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FASHION RETAIL MARKETING - AN OVERVIEW

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ABSTRACT

Fashion involves change, accepted change, as a succession of short-term trends or fads. Styles do not become fashion unless they win acceptance among customers. Fashion is not just about clothing, something which is demand in the market is called as fashion [1]. Fashion marketing is the process of managing the flow of merchandise, from the initial selection of designs produced to the presentation of products to retail customers. The process includes sourcing materials, supply chain management, manufacturing, economic strategy, trend knowledge, consumer understanding and communication with stakeholders, analyzing, developing and researching current fashion trends into sales strategies of the fashion product.

Keywords: Fashion, Marketing, Merchandising, Brand.

FASHION MARKETING – AN INTRODUCTION

Fashion Marketing is a series of activities that fashion business undertake so that the customers will buy products instead of their competitors. Marketing is the process of developing, promoting and distributing products to satisfy customer's needs and wants. Retailers must consider the location, atmosphere and the image of the store. The products must match style, quality, and price to their customers. Marketing paths include product development, retail buying, allocation and planning, visual merchandising and entrepreneurship.

ROLE OF FASHION MARKETERS

Fashion marketer must forecast past and current trends, analyze the information to determine why particular trends are popular and what will be the next big hit, and create the

campaign before the trend hits the market. It is the vital role of a fashion marketer to understand the fashion industry cycle from product development to consumer, evaluate the production needs and learn how each affects the retail and wholesale sides of the fashion industry. A fashion marketing manager focuses on publicizing and increasing awareness of a particular brand and also concentrating in branding and marketing new fashionable products.

FASHION MARKETING PLAN

Marketing plans for fashion brands should have clearly defined audiences, timelines and strategic goals. The plans should involve several marketing channels that work together to enable brands to achieve the strategic goals. ***Digital Media Marketing Plan*** – This plan enable to reach out and emerge with audience online. Social media marketing can use to reach people. For example face book advertising is used to know the demographic and psychographic data of the audience, because it is important to know the target of the audience. ***Publishing Marketing Plan*** **–** This plan is to develop to combine public relations and marketing to gain exposure in magazines and other types of publications, including blogs. Apart from these plans live events such as fashion shows, trunk shows can reach the audience faster.

RETAILING AND DEVELOPMENT OF PRIVATE LABELS AND BRANDS

Merchants are turning to creating private labels and brands to differentiate their model stocks. The development of labels and brands give retailers a degree of exclusivity and reduces the problems associated with carrying the same brands as their competitors [3]. ***National Brands - N***ational brands and labels are immediately familiar to the consumer such as Ralph Lauren, Calvin Klein, DKNY. These are the brands that have been promoted through both the print and broadcast media and have maintained the royalty among the world. **Private Labels and Brands** – In department stores private label and private brand retailing, that frequently carry more than one collection of the exclusive names. Once a private brand is established and accepted by consumers, it often confused with the national brands. Shoppers who are satisfied with a store's private label offerings sometimes seek these collections at other retail outlets.

UNDERSTANDING CONSUMER MARKET TRENDS

Market research is the systematic and objective approach for the development and provision of information for the marketing management decision-making process. Consumer research is the major force in the apparel industry. The success of any apparel or textile company depends on determining the needs and wants of the customer. ***Consumer Research*** – provides information about consumer characteristics and consumer behavior. ***Product Research*** – provides information about preferred product design and characteristics. ***Market Analysis*** – provides information about general market trends. ***Fashion Trend Research*** - Fashion tends to be a daily activity for the designer and the merchandiser. Trend research activities include reading and scanning appropriate trade publications. Each segment of the apparel industry has specific trade newspapers and magazines directed towards fashion trends in the industrial segment. Designers and merchandisers peruse the appropriate publications, depending on their target market. Fashion trend research also involves

shopping activities. Merchandisers and designers look for new trends that may influence the direction of an upcoming design line.

FASHION MARKETING CHANNELS AND DISTRIBUTION PROCESS

The process of products moving from the manufacturer to the ultimate consumer is referred as marketing channel [2]. It consists of manufacturing, wholesaling and retailing functions in order to get merchandise to the customer. Apparel manufacturers selling directly to the consumers are *direct marketing channel*. It can be done through catalogues or over internet. *Limited marketing channel* retailers survey the various manufactures and merchandisers to perform an important service to the customers. Extended marketing channels involve either wholesalers that acquire products from manufacturers or readily available to retailers.

The market channels are used in distribution of many basic items such as T-shirts, underwear and hosiery products. The process of connecting the various levels of the marketing channel to provide the right products to right customers in the right quantities, right place and at the right time.

Manufacturer Distribution – For some apparel companies, shipments to their retail accounts are made directly from the production facility. For other apparel companies, the flow of goods from production facilities to retailers involves the use of distribution centers (DCs). Retailers also use distribution of merchandise from a variety of apparel companies to the number of stores.

CONCLUSION

Marketing is everywhere. Formally or informally, people and organizations engage in a vast number of activities in marketing. Good marketing has become increasingly vital ingredient for business success. In the past, retailers secured customer loyalty by offering convenient locations, special or unique assortments of goods, greater or better services than competitors, and store credit cards. All this has changed today. Retail-store assortments have grown more alike as national brand manufacturers place their branded goods in more and exclusive places. Service differentiation also has eroded. Customers have become smarter shoppers. They don't want to pay more for identical brands. Fashion retailing is a very competitive business, and the effort to keep customers from shopping often seriously affects company profitability.

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