**A STUDY ON MARKETING STRATEGIES WITH REFERENCE TO THE ANDHRA PRADESH PAPER MILL LIMITED – RAJAHMUNDRY UNIT**

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**ABSTRACT**

The paper industry, facing increasing environmental scrutiny and digital alternatives, requires innovative marketing strategies to sustain growth and competitiveness. APL explores a range of marketing approaches tailored to the unique challenges and opportunities within the sector. Key strategies include emphasizing sustainability through eco-friendly product lines, leveraging digital marketing to reach younger demographics, and enhancing customer engagement through personalized services. Additionally, the research highlights the importance of collaboration with supply chain partners to foster brand loyalty and create value-added solutions. By analyzing case studies and industry trends, it provides insights into effective marketing practices that can drive brand differentiation and customer retention in the evolving paper market.

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**KEY WORDS:** Eco friendly product lines, Digital marketing, supply chain partners, customer retention.

**INTRODUCTION:**

We can distinguish between a social and a managerial definition of marketing. A social definition shows the role marketing plays in the society. One marketer said that marketing’s role is to “deliver a higher standard of living”. Here is a social definition that serves our purpose: **Marketing** is a societal process by which individuals and groups obtain what they need and want through creating, offering, and freely exchanging products and services of value with others. For a managerial definition, marketing has often been described as “the art of selling products,” but people are surprised when they hear that the most important part of marketing is not selling! Selling is only the tip of the marketing iceberg.

The paper industry is essential to the nation security and is of substantial importance to the economic prosperity of the country, if the supplies of paper are cut off, the ordinary world of administration and military operation would be greatly impeded. Paper pervades all facts of day-to-day activity, paper and paperboard products to be omnipresent in all the spheres of economic activities from book to bullets and from packages to nuclear technology.

Paper industry has been legitimately accorded to status of ‘Core Sector’ in view of its strategic position in development of the economy. Paper industry in India, like many other processing industries have developed over a period of time from a state of art. From very simple mode of handmade paper, industry has come a long way with highly complex processing, being one of the capitals intensive and energy intensive industries of India. Now Indian Paper industry produces a wide variety of paper and paperboard.

Increasing importance of Govt.’s activities, trade and finance lead to increased demand for paper and enhanced the significance pf paperboard in the Indian Economy. The per capita consumption of paper on India lags behind the corresponding figures of the developed countries. However, even to maintain the present level of consumption it is imperative that paper industry must grow to meet the needs of increasingpopulation and ancillary industry.

**ABOUT ANDHRA PAPER LIMITED UNIT- RAJAHMUNDRY:**

Andhra Paper Limited; situated on the bank of river Godavari is one of the oldest and at the same time most modern paper units in the country today. The history of the APL dates back to 1924. In 1921 a retired Forest officer proposed to set up the paper mill in Rajahmundry before there was no paper mill in Andhra Pradesh and southern region also. The construction work was going in 3 years i.e., up to 1924 it started its production with a capacity of 1 ton per day under the name of ‘“**CARNATIC PAPER MILL AND COMPANY LIMITED”.** After the independence it came under the state govt. in 1953 and functioned as “Andhra Paper Limited” with 10 tons per day capacity under the reigns of the A.P government during 1956-64. On June 29th 1964 it saw incorporated as one of the first joint sectors companies under the stewardship of the Bangur group with its present popular name “The Andhra Pradesh Mills Limited” Since then, it has been making rapid strides in its growth by taking up several expansion projects concurrently and attained the status of one of the biggest paper mills in the country today with installed capacity of 92,500 TPA. The company uses 80-85% hard wood and 15-20% bamboo as the fibrous raw materials. Versatile Kraft pulping process is being adopted in this mill. The company has produced 84,237 tons of paper during 1994-95.

The govt. of India in recognition of the excellent capacity utilization has re-endorsed the industrial license for the expansion of the capacity up to 1, 46,477 TPA.

**NEED FOR THE STUDY**

The paper mills in India today are of diverse age groups; and sizes they use a variety of raw materials and adopt different technologies. New types of demands are coming up with rapid changes in the social economic environment. The paper consumption is recognized as a signal of the economic prosperity and development of a nation. Paper transformed from a primary culture product into a basic product that could be used for innumerable purposes. Paper industry today offers a mixed outlook. On one hand, the industry possesses on sound infrastructure and technical skill but on the other hand obsolete technology, financial crunch, slow paced research and shortage of materials, indicate a grave crisis. The possibilities for the growth of the paper industry are dynamic.

Good marketing strategy is the prerequisite for the conduct of business successfully. It helps in avoiding day to day crises management due to cash crunch or other unanticipated exigencies. It is against this back ground the present research work as a modest attempt has been undertaken to measure and evaluate the paper mills at a micro level. Keeping this in view the present work on “Marketing Strategies” of the paper industry – A case study of Andhra Paper Limited; Unit: Rajahmundry, East Godavari District of A.P has been taken up at a micro level.

**OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:**

The following are the main objectives of the study:

* To examine the marketing activities of Andhra Paper Limited; Unit: Rajahmundry.
* To discuss the various marketing activities in relation with the strategies of marketing of Distribution of Andhra Paper Limited; Unit: Rajahmundry.
* To identify the various problems related to marketing activities and provide suggestions for improvement.
* To know the position of paper industry as whole in the world as well as in India.
* To know the challenges and potential constraints of Andhra Paper Limited; Unit: Rajahmundry.

**METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY:**

Data which is required for the analysis and that could full fill our objectives have been collected from 2 sources.

1. PRIMARY DATA
2. SECONDARY DATA

**PRIMARY DATA**

The primary data are those which are collected and for the first time, and thus happen to be original in character. This data has been collected from various departmental heads of Andhra Paper Limited; Unit: Rajahmundry

**QUESTIONNAIRE**

A well-constructed questionnaire was developed for customers, Dealers and Departmental Heads of Andhra Paper Limited; Unit: Rajahmundry for extracting information. Questionnaire was framed with 9 questions and the collected data was analyzed and tabulated.

**SECONDARY DATA**

It is the information-collected form already published sources. The sources that have been for this data collection are

1. ANNUAL REPORTS
2. MAGZINES
3. TEXT BOOKS ON MARKETING AND PAPER INDUSTRY.

**LITERATURE REVIEW**

Marketing strategy has been a salient focus of academic inquiry since the 1980s, according to (Mavondo 2000). There are numerous definitions of marketing strategy in the literature and such definitions reflect different perspectives (Li et al 2000). A traditional definition of marketing strategy is a plan for pursuing the firm’s objectives or how the company is going to obtain its marketing goals with a specific market segment (Orville and Walker 2008; The Odois, Leonidus, 2003; Kotler, Armstrong, 2009) while Brodrechtova (2008) explains that marketing strategy is a roadmap of how a firm assigns its resource and relates to its environment and achieves corporate objective in order to generate economic value and keep the firm ahead of its competitors. In laymen terms it is to determine the nature, strength, direction, and interaction between the marketing mix-elements and the environmental factors in a particular situation (Li et al 2000). According to Levie (2006), the aim of the development of an organization’s marketing strategy development is to establish, build, defend and maintain its competitive advantage. A thorough analysis of the newest scientific articles on strategic management and organisational behaviour indicates that 71% of them analyse company performance as a dependent variable, 12% of them analyse it as an independent variable while 11% of the studies analyse performance as a dependent as well as an independent variable (March and Sutton1997).

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS:**

**Table 5.1**

**Which company’s’ brand are more competitive to APL?**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Brand Name** | **No. Of Respondents** | **Percentage** |
| JK Paper | 40 | 34 |
| ITC Bhadrachalam | 34 | 28 |
| Siripur Paper Mill | 10 | 8 |
| Rayalaseema Paper | 28 | 23 |
| Telangana papers | 8 | 7 |
| **Total:** | **120** | **100** |

**SOURCE:** Compiled from Questionnaire.

**FIGURE 5.1**

**Which Company’s’ Brand Are More Competitive to Apl?**

**SOURCE:** From the Table 5.1

Table 5.1 explains that JK Papers Limited, ITC Bhadrachalam and Rayalaseema, Paper Mills are the more competitors to APL as per the responses received.

**Table 5.2**

**Are you satisfied with the availability of quality of the Products of The Andhra Paper Mills Ltd., Unit: Rajahmundry?**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Details** | **No. Of Respondents** | **Percentage** |
| Yes | 90 | 75 |
| No | 30 | 25 |
| **Total:** | **120** | **100** |

**SOURCE:** Compiled from Andhra Paper Limited

**FIGURE 5.2**

**Are You Satisfied with The Availability of Quality of The Products of The Andhra Paper Mills Ltd., Unit: Rajahmundry.**

**SOURCE:** From the Table 5.2

Table 5.2 explained that the availability of quality of the paper product of the APL Limited. Out of 100% of the respondents 75% of the customers have stated that yes and the remaining 25% of the customers have stated that the no. Hence, it is required to satisfy the quality of the product for achieving the good customer satisfaction levels.

**Table 5.3**

**Sales Promotional Campaign**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Sales Promotion** | **No. Of Respondents** | **'Percentage** |
| Reduction Of Price | 74 | 62 |
| Credit period | 46 | 38 |
| **Total:** | **120** | **100** |

**SOURCE:** Compiled from the Questionnaire

**FIGURE 5.3**

**Sales Promotional Campaign**

**SOURCE:** From the Table 5.3

Table 5.3 explained that the reduction of the price and credit period of the paper for the APL Limited 62% of the customers have stated that the reduction of the price for purchasing the paper and 38% of customers have stated that the credit period of the industry are important factors for the promotional campaign.

**Table 5.4**

**If you get a customer complaint from the end-user, how the APL management will respond?**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Complaints** | **No. Of Respondents** | **Percentage** |
| Immediate | 72 | 60 |
| Within one week | 40 | 33 |
| Fortnight | 8 | 7 |
| **Total:** | **120** | **100** |

**SOURCE:** Compiled from the Questionnaire

**FIGURE 5.4**

**If You Get a Customer Complaint from The End-User, How the APL Management Will Respond**

**SOURCE:** From the Table 5.4

Table 5.4, 60% of dealers have responded that the Andhra Paper Mill responds immediately, 33% of dealers have responded that within one week from the date of complaint and only 7% of the dealers have responded that within fortnight. Thus, the APL; Rajahmundry Unit Maintaining the good repone levels with the customers/ Dealers.

**Table 5.5**

**In the present marketing scenario how you can convince the end-user to buy the APL product**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Details** | **No. Of Respondents** | **Percentage** |
| Quality | 56 | 47 |
| Quantity | 40 | 33 |
| Price Rate | 16 | 13 |
| Discount | 8 | 7 |
| **Total:** | **120** | **100** |

**SOURCE:** Compiled from the Questionnaire

**FIGURE 5.5**

**In The Present Marketing Scenario How, You Can Convenience the End-User to Buy the APL Product**

**SOURCE:** From the Table 5.5

Table 5.5, it has been explained that the distributor / dealer has been convinced the end customer to buy APL product, as the company 47% of customers choose quality, 33% of the customer choose quantity, 8% of the customers on price rate and 4% of the customers on company’s discount for getting the convinced to become customer to the APL- Rajahmundry Unit.

**FINDINGS:**

1. Andhra Paper Limited dominated other brands in terms of availability of customer service, supply the good quality and quantity to the end user.
2. Most of the distributors / dealers are highly satisfied with the service (supply) of Andhra Paper Limited; Rajahmundry.
3. There will be influence of the low market price, customer service, immediate repones to the complaints etc., on the increase in sales of the Andhra Paper Limited product.
4. The increase in the volume of sales from 2019-2020 is moderate and the chance of increase is high in future.
5. The consumption of the paper is more in summer when it comparatively in the remaining period.
6. The distributors / dealers are not providing the sufficient information regarding the schemes, discounts and the new products details to the end users.
7. The services of the Andhra Paper Limited; Unit: Rajahmundry is moderate when compared to the other paper industries, so here Andhra Paper Limited; in terms of Service (supply) to the end users.
8. Most of the end users require the daily supply (services) from the paper industries, which indicates the high sales of the paper.
9. Presentably, there is not much requirement of advertisement. Sales promotion and personnel selling are the important promotional tools at Andhra Paper Mills Ltd
10. The management of Andhra Paper Mills Ltd is trying its best to retain the employees.

**SUGGESTIONS**

1. Andhra Paper Limited; has to supply their entire product sufficiently and regularly in time to the dealers / distributors in these clusters. So that the loyalty of the distributors / dealers will be increased.
2. The Andhra Paper Limited; Unit: Rajahmundry has to maintain the top position and has to try to increase their performance like good quality of the product, services to the end users and immediate repones to the customer on complaints etc., according to the reasons the company has to take the steps to reach the top position.
3. As most of the distributors require the supply of the product, the Company has to supply the paper immediately or within the stipulated time period to the distributors / dealers, so that they can serve the consumers according to their requirements. If they don’t supply the paper and sufficiently the sales will be decreased.
4. As the end users are highly satisfied with Andhra Paper’s product / services and not that much satisfied with other paper industries services (supply), Andhra Paper Limited can use this opportunity to attract the customers towards the increase of their product quality, services to increase the sales of the company.
5. The trade schemes offered by Andhra Paper Limited to the distributors should be increased and also profitable to the distributors. If they are satisfied with the offers then they will promote the paper more and the profit will be more to the company.

**CONCLUSIONS:**

The project was a great experience for me in order to study the marketing aspects in India and the world. It was a great opportunity for me to do the project work in the end of the course because till now we learned the theory regarding the marketing and the marketing related concepts, but now we got the chance to implement that theoretical knowledge to do the project and got the practical experience in the marketing field. Through this study I learned a lot that how to approach a customer or any other people and how to explain our view to them.

Paper industry is a vast growing industry when compared to many other industries. This industry is a place where major paper industries are there in India and in the world. Andhra Paper Limited Company is one of them. Doing my project at Andhra Paper Limited; Unit: Rajahmundry is a great experience as it gave me lot of opportunity and scope to understand the paper industry and its marketing structure and distribution channels.

Lot of valuable information regarding the company and also the distributors, has been collected from the survey, which helped me clearly to understand the real problems faced by the marketers to distribute and also make retailers to sell the company’s products in the market. I understood how difficult to do the marketing in the present scenario to get success in the marketing field. From the analysis of the data collected from the retailers the investigator got some important findings regarding the company and the industry. For those findings some of the suggestions made to the company were really applicable for the growth and benefit for the company in order to increase its market share and to become the market leader in the paper industry, because a large number of competitors craving for the same market. I got appreciation for the suggestion to the Company.

Thus, finally it can say that the Company needs a lot of improved distribution channel management activities along with various promotional strategies for the customers to get the top position in the paper industry. I wish the company to achieve its objectives achieved soon.

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