

Market Segmentation in B2B: Enhancing Marketing Effectiveness

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ABSTRACT

Business-to-business (B2B) marketing relies heavily on market segmentation since it enables companies to identify and target certain consumer groups with specialized goods and tactics. An introduction of market segmentation in the B2B setting is given in this abstract, emphasizing its significance for comprehending the various demands and preferences of business consumers and for maximizing marketing efforts. B2B market segmentation is separating the larger business market into several segments according to factors including sector, firm size, geography, client demands, buying habits, and decision-making processes. B2B marketers may give more relevant and individualized marketing messages, goods, and services by segmenting the market and getting to know their target consumers better. But compared to consumer markets, market segmentation in a B2B setting might be more complicated. Longer decision-making periods and various stakeholders are common in B2B purchasing choices. Effective segmentation and marketing need an understanding of the dynamics of the purchasing center, including the main decision-makers, influencers, and users.

KEYWORDS

Business, Business-To-Business, Decision-Making, Market, Segmentation.

I. INTRODUCTION

Businesses may discover consumer groups with comparable traits, needs, and purchase habits by segmenting the B2B market. As a result, marketers may modify their value propositions, pricing plans, product attributes, and distribution methods to correspond with the unique requirements and preferences of each group. Companies may establish themselves as dependable partners and solution providers by being familiar with the particular issues, objectives, and decision-making processes of various client groups. B2B market segmentation aids in the efficient allocation of marketing budgets for businesses. Companies may maximize their marketing efforts and money by concentrating on the most promising segments that fit with their strategic aims and capabilities. With a focused strategy, resources may be used more effectively since the segments most likely to provide big returns can be targeted with marketing messages and activities. Market segmentation in B2B marketplaces may be based on a variety of factors. Firmographics, such as industry, firm size, and location, aid organizations in understanding the particular needs and demands of various business kinds. The behavioral segmentation process takes into account things like use trends, loyalty, and purchase habits. In order to get insight into corporate customers' attitudes, values, and motives as well as their decision-making processes and preferences, psychographic segmentation is used [1]–[3].

B2B markets are segmented using many of the same criteria as consumer markets. There are demographic requirements. For instance, Goya Foods, a U.S. food firm, offers various ethnic items to grocery shops based on the demographics of the populations the stores cater to Hispanic, Mexican, or Spanish depending on the stores' target markets. Similar to this, B2B vendors often segment their clientele based on their location and then cater their offerings to them. Segmenting data based on behaviour is also prevalent. B2B vendors commonly segment their clients according to how frequently they use their products. Customers who purchase a lot of products and services from a vendor sometimes get special discounts and are helped by salesmen who personally call on them. Smaller clients, on the other hand, are more likely to be forced to depend on a company's website, customer support representatives, and telephone salesmen. But according to Matthew Harrison, Paul Hague, and Nick Hague's research, there are less behavioral and needs-based segments in business-to-business markets than there are in

business-to-consumer markets for two reasons: first, business markets have a smaller customer base a few hundred as opposed to hundreds of thousands in consumer markets, and second, businesses are less impulsive than consumers. They are not concerned with their social position, affected by their family and friends, etc. as consumers are. Businesses, meanwhile, are only interested in investing in goods that will eventually boost their profits.

A sector that places a premium on pricing and is made up of tiny businesses with slim profit margins that don't see the product or service they're selling as being crucial to their operations. a market sector that places a premium on quality and branding and is made up of companies that are willing to pay more for superior goods. a market sector that places a strong emphasis on services and is made up of companies with high standards for both product and service quality. a market category with an emphasis on partnerships, made up of companies who look to their suppliers for trust and dependability and see them as strategic partners. Like B2C retailers, B2B sellers are looking at new methods to connect with their target audiences. Two conventional methods of targeting B2B markets are trade exhibitions and direct mail campaigns, which are covered in greater depth later in the book. However, businesses are also discovering that they can more cheaply target their B2B clients via email campaigns, search engine marketing, and fan pages on social networking sites like Facebook. Businesses are also starting blogs with cutting-edge material about brand-new goods and industry developments that fascinate their consumers. Additionally, B2B vendors are hosting Webcasts and giving online product demos for prospective consumers for a small fraction of the price of visiting a trade show to present their goods.

Buyer classification criteria are based on segmentation grounds. Consumer markets are often segmented based on behavioral, demographic, regional, and psychographic buyer factors. According on how individuals and Organisations act with or towards items, behavioral segmentation splits them into categories. Demographic segmentation is the process of grouping customers based on observable, individual traits such their age, income, ethnicity, family size, and so on. Geographic segmentation divides consumers into groups according to their residences. By separating customers into groups according to their behaviour, interests, views, attitudes, values, and lifestyles. A company often use numerous bases to get a more complete view of its consumers and provide value for them. When marketing professionals collect both quantitative and qualitative data about their clients, they generate consumer insight. Business-to-business markets are segmented using many of the same criteria as consumer markets. In B2B marketplaces, there are, however, often fewer behaviorally-based categories [4]–[6].

Choosing Markets to Target and Market Strategies

Choosing Markets to Target

You may start to identify those customers that have greater potential if you segment them and get some consumer data about them. Instead of using a shotgun, you are now using a rifle to hunt. Do you want to spend the day searching for squirrels or ten-point bucks? These qualities describe an appealing market: Given your operational costs, it is sizable enough to be profitable. In China, only a small percentage of customers can afford to own vehicles. More automobiles are sold in China than in Europe, nevertheless, due to the size of the nation's population. Cell phones are used by three billion people worldwide. However, there are still three billion people who do not. It is expanding. For instance, India's middle class is expanding quickly, making it a highly desirable market for manufacturers of consumer goods. The majority of Indians are under the age of 30, which increases demand for Bollywood films. It isn't already overrun by rivals, or you have figured out how to stand out in a throng. PCs were formerly manufactured by IBM. Lenovo, a Chinese business, purchased the product line from IBM when the market was overrun by rivals.

Either it's reachable or you can figure out how to get there. Geographic accessibility, political and legal obstacles, technical hurdles, and social barriers are all examples of accessibility or the lack thereof. For instance, the consumer goods business Unilever employs women from third-world nations to deliver its products to rural customers who lack access to outlets in order to overcome geographic hurdles. You have the means to participate in it. It might be a terrific idea for you to enter the wind energy sector. However, it is a capital-intensive industry. This implies that you will either need a large sum of money or must have the ability to raise it. The likes of T may potentially provide competition for you. Oil mogul Boone Pickens is aiming to expand and profit from the wind energy business. It fits in with the goals and purpose of your company. Think of Teracycle, which has established itself by marketing organic goods in recyclable packaging. One of its products is fertilizer manufactured from worm faces and marketed in used plastic drink bottles. No matter how lucrative the market for the service could be, it wouldn't be a smart idea for Teracycle to launch a polluting, coal-fired power plant.

II. DISCUSSION

Choosing the Number of Markets to Target with Target-Market Strategies: Henry Ford demonstrated the viability of mass marketing, at least temporarily. Because you don't have to customize any aspect of the product for various customer groups, which requires more labour and costs more money, mass marketing is also effective. The issue is that different purchasers have different needs. You will lose revenue if a rival gives these groups a product that better satisfies their demands [7], [8]. Most businesses adjust their products in some manner to cater to the demands of various consumer groups. These Organisations are less susceptible to competition since they don't put all of their eggs in one basket. An Organisation that works in many market segments is Marriott International. The business operates fifteen different kinds of facilities, including the following, to cater to the demands of various market segments.

Hilton Courtyard geared at motorists who travel by car. Hotels by Ritz-Carlton. geared at upscale travellers. Conference Centres by Marriott. geared at companies Organising small and medium-sized meetings. ExecuStay by Marriott. targeted at business people who need lodging for a month. Clubs at Marriott Vacations. geared at vacationers looking to purchase timeshares. You may react to market changes caused by demography and other factors by using a multi-segment marketing approach. For instance, an increasing number of individuals who are too elderly to travel have the option of relocating to one of Marriott's Senior Living Services facilities, which provide certain forms of care to seniors. By enabling consumers to choose between your brands and goods, a multisegmented approach may also help you weather a downturn in the economy. Let's say you lose your job and can no longer afford to stay at Marriott's Ritz-Carlton hotels. You may book a stay at a JW Marriott, the most opulent hotel under the Marriott brand and less expensive than the Ritz.

Targeted Marketing

Some businesses, particularly those with less resources and smaller sizes, use concentrated marketing. Targeting a relatively small number of clients is part of concentrated marketing. Because all of your marketing efforts are concentrated in one area, it might be a dangerous approach. One example is the car parts business. Numerous North American auto component producers have traditionally limited their supply to the auto industry. But when the crisis that started in 2008 caused sales at General Motors, Ford, Chrysler, and other automakers to decline, the car components manufacturers found themselves in difficulties. Many of them started making and selling components for solar panels, construction machinery, wind turbines, and aeronautical tools. Targeting a niche market entail choosing a more specialized set of customers. Being a huge fish in a small pond as opposed to a tiny fish in a large pond is your objective when you engage in niche marketing.

A new strategy to identify markets and target them is called microtargeting, often known as narrowcasting. Voter segmentation was its intended purpose during elections, including the 2004 US presidential contest. Microtargeting entails collecting every piece of information that is accessible on a person, from their phone and tax records to the catalogues they get. Acxiom is one business that gathers data of this kind. Acxiom can, for a price, provide you a list of Hispanic customers who drive sedans, own two dogs, have caller ID, purchase certain personal care items, watch specific television cable channels, read particular periodicals, and have income and education levels that fall within a certain range. Microtargeting undoubtedly has moral ramifications.

Choosing International Markets

Companies that compete on a worldwide scale may use any number of the segmentation techniques we covered, alone or in combination. a little version of the targeting techniques used in larger marketplaces. Targeting Techniques in International Markets. If you're a vendor of a commodity like iron ore, you may use a metals broker to market your goods globally. The broker would be concerned with reaching out to clients all around the globe and creating unique marketing strategies for each of them. To some degree, however, most businesses customize their products to fit the wants of various customers all around the globe. For instance, Barbie dolls are sold by Mattel in several countries, but they are not the same Barbie. To appeal to a wide range of individuals worldwide, Mattel has produced many variations of the Barbie doll. Although Pizza Hut has franchisees all over the globe, its goods, packaging, and marketing are each suited to a certain area. For instance, squid is a common topping throughout Asia. Companies customize their goods not only for several nations, but also for various clients in various countries. For instance, Procter & Gamble's China business now sells goods tailored to the nation's several local market sectors. P&G has designed a very basic, low-cost product for the third category, a modified product for the second segment, and a sophisticated formulation of laundry detergent for the premium market.

Due to the rapidly expanding middle classes in China, Russia, India, and Brazil, sellers are increasingly focusing on these markets. Consider the cosmetics company Avon. The United States is no longer Avon's biggest market.

This is Brazil. Brazilians are very concerned with their appearance and are increasingly able to afford cosmetic procedures and plastic surgery. These nations are so alluring that businesses are also altering how they produce products and services. According to Vjay Govindarahan, a professor at Dartmouth's Tuck School of Business, Historically, American companies innovated in the U.S. and took those products abroad. According to Govindarahan, businesses are now producing inexpensive goods in order to seize big developing country marketplaces and then resell them in wealthy nations. Examples include the \$1,000 ECG machine from General Electric and the \$250 Acer laptop. The \$2,500 Tato Nano, the cheapest automobile in the world, was created for India but will eventually be marketed in the US.

Purchasing foreign firms or businesses with sizable market shares overseas is one of the additional tactics for pursuing international markets. In order to get access to the Indian market, Kraft launched a proposal to acquire Cadbury, a manufacturer of candies that holds a third of the country's chocolate market. Similar to how the Dutch brewer Heineken recently acquired Mexico's Femsa, which produces the beer brands Dos Equis, Tecate, and Sol, to fight against Corona beer. However, some nations forbid foreign corporations from purchasing native corporations. They are the only ones with whom they may partner. Other legal and cultural impediments may sometimes stop foreign businesses from invading a nation. The Swedish home furnishings manufacturer IKEA finally pulled out of Russia because doing business there was too challenging. The Russian expansion of McDonald's has been fairly successful, in comparison. The hamburger giant is looking to expand further by adding hundreds of additional locations throughout the nation after dominating other areas [9]–[11].

Stand out from the competition it's reachable or you can figure out a method to get there you have the means to compete in it and it fits in with the goals and missions of your company. Most businesses adjust their products in some manner to cater to the demands of various consumer groups. A corporation may be able to adapt to market changes caused by demographic shifts and other factors, such as economic downturns, by using a multi-segment marketing strategy. Targeting a relatively small number of clients is part of concentrated marketing. Targeting a niche market entail choosing a more specialized set of customers. Microtargeting, also known as narrowcasting, is a recent initiative to super target customers by collecting all types of information on them, including their phone and tax records as well as the catalogues they get. Companies that compete on a worldwide scale may use any number of these segmentation techniques, alone or in combination. Due to the rapidly expanding middle classes in China, Russia, India, and Brazil, sellers are increasingly focusing on these markets. To seize significant markets in these developing nations, businesses are manufacturing low-cost items, which they then advertise and sell in richer nations. Other methods of pursuing international markets include purchasing foreign firms or collaborating with them.

Offering Positioning and Repositioning

Why should customers choose your product above others? You must consider how to position your product in the market in relation to rival items if it is subject to competition. You don't want your product to be seen by buyers as simply another face in the crowd, after all. Positioning is customizing your goods to stand out from the competition and get customers to purchase it. A perceptual map may be used to place your product by plotting consumer survey results on it. A perceptual map is a two-dimensional graph that graphically depicts how your product compares to your rivals based on factors that matter to customers. The criteria might include a wide range of elements, such as cost, degree of product quality, level of customer service, and so on.

In order to put their items where the customer wants them, several businesses employ taglines in their advertising. A tagline is a one-sentence slogan created to capture the essence of a brand. You may have heard Wendy's slogan, it's better than fast food, which aims to distinguish Wendy's from eateries like McDonald's and Burger King by giving customers the impression that Wendy's cuisine is less fast foolish given the negative press that fast food now receives. Repositioning a product may be beneficial for businesses, particularly if they want it to start appealing to other market groups. Repositioning is a strategy used to move a product to a new location in customers' perceptions. An example is the i-house, a prefab home created by the mobile home maker Clayton Homes. Popular Mechanics claims that the i-house looks like a house you'd order from IKEA, sounds like something designed by Apple, and consists of amenities solar panels, tankless water heaters, and rainwater collectors that one would expect to come from an offbeat green company out of California selling to a high-end market. I believe we are retaining our appeal to our current market and growing it to attract more consumers who wouldn't have previously given our home product any thought. At a recent auto exhibition in Shanghai, Porsche debuted its new range of Panamera automobiles. The vehicle is a worldwide model, however it is longer than Porsche's other vehicles [12], [13].

III. CONCLUSION

B2B market segmentation has been revolutionized by technology and data-driven strategies. Companies can collect and analyses enormous volumes of data on consumer interactions, buying behaviour, and preferences thanks to advanced analytics and customer relationship management systems. With the use of this data-driven segmentation methodology, marketers are better equipped to design specialized marketing strategies by discovering insightful information, seeing trends as they emerge, and anticipating client wants. In conclusion, market segmentation is a critical tactic in B2B marketing since it enables businesses to identify and efficiently target certain consumer categories. Businesses may effectively allocate resources, focus their value propositions, and customize their marketing strategies by having a thorough awareness of the distinctive traits, demands, and preferences of various client groups. By using data analytics and technology to segment the B2B market, businesses may improve customer interactions, increase customer happiness, and gain a competitive edge in the challenging B2B market.

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