PRI-AIN766

by A C

MARKETING ISSUES IN AND ITS IMPACT UPON NEXT PLC

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Rationale

Background context and rationales

Next PLC is a multinational company or MNC that operates in the retail sector. The company is based in the United Kingdom or UK and is headquartered in Leicester, England. The ranges of products that the company operates are clothing and fashionable accessories for men and women. Next PLC operates under multiple channels and sections to aid their business growth (forbes.com, 2023). Segmenting their business operations under Next Retail, Next Online, Next Finance and Next International Retail gives the company advantage to manoeuvre their business goals and objectives. Sectoring their business operations helped Next PLC to gain revenue of approximately £4.9 billion in 2022 (statista.com, 2023). The revenue generated by Next PLC was a hike compared to the revenue of 2021 which was estimated to be at £3.8 billion.

The issue the company faces is their lack of social media and online marketing managerial skills. Next PLC's lack in these managerial skills has cost the company a drop of 22.7% in the sales of their retail sector (statista.com, 2023). Next PLC's revenue decreased by a bigger margin due to their lack of effort in updating databases that hold both product and customer information. Next PLC follows a marketing plan that includes the strategic inclusion of products the company makes, the intended price for the product, the place the product intends to sell, and the promotional strategies the company undertakes to sell the product.
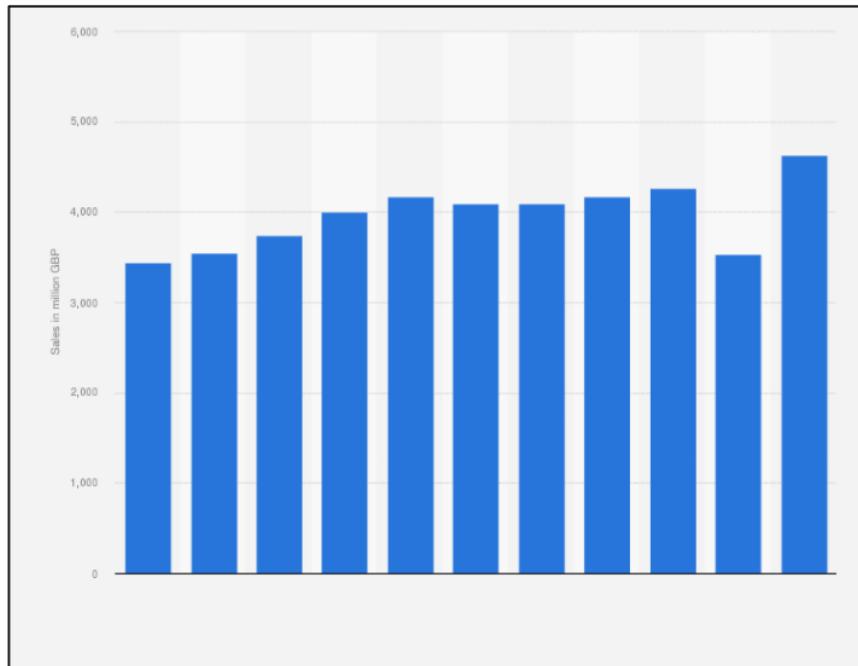
Figure 1: Rate of Revenue of Next PLC

(Source: statista.com)

The marketing strategies the company undertakes include both online and offline modes of marketing. The company operates offline through their 700 retail stores across Europe. The online modes of marketing are mostly related to accessing sales outside Europe where Next PLC does not have a local retail store. According to research by Nash (2019), social media management is an effective marketing tool for any company to boost their product sales. Social media adds a massive market presence for the product a company intends to advertise and sell. Following this strategy Next PLC uses social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest and Instagram to update their product information and target selling these products (nextplc.co.uk, 2023). However the issues the company faces while accessing these platforms include the lack of social media managers and a database that can store and access product and customer information.

The marketing strategies Next PLC deals with primarily are related to their dearth or lack of focus in technological advancements. The technological advancement of any company's system is the key to grow their market presence, target customers and review sales. Failures to access these technological advancements are a result of Next PLC's lack in implementing workforce to train their employees to access the online marketing methods. Next PLC's

technological issue related to marketing also includes the lack of a 24 hour system for customers, the absence of chatbots to assist customers with the products they intend to buy. This is affecting the customer reach of the company. The post pandemic marketing strategies for every company requires an online portal effective to assist both product sales and solve customer queries. Based on the research by Makasi *et al.* (2020), nearly 75% of the customers in the UK have shifted to online retail shopping. Although the policies of Next PLC promote their online presence, it lacks the software managerial efficiency required to attract and reach a vital customer base.

Next PLC does not store the information of their previous customer order which is vital to boost their management and train professionals to understand the arrangement of customer preferences. A stable software marketing database for any MNC includes their managerial tools that the customers and the assisting Artificial Intelligence or AI can access. The issue with Next PLC's database is that the company kept its online portal only to market their available and released products. Next PLC's database did not introduce any sections or areas that amplify the scope of understanding customer preferences or queries before making any purchase. This deficiency in software management is costing the company to lose young customers that rely on technology.

The research highlights the issues related to marketing faced by Next PLC to sell their products and reach a market growth using online mediums. This research also shows their lack of managerial inefficiency related to the maintenance of a software database. However, it is important to manage these technological advancements and online media marketing to boost economic growth of a company. The research by Mason *et al.* (2021), stresses on the prerequisite of a strong social media presence for marketing post the pandemic. Following the aforementioned proposal, it can be stated that online media marketing through individual company portals and social media helps to make significant changes in their economic growth. Next PLC faced the lack of a relevant and efficient online database and in the areas of managing media marketing.

Research aim

The aim of this research is to identify the marketing issues and its impact upon Next PLC and its effect on the organisation

Objectives

Based on the aim of the research, objectives can be drafted as follows

- To identify the marketing issues and its impact upon Next PLC and its effect on the organisation

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- To assess the effects of ineffective marketing and customer engagement upon Next PLC
- To evaluate the complications in marketing to increase customer reach upon Next PLC
- To recommend certain strategies for coping complications in marketing to increase customer reach upon Next PLC

Question

Referring to the questions of the research, research questions can be identified as follows

- What are the marketing issues and its impact upon Next PLC and its effect?
- Which are the effects of ineffective marketing and customer engagement upon Next PLC?
- What are the complications in marketing to increase customer reach upon Next PLC?
- Which can be the recommending strategies for coping complications in marketing to increase customer reach upon Next PLC?

Method, Data & Ethics

Research Philosophy

Research philosophies play a crucial role in defining a specific path to proceed with specific research. There are three different research philosophies including Positivism, Interpretivism and Realism. Human actions are analysed for developing new ideas in research utilising Interpretivism research philosophy. On the other hand, scientific experiments are performed for development of new ideas in research using Realism research philosophy (Warwick, 2023). Phenomenons taking place within a society are analysed in case of research using Positivism research philosophy. This research will be done following Positivism research philosophy. Marketing issues faced by Next Plc. will be analysed for understanding their impact on this organisation.

Research Approach

Research approaches play the role of providing guidance on constructing ideas associated with a specific research topic. There are mainly three research approaches which include Inductive approach, Deductive approach, and Abductive approach. Existing theories associated with a topic are verified in research following Deductive approach of doing research (Scribbr, 2022a). Existing theories are modified through research incorporating Abductive research approach. On the other hand, new theories are developed by collecting information in a systematic manner in research using Inductive approach. Inductive approach will be followed for proceeding with this research. Information associated with marketing

strategies of Next Plc. will be collected for developing new theories about their impacts in this research.

Methodological choices

There are various methodological choices that are selected based on the requirements of a research. These choices include mono-qualitative, mono-quantitative, multi-qualitative, multi-quantitative, mixed simple, and mixed complex methods (Kansteiner and König, 2020). Mono qualitative research methodology will be used in this research for analysing the impacts of marketing strategies employed by Next Plc.

Research Strategy

Research strategies are associated with providing research with a specific technique to follow for meeting its objectives. Different strategies of research include experiment, archival research, ethnography, survey, narrative inquiry, case study, and Grounded theory. This research will be done using an Archival research strategy for meeting its objectives through exploration of existing archives (University of Manchester, 2022). Existing documents relevant to impacts of marketing strategies of Next Plc. on its business performance will be selected and information will be collected from them. This would aid in developing an understanding of the role of marketing in organisational performance.

Time Horizon

Time horizon of research provides information about frequency of data collection in that specific research. There are mainly two types of time horizons that include Cross-sectional and longitudinal studies. Information is collected for a prolonged period of time in a specific interval in the case of longitudinal studies (Scribbr, 2023). On the contrary to this, information collection is done once in case of cross-sectional research. This research is a cross-sectional study as information will be collected only once without any repetition.

Data Collection

Selection of suitable data collection methods for specific research is important as success of the research depends on the collection of suitable information for it. There are mainly two different types of data collection methods which include primary data collection and secondary data collection. Primary qualitative data is collected by conducting interviews and primary quantitative data is collected by conducting surveys. This requires involvement of participants in research for collection of information. On the contrary, in case of secondary data collection participants are not required to be involved. Data is collected from secondary sources of information in research following secondary data collection (Ruggiano and Perry, 2019). Relevant articles are collected from credible sources such as Google Scholar. Required

data in this research will be collected using a secondary data collection method. Existing articles, company websites, and annual reports would be accessed for collection of crucial information related to this research. Incorporation of secondary research would also aid in collecting large amounts of information within a short period of time.

Data Analysis

Data analysis techniques are important for analysing collected information for extracting crucial insights about the topic of research. There are broadly two different types of data analysis techniques including Qualitative data analysis and Quantitative data analysis. These techniques of data analysis are selected based on the type of data collected in research. Quantitative analysis techniques include descriptive statistics and statistical analysis. On the other hand, the secondary analysis includes the thematic analysis technique (Scribbr, 2022b). This research will include a thematic analysis technique as secondary data will be collected in this research. A total of 5 themes will be developed and 10 articles would be selected for developing these themes.

Ethical Consideration

There are various ethical considerations associated with research that are required to be considered for avoiding any ethical issues. Instances of academic misconduct are required to be avoided by providing proper credit to sources from which information would be collected. Apart from this, guidelines for doing research are required to be followed. For instance, every technique associated with every step of this research is required to be performed precisely. Without maintaining this accuracy accurate results will not be obtained from this research. Apart from this, guidelines of "Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 (c. 48)" are required to be followed for avoiding any issues associated with copyright of information included in selected articles (Legislations, 2022). Wellbeing of people associated with this research will be ensured through strategies such as conducting secondary research for avoiding direct human interaction. Incorporation of these considerations would allow to avoid ethical issues in this research.

Reliability and Validity

Reliability and validity of research depend to a great extent on the tools and techniques used in it. There are various procedures for maintaining the credibility of research leading to accuracy in its findings. Reliability of this research will be maintained by selecting credible articles published by renowned authors. On the other hand, authentic databases such as Google Scholar would be used for collecting articles for this research. Validity of this research will be ensured by collecting valid and current information. Articles published

within the last five years will be only selected in this research. Articles containing duplicate or redundant information will be rejected from being included in this research.

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