

FROM CUSTOMER SATISFACTION TO CUSTOMER DELIGHT USING A SUSTAINABLE AND COST-EFFECTIVE ORGANIC MARKETING STRATEGY

Prakash M C, SRM Institute of Science and Technology, Kattankulathur, Chennai

Dinesh J, SRM Institute of Science and Technology, Kattankulathur, Chennai

ABSTRACT

In today's competitive marketplace, achieving customer satisfaction is no longer a sufficient benchmark for sustained business success. Businesses are increasingly shifting their focus toward customer delight—a transformative approach that fosters emotional connections and long-term brand loyalty. This research article explores how businesses can achieve customer delight through the implementation of a sustainable and cost-effective organic marketing strategy named “Employee and customer centric marketing strategy”. This marketing strategy involves consistent quality products, a four-step process, valued employees and engaged customers to achieve customer delight. Customer delight results in delighted customers who are different from other customers in terms of loyalty, price sensitivity, word-of-mouth marketing and forgiving mistakes.

Keywords: Customer Delight, Customer Satisfaction, Organic Marketing Strategy, Consistent Quality Products, Valued Employees, Engaged Customers.

INTRODUCTION

In today's world, there is a cut-throat competition between businesses. Customer satisfaction is necessary for each and every business, but going beyond customer satisfaction is very crucial for businesses to stay ahead of their competitors. While customer satisfaction is all about meeting the expectations of customers, customer delight means exceeding the expectations of customers and hence customer delight is beyond customer satisfaction.

Businesses can achieve customer delight through valued employees, consistent quality products and organic marketing. Valued employees are employees who perform well, and are recognized, appreciated and rewarded for their performance. Consistent quality products means creating quality products consistently. Organic marketing means attracting customers and making them purchase products without using paid marketing strategies.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Origin of Customer Satisfaction

Marketing in the post-World War era (in the mid-20th century) focused heavily on customer satisfaction-meeting expectations was the benchmark. Businesses aimed to deliver what they promised, nothing more, nothing less.

Rise of Service Differentiation

In 1980's and 1990's, markets became saturated and competition intensified, so companies began to realize that satisfaction wasn't enough to retain customers. The concept of customer delight emerged going beyond expectations to create emotional connections. Brands like Ritz-Carlton and Nordstrom became famous for their exceptional service that surprised and delighted customers (McKinsey & Company, 2024).

The Experience Economy

With the rise of the internet and social media (in 2000's), customer experiences became more visible and shareable. Businesses began to focus on emotional engagement, not just transactions. Customer Delight became a strategic tool to drive loyalty, advocacy, and differentiation (Wikipedia, 2024).

Data-Driven Customer Delight

From 2010 till now, advancements in Artificial Intelligence (AI), Customer Relationship Management (CRM) systems, and analytics allowed companies to personalize experiences at scale. Customer delight became measurable through metrics like Net Promoter Score (NPS) and Customer Lifetime Value (CLV). Companies like Amazon and Zappos set new standards for proactive, personalized service (Wikipedia, 2024).

DISCUSSION

Research Gap

In the digital age, businesses are facing heavy competition and they are finding it very difficult to differentiate themselves, and attract and retain customers. Customer satisfaction is no longer enough for businesses to differentiate themselves, and attract and retain customers. Customer delight is the core of modern marketing and need of the hour differentiator. It helps businesses stay ahead of their competition by successfully differentiating themselves, and attracting and retaining customers (Active Campaign, 2022; Columbia Business School, 2025; Geeks for Geeks, 2025).

Research Objective

To achieve customer delight using an organic marketing strategy that is sustainable and cost-effective by involving products, employees and customers.

Proposed Marketing Strategy

The proposed marketing strategy is "Employee and customer centric marketing strategy" and it is explained below.

Businesses which deploy this marketing strategy should first produce consistent quality products.

Secondly, businesses should do organic marketing by using an organic marketing strategy that is sustainable and cost-effective.

The following steps describe a desirable organic marketing strategy for businesses that is sustainable and cost-effective.

- Use content marketing to attract customers authentically by creating value-driven blog posts, how-to guides, infographics and videos that educate or entertain the target

audience, followed by doing Search Engine Optimization (SEO) which involves using keyword search for aligning content with what potential customers are searching for.

- Use landing pages to convert potential customers. That is, use compelling, benefit-focused copy and strong Call to Actions (CTAs) to make potential customers purchase consistent quality products.
- Engage customers by using loyalty programs to reward engagement and repeat purchases with appropriate perks and privileges, followed by using social media conversations to actively respond to customers' comments, repost customer shoutouts and host live question and answer sessions.
- Retain and advocate customers through customer feedback loops, referral programs and brand ambassadors. Involve valued employees in customer feedback loops in order to ask for reviews and feedback from customers and show that businesses are responding to customer reviews and customer feedback. Use referral programs to offer incentives for customers who bring in new customers. Create brand ambassadors by inviting evangelists to co-create or represent your business online.

Thirdly, create valued employees by valuing employees. Value employees by recognizing those who perform well, and appreciate and reward them appropriately for their performance, which not only makes them feel valued but also boosts employee morale and employee retention (Bucketlist Rewards, 2024). Such employees become valued employees. Valuing employees fosters motivation, engagement and loyalty which act as key drivers of business success (Culture Partners, 2024).

A consistent quality product is one that reliably meets or exceeds customer expectations every time it is produced or delivered. It reflects uniformity in performance, appearance, and functionality, regardless of when or where the product is made. This consistency builds customer trust, enhances business reputation, and reduces costs associated with defects or returns (Qarma, 2022).

Organic marketing is a strategy that focuses on attracting customers naturally over time, without relying on paid advertisements. It involves using free tools and methods—like Search Engine Optimization (SEO), social media posts, blog content, email newsletters, and word-of-mouth to build business or brand awareness, engage customers, and generate leads (Snov.io 2025).

A valued employee is someone whose contributions, skills, and presence are genuinely appreciated and rewarded by his/her organization. He/she is recognized not just for what he/she does, but for how he/she aligns with the company's mission, culture, and goals. Being valued means feeling respected, supported, and seen as essential element to the team's success.

An engaged customer is someone who actively interacts with a business or brand across various touchpoints before, during, and after a purchase. This engagement goes beyond transactions; it includes behaviors like reading content, participating in loyalty programs, providing feedback, sharing experiences on social media, and showing brand advocacy.

Customer delight is the act of exceeding customer expectations in a way that creates a positive emotional reaction often surprise or joy. It goes beyond simply satisfying a need; it's about delivering an experience so memorable that customers feel genuinely appreciated and are more likely to become loyal advocates for the brand. Customer delight can be achieved only when the best people and best things give their best—best product or service, best marketing strategy, best employees and best customer engagement (Business News Daily, 2023; Geeks for Geeks, 2025; Wikipedia, 2024).

Customer satisfaction is a measure of how well a business meets customer expectations through its products, services, or overall experience (Wikipedia, 2025).

Evangelism is an advanced form of word-of-mouth marketing where customers who are passionate about a product or service offered by a business do unpaid marketing for what they are passionate about (Wikipedia, 2024). Such customers are called evangelists.

Consistent quality products+Organic marketing+Valued employees+Engaged customers=Customer Delight (1)

Finally, from equation (1), we understand that customer delight is a combination of four factors—consistent quality products, organic marketing, valued employees and engaged customers.

CONCLUSION

This research article starts with discussing about customer delight and using it to help businesses stay ahead of their competitors. It then explains the marketing journey from customer satisfaction to customer delight followed by proposing the “Employee and customer centric marketing strategy” which is a sustainable and cost-effective organic marketing strategy, and involves consistent quality products, organic marketing, valued employees and engaged customers for achieving customer delight.

According to (Wikipedia, 2024), customer delight results in delighted customers and delighted customers are:

- More loyal
- Less price-sensitive
- More likely to become evangelists
- Forgive mistakes more easily or a greater number of times than an average customer

REFERENCES

- Active Campaign. 2022. Customer delight: 7 strategies to delight your customers. Active Campaign Blog.
- Bucketlist Rewards. 2024. The value of employees: Understanding and appreciating their contributions. Bucketlist Rewards Blog.
- Business News Daily. 2023. How customer delight will keep them coming back. Business News Daily.
- Columbia Business School. 2025. Customer experience in the digital age. Columbia Business School Executive Education.
- Culture Partners. 2024. Valuing employees: Recognition and appreciation. Culture Partners Insights.
- Geeks for Geeks. 2025. Customer delight: Meaning, importance and examples. Geeks for Geeks.
- McKinsey & Company. 2024. Fueling growth through moments of customer delight. McKinsey & Company Insights.
- Qarma. 2022. 5 key benefits of consistent product quality for businesses. Qarma Blog.
- Snov.io. 2025. Organic marketing. Snov.io Glossary.
- Wikipedia. 2024. Customer delight. Wikipedia.
- Wikipedia. 2025. Customer satisfaction. Wikipedia.
- Wikipedia. 2024. Evangelism marketing. Wikipedia.