

EMPIRICAL TESTING OF A CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT MODEL IN CONSUMER INTERNET SERVICES

by

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submitted in partial fulfilment of
the requirements for the degree

MASTERS COMMERCII

In the Department of Marketing and Communication Management,
Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences,
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA

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Pretoria, South Africa

May 2000

Synopsis

An extensive literature study, as well as quantitative and qualitative research was performed, in order to gain insights into relationship management within consumer Internet service provision. Consumer Internet service is similar to banking, pay television and a cellular service in that it constitutes continuous service delivery. The investigation was based on a model founded in services and relationship marketing literature. The basic premise of the model is that service quality leads to customer satisfaction, which in turn leads to relationship quality. Structural equation modelling was used and the relationships empirically confirmed.

The literature component of the study starts with a review of the Internet, the Internet in South Africa and Internet Services in general. Emphasis then moves to the defining of a core service component for Internet service delivery as well as value-added services as a means to escalate Internet service beyond a commodity. From this premise, the relationships between value-added services and service quality, and customer satisfaction and relationship quality, are investigated. It is then confirmed that a significant relationship exists between value-added services and service quality.

The marketing of services and service quality are reviewed in order to create context for the GAPS model and the SERVQUAL instrument. The SERVQUAL instrument has been proven to be both a reliable and valid instrument for the measuring of service quality within the Internet Industry. Service blueprinting was done in order to represent the Internet service delivery process visually. Fail-points in delivery were identified and prioritised from the point of view of the subscriber.

Customer satisfaction theory is reviewed and the flow construct as means of behavioural profiling is investigated. Satisfaction derived from using the Internet is tested in relation to service quality, customer satisfaction and relationship quality. It is interesting to note that the most significant relationship exists between Internet satisfaction and relationship quality.

The evolution of relationship marketing and relationship management is investigated and an overview given of relationship strategy. Relationship quality as a dynamic concept is then investigated. The relationship between relationship quality and customer retention has been found to be weak, but still significant.

An Internet based research design was used for collection and the instrument used was an Internet based questionnaire. The sample size was 10 000 Internet subscribers and 1372 usable responses were obtained.

Voorwoord

'n Indiepte ondersoek bestaande uit 'n literatuurstudie asook kwalitatiewe en kwantitatiewe navorsing is geloods om dieper insig te verkry oor verbruikers-Internet diensverskaffing. Verbruikers-Internet is soortgelyk in bankdienste, betaal televisie en sellulêre dienste in die opsig dat diensverskaffing deurlopend plaasvind. Die ondersoek is gebaseer op 'n model wat gevind is binne die konteks van die bemaking van dienste en verhoudingsbemaking. Die basis van die model is dat dienskwaliteit lei tot verbruikers satisfaksie, wat op sy beurt weer lei tot verhoudings kwaliteit. Gestruktureerde vergelyking modellering is gebruik en die voorgestelde model is bevestig as geldig.

Die literatuur afdeling van die studie begin met 'n oorsig van die Internet, die Internet in Suid-Afrika en Internet dienste in die algemeen. Klem verskuif dan na die definëring van die kern diens-element van Internet diensverskaffing asook die waarde-toevoegende-dienste wat ingespan word om Internet dienste te weerhou daarvan om kommoditeit status te verkry. Hieruit voortvloeiend word ondersoek ingestel na die verband tussen waarde-toevoegende-dienste en onderskeidelik dienskwaliteit, verbruikers satisfaksie en verhoudings kwaliteit. Dit word bevind dat 'n sterk verwantskap bestaan tussen waarde-toevoegende-dienste en dienskwaliteit.

Die bemaking van dienste en dienskwaliteit word ondersoek ten einde konteks te verskaf vir die gapings model van dienskwaliteit en die SERVQUAL instrument vir dienskwaliteit meting. Bevindinge staaf dat die SERVQUAL instrument 'n betroubare en geldige meetinstrument is vir die meting van dienskwaliteit binne die Internet industrie. 'n Dienslewering-sbloudruk is opgestel ten einde die dienslewering-proses visueel voor te stel. Faal-punte in dienslewering is identifiseer en prioritiseer vanaf die verbruiker se oogpunt.

Verbruiker satisfaksie teorie is bestudeer en die "Flow" konstruk ondersoek as moontlike gedragsprofiel segmenteerder. Verbruikers satisfaksie verkry deur die gebruik van die Internet is getoets in verhouding tot dienskwaliteit, verbruikers satisfaksie en verhoudings kwaliteit. Die interessante bevinding wat gemaak is, is dat die sterkste verhouding bestaan tussen Internet gebruik satisfaksie en verhoudings kwaliteit.

Die evolusie van verhoudings bemaking en verhoudings bestuur is ondersoek en 'n oorsig is gegee van verhoudingsbou strategie. Verhoudings kwaliteit as 'n dinamiese konsep is bestudeer. Dit is bevind dat die verhouding tussen verhoudings kwaliteit en verbruikers se voordurende diensgebruik swak maar wel statisties noemenswaardig is.

'n Internet gebaseerde navorsings ontwerp is gebruik vir vraelys en insamelings doeleindes. Die steekproefgrootte was 10 000 Internet verbruikers en 1 372 bruikbare response is verkry.

Hierdie verhandeling word opgedra aan my ouers; en hulle ouers 😊

Met spesifieke dank aan:

Professor Adré Schreuder,

Johan Pienaar, Salma Kidd, Paulo Froes, Faruk Waja, Royden Dall, Shaun Donovan, Travis Pawley en Matthew Roesner - Intekom,

Elize Thiart,

Peet Venter,

Coert Vorster,

Andrew Salomon,

*"Doen slegs U wil Heer, U wil met my,
U pottebakker, met my die klei..."*

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