STUDY ON CUSTOMER SATISFACTION IN EXPERIENCE MARKETING OF EAST FITNESS CLUB IN WENZHOU

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This paper uses a mixed research method. Questionnaire on Wenzhou East issued questionnaire party fitness club 12 fitness club potential customers as the object of investigation, the article on the club to experience the customer using the occasional sampling method, the questionnaire distribution time is mainly concentrated in September-December 2022, each fitness club to issue 50 questionnaires, questionnaires sent to the customer to fill out the questionnaire and then retrieved, a total of 600 questionnaires issued to ensure that the questionnaire effect, the questionnaire issued after the end of the customer fitness experience, the customer experience, the questionnaire is issued to the customer. The customer's satisfaction with the experience effect of Wenzhou East Fitness Club is high and basically meets the customer's psychological expectations, which indicates that the implementation of the experience marketing strategy of Wenzhou East Fitness Club has been realized in all aspects of the customer experience process.

Keywords: fitness club; experience marketing; customer satisfaction; marketing strategy

Introduction

Research background

In 2011, the State Council issued a plan on national fitness which states that "the national fitness program involves the well-being and health of the people, is an important symbol of China's comprehensive national strength and the improvement of modern civilization, and is an important means and guideline for building a moderately prosperous society and socialist modernization in an all-round way".

In 2014, the General Office of the State Council issued the Opinions of the State Council on Accelerating the Development of the Sports Industry and Promoting Sports Consumption, in which it was proposed that "by 2025, the relevant departments estimate that the total amount of the sports industry will exceed RMB 5 trillion yuan, becoming a
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backbone of China's socio-economic development" (The State Council on Issuing the National Fitness Program, 2010). Commercial fitness clubs in China are the main pillar of the sports industry, and it is evident that the good development of fitness clubs has played a certain role in promoting the implementation of China's national fitness program and the Opinions.

After just a few decades, China's fitness clubs have been developing at a high speed along with the continuous growth of the national economy, and the number of fitness clubs is also increasing, distributed in all provinces, cities, and towns in China (Liu, 2016).

Some good prospects for the development of fitness clubs from the beginning of a now has developed into a dozen directly-managed stores and franchise chains. With the continuous development of high technology, per capita income increases and people's leisure time continues to increase as well as people's health concept in-depth understanding, more and more people participate in the fitness industry.

China with the "social development from the previous service economy, industrial economy, agricultural economy era gradually into the current" experience economy "era", the main means of competition in the future clubs will be the customer's "product" experience satisfaction (Opinions of the State Council on Accelerating the Development of Sports Industry and Promoting Sports Consumption, 2014).

The main means of club competition in the future will be the customer's satisfaction with the "product" experience, through the consumer's personal experience, in the sense of satisfaction, so that consumers have the impulse to buy the "product", so as to achieve the purpose of marketing. Therefore, experience marketing strategy has gradually become one of the important means of club competition in China (Li, 2018).

Research problems
As the pillar of China's sports industry, commercial fitness clubs are growing at a rate of 1,000 per year, and the competition among Chinese fitness clubs is getting stronger. As the competition among fitness clubs in China in terms of products, prices and channels has tended to be equal, it is difficult to achieve good results only by the promotion of commodities and price reductions, and it is inevitable that we must start from the marketing aspect in order to win the game (Liu & Jia, 2011).

As people in the process of buying products not only stay in the past basic material satisfaction, but now pay more attention to emotional and spiritual enjoyment, therefore, in the marketing process, which club can more satisfy the emotional and spiritual needs of customers, then it will win more customers, thus, experience marketing came into being. In this process, the implementation of experience marketing strategy is favored by more and more fitness clubs, so the article believes that the experience marketing approach will become the main means of competition in China's fitness clubs.

China has begun to step into the consumer-oriented era from the product-oriented. So, what is the development status of experience marketing in China's fitness clubs, and what needs to be improved, these issues are urgent problems to be solved (Li & Zhong, 2018).

The objective of the study
The aim of this paper is to conduct a customer satisfaction survey on Wenzhou East Fitness Club to analyze and evaluate the marketing effect under different experience standards in its experience marketing.
1. To determine the design of an experiential marketing strategy for an East health club.
2. To identify the stages of implementation of experiential marketing in East fitness clubs.
3. To evaluate the customer satisfaction of experiential marketing in East fitness clubs.

**Scope of the study**

Through the Wenzhou East Fitness Club 12 fitness clubs potential customers as the object of investigation, the article to the club experience of the customer using the occasional sampling method, the questionnaire distribution time is mainly concentrated in September - December 2022, each fitness club issued 50 questionnaires, the questionnaire will be sent to the customer to fill out the questionnaires and then retrieved, a total of 600 questionnaires were issued to ensure that questionnaire effect, in the form of the customer fitness experience after the end of the distribution of questionnaire immediately filled out immediately retrieved questionnaires, recovered 560 questionnaires, the effective questionnaire recovery rate of 93.3%, the questionnaire efficiency 90%. In order to ensure the effectiveness of the questionnaire, it was distributed after the customers' fitness experience, and the questionnaires were collected in the form of immediate completion and immediate retrieval. 560 questionnaires were collected and 540 questionnaires were valid, with a recovery rate of 93.3% and an effective rate of 90%.

**Research significance**

Scientific research in China on the development status of fitness clubs and business conditions and other areas of research is very extensive, but the gym experience marketing strategy of the research is relatively small. Wenzhou City is an economically developed coastal area in China, and the development of fitness clubs is even more exemplary.

Therefore, this paper investigates and analyzes the experience marketing strategy of fitness clubs in the example of Wenzhou East Fitness Club to summarize the experience marketing strategy of the successful gyms, to understand and explore the application of the experience marketing strategy in China's fitness clubs, and to fill in the research gaps in the scope of this study. To find out the shortcomings of the experience marketing strategy of fitness clubs and put forward corresponding countermeasures is of great significance to enhance the competitiveness of profitable fitness clubs in China and promote the development of fitness clubs in China.

**Literatures review**

**Fitness club**

So far, China does not have a clear overview of the concept of fitness clubs, in which Li (2018) points out that "a fitness club is a for-profit place or institution that provides customers with perfect fitness facilities and good fitness services." Wang (2010) points out that "a fitness club is a for-profit social institution that teaches fitness and health methods to customers and provides fitness and entertainment facilities."

Wang (2010) points out that "a health club is a for-profit social institution that teaches fitness and health care methods to customers and provides fitness and recreational facilities, including fitness venues, health care cities, golf courses, bowling alleys, badminton courts, etc., with a single program or a comprehensive program".
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Wen (2016) proposed that "fitness clubs are all operated for the purpose of making money, and fitness clubs are operated as an entity, with the operation mode of an enterprise, in accordance with the law of market development, and are operated independently, and are self-sustainable business entities".

The article defines the concept of commercial fitness clubs as the starting point to meet the various needs of customers, with profit as the main purpose, fitness clubs are the product of the operation of the market mechanism, which is an important part of China's sports industry. Commercial fitness clubs face the market, and different customers for equal exchange, to meet the different levels of people's sport's needs, highly favored by most customers (Shi, 2015).

**Experiential marketing**

The era of experiential economy has arrived, and the focus of competition is the satisfaction of customers after experiencing the products, who can make customers enjoy unforgettable experiences, who will dominate the market. Experience marketing is a product of the experience economy era, along with the development of the economy is constantly applied to major enterprises (Wen, 2016).

Experience marketing replaces the traditional way of selling and buying products, and a new way of experiencing products is born, which can increase the driving force of customers to buy products, so experience marketing is an inevitable product of the experience era.

About the concept of experience marketing has many different meanings, Schmidt believes that experience marketing is the enterprise as a medium of goods, service as the center, to the customer's experience to meet the degree of the goal and the development of the activities of the general term. Berndt H. Schmidt puts forward that experiential marketing is a marketing strategy designed by thinking about the five aspects of customer's senses, thoughts, emotions, actions, and associations (Schmidt, 2004).

Relevant scholars in China define experiential marketing as an enterprise taking products as props, customers as the center, service as the stage, and satisfying consumers' psychological and spiritual needs as the starting point, through the design of specific experiences for customers and the elaborate design and arrangement of the scenario and event process, so that the customers can have a profound experience in the process and achieve the greatest spiritual satisfaction (Schmidt, 2001).

Simply put, experience marketing is a marketing strategy that allows customers to experience products from the aspects of emotion, sensation, thinking, action and association (Fan, 1998). It is a marketing strategy that starts from the customer's emotion, fully understands the customer's emotional changes, further satisfies the customer's needs, and then maximizes the marketing concept.

**Experiential marketing theory**

While traditional marketing focuses on product planning, brand design and corporate publicity, experiential marketing focuses on customer experience and pays more attention to consumers' views and reactions to the products after the experience. The former stands on the enterprise's point of view, while the latter stands on the consumer's point of view, focusing on meeting the needs of consumers, taking the consumer as the main body, creating, and providing a meaningful experience process.
Traditional marketing subjectively believes that consumers are rational and can choose products rationally by comparing the quality of products, analyzing the price, and recognizing the needs. Experience marketing believes that customers are rational and emotional groups, experience marketing emphasizes the subjective feelings of customers before and after the experience, experience marketing according to the hobbies and interests of different customers to carry out person-to-person experience to meet the needs of customers (Xu, 2019).

Traditional marketing takes customers as the creator of value, while experiential marketing takes customers as consumers, experiencers, and creators of value.

**Past research**

Fitness clubs originated in the United States, the development has been more than half a century, the development of commercial fitness clubs in the country plays a leading role, in order to better make China's fitness clubs and internationalization in line with China's relevant fields scholars of foreign fitness clubs to do relevant research, from the development of the current situation of the fitness clubs to the members of the basic situation and other aspects of the study, to obtain the following conclusions:

1. Fitness clubs can not only help members shape fitness, recreation and entertainment, but also enable members to develop a healthy lifestyle.

2. Health clubs not only create a more comfortable and favorable exercise environment for their members, but also provide cardiorespiratory fitness monitoring and physical fitness test services for their members.

3. The number of fitness clubs in foreign countries is increasing every year, and the development of business management, marketing strategy and chain system is also more mature, the scale of operation is relatively large, and each club has its own characteristics.

4. The governments of some countries have adopted macro-control and management of gyms, which promotes the operation of gyms (He et al., 2010).

In recent years, with the continuous improvement of China's residents' consumption level, the experience marketing strategy has been gradually applied to the marketing of commercial fitness clubs, and related scholars have also made relevant studies in this research field, analyzing, and studying the characteristics of experience marketing and experience marketing strategy of gyms.

1. The characteristics of experience marketing in fitness clubs are mainly reflected in the active participation of consumers and the interaction between consumers and clubs, in addition, commercial fitness clubs pay more attention to the consumer's experience before and after the experience, and the consumer's needs in all aspects as well as individual needs.

2. In terms of experiential marketing strategies, relevant scholars have conducted research on experiential marketing from the aspects of aesthetic, personality, social, and comfort, and some scholars have analyzed and researched from the aspects of recreational experience, educational experience, escapism experience, and aesthetic experience by applying the theories of Pine and Gilmore. Checking China Knowledge Network, we know that there are relatively few studies on experience marketing of fitness clubs in China, and there are no more than 20 relevant documents (Ding & Chen, 2017).

Therefore, the article thinks that the research on the theory of fitness club experience marketing is detached from the development of clubs in China, and the relevant scholars should increase the research on this aspect in order to satisfy the personalized needs of the
people with sufficient material conditions and the good development of clubs in China (Kotler et al., 2001).

Finding and conclusion

Implementation of experiential marketing strategy
In order to better attract the eyes of customers, Wenzhou East Fitness Club launched a rich East culture product, East Fitness Club according to its directly-managed stores in the high school and low-grade fitness clubs to develop a different price level of the gold card, annual card, bimonthly card, as well as a single-month card and so on. In addition, the East Fitness Club invited the Queen of Asian Artistic Gymnastics Zhou Xiaojing as the image spokesperson, also invited Li Zhiming (known as the Prince of Street Dance) and Cheng Dantong (known as Miss Asia Fitness) as the East long-term consultant; in addition, also in the major public squares of Wenzhou, the launch of Taekwondo, pedals, bicycles and other nearly a hundred promotional and performance activities.

In order to meet the customer's high-level experience in the needs of the club from the customer's emotions, feelings, thinking, action, association, and other aspects of the customer's pro-physical research to participate in fitness, so that it can feel the facilities of the perfect, background music, dynamic, fitness environment of the elegance of the trainer's professional guidance and service, fitness equipment and so on.

In order to further retain customers, Wenzhou East Fitness Club provides high-quality after-sales service, so that customers of the club to increase the sense of trust, such as the club's renewal of the card issued by the members of the preferential policies, which also provides protection for the club to retain the old customers.

Satisfaction analysis

The article analyzes the experience marketing strategy of Wenzhou East Fitness Club by drawing on the theory of Bird-Schmidt and taking customers' emotional experience, sensory experience and thinking experience as the criteria for judging customer satisfaction.

Sensory experience is a kind of experience that customers establish on their senses through vision, touch, hearing, smell, and taste to the environment of the fitness club. It is the customer's initial experience, including gym equipment, air, music background, site layout, etc. The article takes these indicators as the basis for customer questionnaires, and provides a preliminary understanding of the consumer's sensory experience.

Among the members of Wenzhou East Fitness Club, 160 people expressed dissatisfaction with the equipment, accounting for 29.7% of the total, 180 people expressed general, accounting for 33.3% of the total, and 150 people expressed comparative satisfaction, accounting for 27.8% of the total.

According to my personal visits and exchanges with members, I know that a small part of the equipment in some directly-managed stores of Wenzhou East Fitness Club has not been replaced for many years, and it is too aging, which is easy to cause workout accidents and cause dissatisfaction of some customers.

In the survey process, 210 people are dissatisfied with the air quality of Wenzhou East Fitness Club, accounting for 38.9% of the total number of people, 150 people feel that it is average, accounting for 27.8% of the total number of people, and only 50 people said they are very satisfied, accounting for 9.2% of the total number of people.
In order to let customers have a good exercise environment, Wenzhou East Health Club should strengthen the improvement of the air environment. According to the survey, 175 people are satisfied with the music background of Wenzhou East Health Club, accounting for 32.4% of the total number, and 225 people are quite satisfied, accounting for 41.7% of the total number. It can be seen that the customers of Wenzhou East Health Club are very satisfied with the music background. According to the survey, 194 people are satisfied with the layout of Wenzhou East Health Club, accounting for 35.9% of the total, and 181 people are quite satisfied, accounting for 33.5% of the total. It can be seen that Wenzhou East Health Club is quite reasonable in terms of venue arrangement.

Thinking experience marketing refers to the development of customers' ability to think, allowing them to generate different or uniform ideas after interacting with external activities. There are 193 people, accounting for 35.7% of the total, who think that they are quite satisfied, and 173 people, accounting for 32.1% of the total, who say that they are quite satisfied. It can be seen that the level of coaches is basically up to the standard in the members' mind, but there are still 9.8% and 22.4% of the members expressed dissatisfaction and general, according to the fieldwork and members' communication, the level of coaches of group exercise classes can meet the needs of most members, and the coaches of apparatus area are a little bit worse. Therefore, the article thinks that Wenzhou East Health Club should strengthen the training of the coaches in the apparatus area and further improve the level of the coaches in the apparatus area.

According to the survey, 110 people said that they were dissatisfied with the fitness programs offered by Wenzhou East Fitness Club, accounting for 20.4% of the total; 130 people said that they were not satisfied, accounting for 24.1% of the total; 145 people said that they were satisfied, accounting for 26.8% of the total; and 155 people said that they were quite satisfied, accounting for 28.7% of the total.

This shows that 44.5% of the customers of Wenzhou East Fitness Club are dissatisfied with the fitness programs offered by the club, and according to the author's fieldwork and customer exchanges, most of the female customers hope that the gym will offer dances with ethnic characteristics, such as square dances and ethnic styles, while the male customers hope that the gym will offer exercise classes suitable for male members, such as combat drills. Therefore, the article thinks that Wenzhou East Fitness Club should increase some courses according to the needs of the members.

According to the survey, there are 275 people and 120 people are satisfied and quite satisfied with the coaching work of the coaches, accounting for 50.9% and 22.2% of the total respectively, which is closely related to the coaches' serious study of the knowledge of the coaches, however, there are still 104 people who said that they are average, accounting for 19.3% of the total, according to the interview, although the coaches often study the knowledge of the coaches by themselves, they usually have a lot of knowledge of the coaches, but the coaches are not satisfied with the work of the coaches.

According to the interview, although the coaches often learn the knowledge of coaches by themselves, usually the training of coaches by Wenzhou East Fitness Club is less, therefore, the article thinks that Wenzhou East Fitness Club should ensure the training of coaches at least once a month.

According to the survey, 218 people, or 40.4% of the total, said they were satisfied with the advertising methods of East Fitness Club, and 199 people, or 36.8% of the total, said they were very satisfied with the advertising methods of East Fitness Club.
However, there are still 22.8% of customers who think they learn about the gym's publicity late, and express dissatisfaction or average. After interviewing the staff, we learned that Wenzhou East Fitness Club mainly advertises by means of outreach flyers, "sweeping the floor", member publicity, and media publicity. Therefore, the article concludes that, in a more technologically advanced society, WeChat has become the main tool of communication for modern people, and WeChat marketing is a good way to publicize the club, thus allowing more potential members to participate in the sports and fitness industry.

Emotional experience marketing strategy is the customer in the purchase of commercial fitness club products and services embodied in the emotional experience of the changes in the entire consumption process throughout the human flavor, so that the customer in the experience will linger. There are 203 people on the service attitude of Wenzhou East Fitness Club said relatively satisfied, accounting for 37.6% of the total number of people, 251 people said very satisfied, accounting for 46.5% of the total number of people, it can be seen, Wenzhou East Fitness Club in the service attitude of the basic to achieve customer satisfaction. Reflects the club's service staff's seriousness and responsibility, meticulous and considerate, warm and patient, and civilized manners.

According to the survey, nearly half of the customers expressed dissatisfaction or general, of which 100 people expressed dissatisfaction with the dating attitude of Wenzhou East Fitness Club, accounting for 18.5% of the total number of people, 232 people expressed general, accounting for 43% of the total number of people. After fieldwork and customer exchanges, Wenzhou East Fitness Club usually organizes fewer exchanges between customers and the club. It can be seen that Wenzhou East Health Club should strengthen the interaction with customers, and should organize more activities such as Christmas Day and Christmas Eve according to different festivals for potential customers to participate for free in order to leave a deep impression on customers.

According to the survey, 201 people in Wenzhou East Fitness Club exercise after the physical and mental pleasure expressed relatively satisfied, accounting for 37.2% of the total number of people, there are 254 people, said quite satisfied, accounting for 47% of the total number of people. Wenzhou East Fitness Club has done a relatively outstanding job in creating atmosphere and design, which will add more positive impressions on customers' consumption decisions.

To summarize, the article designed 4 levels of satisfaction dimensions, of which 10 indicators reached more than 60% of the sum of customers' comparative satisfaction and considerable satisfaction, which are mainly distributed in the East Fitness Club's personnel, environment, services, and products, etc. Customers are highly satisfied with the experience effect of Wenzhou East Fitness Club, which basically meets the customers' psychological expectations.

The customer's satisfaction with the experience effect of Wenzhou East Fitness Club is high and basically meets the customer's psychological expectations, which indicates that the implementation of the experience marketing strategy of Wenzhou East Fitness Club has been realized in all aspects of the customer experience process.

**Recommendation**

The experiential marketing strategy of fitness clubs is a well-developed theory, and the article only briefly analyzes the club's experiential marketing strategy.
The article only briefly analyzes the club's experiential marketing strategy; so much so that it’s detailed operation and how to manage it need to be studied in depth by future scholars. The article only briefly analyzes the club's experiential marketing strategy; so that it’s detailed operation and how to manage it will be studied by future scholars.

References


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