high-cost performance, and also point out the shortcomings of products that need to be self-assembled and crowded stores, and give corresponding suggestions. The conclusion shows that IKEA focuses on consumer feelings and provides a variety of services. The survey shows that most consumers are satisfied with their services and products. In the future, IKEA should provide paid assembly services, optimize the checkout process, and provide personalized recommendations with big data to better meet customer needs.

Keywords: Customer service; Strategic target; Survey analysis.

1. Introduction

This report was written by Xiao Yuanyuan at the request of a business communication skills mentor; The main purpose of this article is to introduce IKEA's customer service, investigate IKEA's background, business and strategic goals, etc., in the article mainly introduces IKEA's background, various standards in the service system, customer information storage and processing, and IKEA's advantages and disadvantages and solutions. IKEA is looking beyond home design. Relying on its innovations in research and development, product design, engineering technology and customer service, it has become a global retail giant. IKEA recognizes that home is more than just a place for people to live. By understanding the basic emotional needs of consumers, IKEA can secure the future of its business. Therefore, IKEA has a deep understanding of consumer needs and meets these needs through products, services and shopping experiences. IKEA is the world's largest furniture seller with branches all over the world. It sells furniture in flat packs. Rich retail experience differentiated products and reasonable prices are the keys to IKEA's success and it is one of the most successful multinational retailers in the world.

2. Procedures

In order to collect the information needed to prepare this

report, IKEA publishes an online questionnaire for users of IKEA products, which is distributed through social media, IKEA forums and other platforms. The content of the questionnaire includes user satisfaction with IKEA products, usage experience, improvement suggestions, etc., which facilitates the direct collection of user feedback. In order to obtain more accurate information, IKEA establishes a relationship with IKEA's customer service team through interviews, social media, or phone calls. Contact us to seek opportunities for interviews or direct communication [1-3].

3. Findings

3.1 Introduction

IKEA is a multinational retail company specializing in ready-to-install furniture, kitchen appliances, home accessories and decorations. Founded in Sweden in 1943 by Ingvar Ingvar Kamprad, IKEA has grown to become one of the world's largest furniture retailers, with a strong global presence and a unique brand identity. In recent years, IKEA's development has been getting better and better. More customers choose IKEA, which keeps pace with the times and uses big data analysis to improve customers' shopping experience. Online, IKEA expands online shopping, allowing consumers to purchase products and enjoy convenient services anytime and anywhere. At the same

time, IKEA has also gained the love of many young people through new marketing methods such as social media and live broadcasts.

Offline, IKEA is committed to creating a humanized shopping environment. From layout to products to consulting services, every aspect makes customers feel the warmth and comfort of home. In addition, IKEA continues to innovate, such as “IKEA Home Furnishing Workshop” and other activities, to encourage customers to assemble furniture by themselves and enhance customers’ sense of accomplishment.

3.2 The organization’s strategy statement for customer care

IKEA attaches great importance to the development and maintenance of good relationships with customers. IKEA’s stores do not have “salesmen”, only “employees”. They must not actively sell products to customers or talk to customers as they do in other furniture stores. For example, setting up a display area in the store allows customers to directly feel the effects of the product through carefully arranged scenes. At the same time, the official website provides detailed product information, price, size and other basic parameters, and helps customers understand the product through various methods such as pictures and video demonstrations. On the IKEA official website, customers can see all kinds of product information. These designs have brought many customers and a good reputation to IKEA.

3.3 Details of the system, standards, and staff standards

IKEA has a complete customer service system, which has three high standards, namely hygiene, staff, service; Guarantee customers a high-quality dining experience. At IKEA, hygiene is very important. High standards of cleaning procedures must be strictly followed, whether in the restaurant’s kitchen area, dining area, or throughout all areas of the mall. The restaurant’s ingredients are sourced to ensure freshness and safety. Kitchen staff adhere to food safety regulations to ensure hygienic safety during cooking [3-6].

3.3.1 Environmental standards

IKEA’s environmental standards cover IKEA’s furniture production and supply chain, including production methods, modes of transport, waste management and customer experience. IKEA is committed to using sustainable materials for its furniture, such as sourcing wood from sustainable forestry, and explicitly prohibits the use of illegally logged products. IKEA also actively promotes the use of recyclable and environmentally friendly materials to ensure that the impact of furniture on the environment is

minimized during the production process. It also requires environmental risk assessment at every stage of furniture and compliance with international social responsibility standards to ensure the environmental friendliness of furniture, to ensure the use of furniture and customer satisfaction, and to ensure that processes such as storage, transportation, installation and other processes can be environmentally friendly.

3.3.2 Employee standards

IKEA offers employees paid annual leave to relax outside of the work environment. IKEA helps employees grow through a series of measures, sets a clear growth path for their growth and development, provides high-quality training for employees, and continuously improves their individual work ability. By participating in training and learning activities, employees continuously improve their professional skills and comprehensive qualities and become better workplace talents. Through common training and learning experiences, communication and collaboration among employees become smoother, and team cohesion is significantly enhanced. IKEA’s regular learning activities are based on IKEA’s best experience and practices and are open to every employee. This trend will continue until the entire staff team is adequately trained through good communication arrangements.

3.3.3 Service Standards

IKEA’s customer service strategy is as follows. IKEA’s goal is to “create a better everyday life for all”. Smart, practical, quality, affordable and sustainable. Customers can view ideas and inspiration from around the world online and even create wish lists for their favorite products. IKEA offers a wide range of practical services to help customers buy, transport and assemble products. IKEA provides a product search function. Customers can filter products based on price, color, size, material and other conditions to quickly find products that meet their needs. Customers can check the inventory of nearby shopping malls online and make reservations to purchase popular or limited-edition products to avoid the embarrassment of having nothing to buy when they arrive at the store.

3.4 Collection, storage and usage of customer feedback

3.4.1 Collection of customer feedback

The official website of IKEA has a dedicated section to record customer complaints, which is open to all customers who buy or want to buy IKEA products. IKEA customer service regularly asks customers if the solution is satisfactory. Customer service will continue to follow up to achieve customer satisfaction feedback. IKEA collates

customer complaints and comments and puts them into the company's website, which is transparent, thus encouraging the company to do better and deal with complaints quickly under the supervision of customers. For customer complaints and dissatisfaction, the IKEA customer service department will respond quickly and take measures to solve the problem. At the same time, IKEA will also provide timely feedback to customers on the processing results to ensure that customers' rights and interests are protected [6-9].

3.4.2 Storage of customer feedback

IKEA, a globally recognized furniture retailer, employs various methods to gather and manage customer feedback. The company utilizes professional survey platforms like SurveyMonkey and Questionnaire Star to design customer satisfaction surveys. These platforms offer a wide range of question formats, including rating scales and multiple-choice options, to cater to diverse feedback requirements. Customers are encouraged to evaluate their experiences, share detailed opinions on products and services, and propose areas for improvement.

IKEA often places suggestion boxes in stores, where customers can provide feedback, suggestions or express any concerns. These boxes allow customers to share their thoughts anonymously and include their contact information for follow-up if needed. Feedback gathered from the suggestion box is usually reviewed by IKEA management.

3.4.3 Use of customer feedback

IKEA uses customer feedback in a number of ways to improve its products, services and overall customer experience, and through analytics, IKEA can identify recurring patterns or specific issues with customers. IKEA values its customers' investment in product development and design. Feedback on product features, functionality, quality, and design preferences may affect the development of new products or modifications to existing products. For example, in order to meet customers' needs for storage space, IKEA has adjusted the design of the lockers and increased the adjustability of the partitions. Customers can freely adjust the spacing between partitions according to their own needs, making the storage space more practical. This feedback-driven approach allows IKEA to continuously improve its services and meet customer expectations more effectively [10].

3.5 An evaluation of the customer care strategy

3.5.1 Strengths

IKEA attaches great importance to putting the customer at the center of its operations. The company strives to un-

derstand the needs of its customers, preferences, and pain points to provide solutions that meet their expectations. This customer-centric approach helps IKEA create positive and personalized experiences for its customers.

IKEA is known for its affordable and value-for-money products. The company's customer service strategy aligns with its commitment to providing quality products at competitive prices. By offering affordable options, IKEA caters to a wide range of customers, making stylish and functional furniture and home products accessible to a wider audience.

IKEA's customer service strategy emphasizes self-service and convenience. Store layouts are designed to allow customers to navigate and explore products independently. IKEA offers clear signage, well-organized sections and showroom-like environments that allow customers to visualize how products will fit into their homes. This self-service approach empowers customers and enhances the shopping experience.

IKEA has implemented more return and exchange policies so that customers do not need to worry about returns and exchanges after purchasing products. As long as the product meets the conditions for exchange and return, customers can easily handle the return and exchange procedures within the specified period and enjoy worry-free shopping guarantee.

IKEA uses social media platforms to interact and communicate with customers. By publishing interesting content, answering customer questions, and organizing online activities, IKEA can get closer to customers and enhance the brand's affinity and influence.

3.5.2 Weaknesses

IKEA products often need to be assembled in-house, which can be challenging for some customers. The instructions provided may not always be clear or easy to follow, leading to frustration and dissatisfaction. This complexity in the assembly process can lead to a negative customer experience, especially for those who are less skilled in DIY tasks.

IKEA stores are known for their popularity and can get crowded, especially on weekends or during peak shopping periods. This can lead to long wait times at the checkout counter, difficulty finding help, and a generally crowded shopping environment. Customers may find it challenging to navigate the store or get timely assistance, which negatively impacts their overall experience.

IKEA's focus on cost-effective solutions and self-service can lead to a lack of personalization for individual customers. While a wide range of products can cater to a variety of preferences, customers looking for more customized or custom solutions may find their options limited.

A standardized approach to product supply and self-help may not fully meet the needs of customers looking for unique or personalized furniture and home solutions.

Offer paid assembly services in IKEA stores, especially for large or complex products. In this way, customers can choose to assemble it themselves or let professionals do it for them, reducing dissatisfaction caused by difficult assembly. At the same time, a dedicated assembly consultation area is set up in the store with staff available to answer questions that customers encounter during the assembly process at any time.

Introduce more self-service cash registers or optimize the checkout process to reduce customers' waiting time at the checkout counter. At the same time, cashiers are trained to improve service efficiency and ensure transactions are completed quickly and accurately.

Use big data and AI technology to analyze customers' shopping history and preferences and provide them with personalized product recommendations. This not only improves customer satisfaction but also increases sales.

4. Recommendations

Consumers cannot assemble their furniture. When IKEA's home furnishing products come home, many consumers need to assemble them. IKEA should provide customers with convenient services or options, and most people like to use them when buying at home. If customers are not willing to assemble themselves, IKEA can provide customers with free assembly services.

The company should set up after-sales service stations at the end of each theme exhibition area to provide explanations or help consumers improve the after-sales service system of IKEA. IKEA can open fixed public transport routes, provide low-cost or free transportation services, and attach detailed instructions for use to each product, thereby increasing the satisfaction of IKEA consumers with after-sales service.

IKEA should expand its selection of recruiters. Without changing the core competencies required by key employees, there should be a renewed emphasis on hiring people with different backgrounds and personalities, and innovative new products should be continuously developed to promote diversity, inject new ideas and ensure cultural richness.

5. Conclusion

IKEA places significant emphasis on understanding and prioritizing the emotional needs of its customers, ensuring that every interaction with the brand is both enjoyable and fulfilling. By creating an environment that fosters a relaxed and pleasant shopping experience, IKEA has suc-

cessfully cultivated a strong sense of loyalty and satisfaction among its consumer bases.

Most customers express high levels of satisfaction with both the external and internal services provided by IKEA, as well as the quality and design of its products. IKEA's commitment to innovation is evident in its ability to offer smart, functional, and aesthetically pleasing furniture that remains both affordable and sustainable. By leveraging technology, IKEA enables customers to explore global design ideas and inspirations online, empowering them to create personalized wish lists for their favorite products.

Additionally, IKEA provides a comprehensive range of practical services, including purchasing assistance, transportation solutions, and assembly services, to ensure a seamless shopping experience from start to finish. The company's dedication to customer service is reflected in its continuous efforts to meet and exceed customer expectations, reinforcing the brand's commitment to making every customer feel valued and appreciated.

As IKEA continues to evolve, it remains steadfast in its mission to enhance the customer experience by offering exceptional service, innovative products, and a shopping environment that truly resonates with the needs and desires of its diverse clientele. In doing so, IKEA not only strengthens its position as a global leader in the furniture retail industry but also solidifies its reputation as a brand that genuinely cares about its customers' satisfaction and well-being.

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