Catch Them Young (CTY) – An Emprical model for Next Gen Customers with special reference to Electric Vehicle Industry

*** Dr. Kirupa priyadarsini .M - ** Mr. Varun Kumar .M**

ABSTRACT

The marketing philosophy of catching the customer young has never before had its place in automobile industry. This is an effort to study the effectiveness of the CTY model for the upcoming electric vehicle market. This paper focuses on a CTY model that was developed specifically for school children. This model was implemented among 614 participants in schools and the effectiveness of the model in creating awareness is studied. The CTY model was designed in the form of a one day campaign consisting of three phases namely the presentation, the factory visit and the test drive. The data for the study was collected both before and after the campaign in the form of a predesigned structured questionnaire. Tools like independent z test, chi square test and paired t test were used to analyze the effectiveness of the CTY campaign. Results of the study indicate that the first two phases of the CTY model were similar. The association between the hands on experience component and product opinion was high. And it was also found that the new model was very well received by the youngsters and it highly successful in creating awareness about the product.

Introduction

Organizations today increasingly understand the need to tap the customers while they are still young. In this motive many organizations have started moving out of their corporate to places where their potential customers stay. Many organizations conduct contests, campaigns and other promotional activities with the objective of capturing the young minds. A decade ago this strategy was predominantly used by companies that made products for the younger generation. Off-late durable goods industries and IT Majors are also using this strategy to make it to limelight.

This helps the companies establish bondage with their future customers as well as to increase their brand identity. This connectivity also helps

* Asst. Professor, Management Department, College of Business Administration, Saudi Arabia
** Faculty, School of Management, Sri Krishna College of Engineering and Technology, Coimbatore

companies to keep themselves abreast with the tastes and preferences of the future generation. With this intent this study was conducted.

Electric Vehicle Industry

Rise in economic activity and population has led to a tremendous demand in the transport sector especially in urban India. By 2020, India's population in cities is expected to grow five-fold to a staggering 200 million while pollution is expected to grow by seven times. With this tremendous growth has emerged a very critical issue of keeping air and noise pollution in urban areas under control.

The only solution to this growing environmental problem in terms of mobility is electric vehicle or the battery operated vehicles. Small electric buses, three wheelers and electric scooters are ideal for city mobility in India but it could take between 5 and 10 years before they become viable for commercial use.

Targeting young customers in the Electric Vehicle industry

The marketing philosophy of catching the customer young has never before had its place in automobile industry. This is an effort to study the effectiveness of the CTY model for the upcoming electric vehicle market.

Catch Them Young – The INFOSYS Model for School Children

Catch Them Young, a two-week program to initiate schoolchildren into information technology, completed its 12th year. Students from reputed educational institutions in major cities were selected through an entrance test that urged them to think out of the box. The program was successfully concluded at Bangalore, Bhubaneswar, Chandigarh, Chennai, Hyderabad, Mangalore, Mysore, Pune and Thiruvanantha puram.

An initiative of Infosys' Education & Research (E&R) group, CTY gives school students across India a head-start in understanding information technology. Top performers in the program get an opportunity to work with experienced Infosys professionals on exciting projects.

Selected students underwent classroom sessions that introduced them to Microsoft Office, System Analysis and Design and Programming in Visual Basic. The classroom sessions were handled by educators from E&R and volunteers from the production environment then students were assigned projects, which included designing systems for school management, library management, airline reservation, railway ticketing, store management, etc. and the teams presented their work to senior leaders from Infosys' E&R group. CTY turned out to be a very memorable summer vacation for the school children.

CTY MODEL for Electric Vehicle Industry

The CATCH THEM YOUNG model was developed into a campaign which had three phases covering an entire day. The first phase was a Presentation.

It was in the form of a classroom lecture and an interactive session with the students. It started with a brief presentation about the basic principles and working of electric vehicle. The content of the presentation included concepts of magnetism, components of electric vehicle and the future of the electric vehicle industry and its importance. This was followed by interactive session with the students comprising of oral contests and testing their conceptual Knowledge.

The second Phase comprised of Factory visit; students were given with a live demonstration about the assembling of electric vehicles and the various quality processes that are carried out during assembling. In addition student interests were kindled by providing them with customization options. Their opinion and feedback about the processes were also collected.

The final part of the CTY campaign was a hands-on experience with the product - a test drive. Students were grouped and about 5 vehicles were provided. The distance covered was one kilometer. Training on Safety was given to students and demonstrated so that they follow the same during their hands on experience. Safety aids were provided for the same. At the end of test drive data was collected with a questionnaire.

Research Methodology

Objectives

- To identify the effect of CTY campaign with respect to various phases of the campaign.
- To assess the influence of the Hands on Experience of the CTY component on product opinion and ability of new product to replace conventional product.
- To assess the product awareness through CTY campaign before and after.

Research Design

The research design used for this study is descriptive in nature. The design is concerned with studying the phenomenon projected by the campaign and the response of the participants in the environment.

Sources of Data

Firstly data was collected from the participants before the one day campaign started. Primary data was collected directly from the participants a few days after the campaign through a structured questionnaire. The data collected for this particular study was obtained from IX standard students of 5 schools.

Research Instrument

The instrument used for the collection of primary data is a questionnaire. Two sets of questionnaire were prepared for the study.1. Pre campaign Questionnaire for collecting data about the awareness of the new product 2. Post Campaign Questionnaire for assessing the components of the campaign as well as the level of awareness.

Questionnaire was prepared in a structured manner which was clear and easily understandable for the respondents. Questions related to the demographic profile of the respondents was formulated in the first section, followed by eighteen questions with five dimensions which throw light on the three components carried out in the campaign. Closed end multiple choice questions were used. Likert's 5 point scale and a dichotomous scale were used to answer the questions.

The dimensions are related to the various aspects of the campaign which includes duration, content and coverage, attraction and knowledge gained, test drive experience and effectiveness. The variables measured also included New Product opinion, ability of the new product to create awareness, interest, desire, preference and willingness to buy the product.

Data Collection Technique

Direct method of data collection was used. Each of the participants was given with a questionnaire. Detailed instructions were given to the participants about the study and the questionnaire. They were given with 20 minutes time for filling the questionnaire. All the responses were found to be complete in all respects.

Sample Size

The sample size was 614. The questionnaire was collected from 684 out of which 614 were complete and had reliable data. The students were divided into 7 batches and the campaign was conducted for 7 days.

Sampling Procedure Method

All matriculation schools in Coimbatore district were approached for the CTY Campaign. 6 schools gave permission to take their students for the one day study. Cluster sampling was used for the study. All the students from class IX were taken for the study.

Analysis and Interpretation

To identify the effect of CTY campaign with respect to presentation and factory visit

Presentation and factory visit formed the major part of the marketing campaign. Data was collected for analyzing the opinion about both the activities on the basis of dimensions like Time Allotted for the campaign, Extent of Attraction, Content and Coverage of the Program and Knowledge gained and extent to which the session is informative.

Independent sample z test was done for testing the means of presentation and factory visit across the above four dimensions. Suitable hypothesis were formulated for testing the same.

- Ho: There is no significant difference in the means of presentation and factory visit with respect to

A) Time Allotted for the campaign,

B) Extent of Attraction,

C) Content and Coverage of the Program and

D) Knowledge gained and extent to which the session is informative.

- Ha: There is significant difference in the means of presentation and factory visit with respect to

A) Time Allotted for the campaign,

B) Extent of Attraction,

C) Content and Coverage of the Program and

D) Knowledge gained and extent to which the session is informative.

Table 4.1

Independent sample t test for testing of means across presentation and factory visit

S.No	CTY Characteristics	Particulars	Mean	SD	Z value	Significance	Ho – Accepted or Rejected
1	Time Allotted	Presentation	4.3737	1.0359	4.151	0.000	Rejected
		Factory visit	3.6364	1.4318			
2	Attractiveness	Presentation	3.8485	0.9407	0.617	0.538	Accepted
		Factory visit	3.7677	0.9015			
3	Content and Coverage	Presentation	4.0505	0.7474	1.423	0.156	Accepted
		Factory visit	3.8788	0.9397			
4	Knowledge gained / informative	Presentation	4.2727	0.8183	0.412	0.681	Accepted
		Factory visit	4.2059	0.8082	0.412	0.681	Accepted

To test the above hypothesis independent z test was used. Table 4.1 shows the characteristics of the catch them young program with respect to presentation and factory visit. The table gives information about the mean, standard deviation, z value and the significance of the z test. The results of the hypothesis test are also disclosed.

The characteristics of the Catch them young program was studied based on time allotted, attractiveness of the presentation and factory visit, content and coverage of the two components, knowledge gained and the extent to which it was informative.

The significance value of the z test shows that the null hypothesis is rejected for time allotted for presentation and factory visit. Therefore it can be concluded that there is difference between time allotted for factory visit and presentation.

The significance value of the z test for the other three characteristics namely attractiveness of the campaign, content and coverage, knowledge gained and the extent to which it was informative shows that the null hypothesis was accepted. Therefore it can be concluded that the respondents do not differ in their opinion about the three characteristics.

To assess the influence of the Hands on Experience of the CTY component on product opinion and ability of new product to replace conventional product

The third component of the CTY campaign was to give the participants a hands-on experience with the product. A test drive was administered to the participants and data regarding the experience of the test drive and the extent to which the test drive influences in purchase decision of the product was found out. Chi square test was used for testing the degree of independence between the hands on experience and product opinion, the results of which are depicted in table 4.2.1

Ho: There is no association between product opinion and a) Test drive experience and b) Test drive influence.

Ha: There is association between product opinion and a) Test drive experience and b) Test drive influence.

Table 4.2.1

Influence of Hands on Experience on Product Opinion

S.No	Particulars	Pearson's chi square Value	Significance	Ho – Accepted or Rejected
1	Test drive experience Vs Product Opinion	12.223	0.007	Rejected
2	Test drive influence Vs Product Opinion	20.036	0.000	Rejected

The results indicate that the significance value Chi Square test rejects the null hypothesis stating that there is significant association between product opinion and a) Test drive experience and b) Test drive influence.

Influence of Hands on Experience On Customers Perception of ability of new product to replace conventional product

As a part of the CTY campaign for identifying the customers perception about the new product to replace the conventional product, Chisqure test was used to test the association between replacement of conventional vehicles and a) test drive experience b) test drive influence. The results are shown in table:

Ho: There is no association between customer perception on replacement of conventional product and test drive experience and influence.

Ha: There is association between customer perception on replacement of conventional product and test drive experience and influence.

Table 4.2.2

Influence of Hands on Experience On Customers Perception of ability of new product to replace conventional product

S.No	Particulars	Pearson's chi square Value	Significance	Ho – Accepted or Rejected
1	Test drive experience Vs Replacement of conventional vehicles by electric vehicles	3.734	0.031	Rejected
2	Test drive influence Vs Replacement of conventional vehicles by e vehicles	4.097	0.043	Rejected

Table 4.2.2 it can be interpreted that the significance value of z is less than 0.05. Therefore the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternate hypothesis in accepted which states that there is association between customer perception on replacement of conventional product and test drive experience and influence.

4.3 To assess the product awareness before and after the CTY campaign

To identify the effectiveness of the campaign in creating awareness, analysis was done on the basis of various categories like awareness, interest, desire, preference of electric bikes and willingness to buy electric bikes before and after the campaign. Paired sample t test was used for this purpose. The relationship between the effectiveness before and after the campaign is the basis for using paired sample t test for this analysis.

Ho: There is no difference in awareness before and after the CTY campaign.

Ha: The CTY campaign was effective in creating awareness about the product.

Table 4.3

Paired t test to assess the product awareness before and after the campaign

S.No	Particulars (Before & After campaign)	Mean Difference	SD	T value	Significance	Ho – Accepted or Rejected
1.	Awareness	0.7778	1.36692	5.661	0.000	Rejected
2.	Interest	0.4444	1.17127	3.776	0.000	Rejected
3.	Desire	0.4141	1.05955	3.889	0.000	Rejected
4	Preference	0.4242	1.06033	3.981	0.000	Rejected
5	Willingness	0.5152	1.28860	3.978	0.000	Rejected

The paired t test results show that there is very high significance. Therefore the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternate hypothesis that the CTY campaign was effective in creating awareness about the product was accepted at 1% level of significance.

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Findings and Discussions

The first and foremost objective of the model was to assess the opinion of the respondents with respect to the first two phases of the study i.e., presentation and Factory visit. The was studied on the four common attributes namely a) duration of each phase b) attractiveness of the phases c) content and coverage d)knowledge gained in the sessions and the extent to which it was informative. It was found that opinion of the participants differ with respect to time allotted and duration of the program.

With respect to attractiveness of the campaign, content and coverage, knowledge gained and the extent to which it was informative it was found that the opinion does not differ among the participants. This proves that both the phases of the campaign were equally good enough. The mean values also indicate that the mean is high and the respondents have a very favorable opinion about the two phases.

This model therefore is able to attract the young minds and arouse the interest of the participants. One day spent with the corporate would be memorable to the students. This day would go a long way in helping the participants remember the brand and recall response would be high since they have been delighted by their experience with the manufacturer.

Results indicate that the hands on experience i.e., the test drive experience affect the opinion of the participants about the product. Similarly ability of the test drive to influence the customer to buy has an impact on the product opinion.

Participants were questioned about the ability of e-bike to replace conventional vehicles. Test drive experience as well as test drive influence were associated with the opinion of participants about the ability of e bikes to replace conventional bikes.

The hands on experience component of the CATCH THEM YOUNG campaign was a thorough success. This helped in not only improving the product opinion but also helped in influencing the participant to go for purchase of the vehicle. Though the participants were too young to make a purchase decision, the fact that the campaign was able to create the interest to own a vehicle was considered more than sufficient

It was found that there was a high level of awareness among the participants about the product after the CTY campaign. This indicates that the CTY campaign was effective in bringing about the desired response in the minds of the youngsters.

The CATCH THEM YOUNG campaign was able to make a huge difference in creating and improving the awareness of the product in the young minds. The quantum of reach that this model has on the youngsters is undoubtedly more than any other method. Plus the competitive advantage is that the model is also cost effective for the organizations.

Conclusion

CATCH THEM YOUNG - the one day program to initiate the school children into environment friendly Electric Vehicle industry was a huge success. This Study therefore establishes the fact that the new model CATCH THEM YOUNG is capable of attracting the customer while they are still young. In addition to the technical activities, students were given opportunities to showcase their creativity in bikes and awareness on safety. Quizzes and contests were conducted which helped them boost their self confidence. For those lucky school children, CTY turned out to be a memorable day that they won't forget in a hurry and the best is yet to come. . . . .