Week 1: Qualitative Focus Group Research Discussion Guide

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**Identify the Problem or Opportunity**

Adults with disposable income are in need of free beer. Alcohol manufacture need restaurants to sell their beer. Restaurants need customers to buy their food. How do we solve everyone’s problem at the same time? Simple; the manufacture gives the adult a free beer at the restaurant. The adult goes then goes to the restaurant to collect on the lost leader, where they purchase food and additional beer to do with their coupon.

While the solution is simple, the missing piece comes with a mechanism for the three to meetup in a consistent manner. Presently the drinker needs to visit several web sites and actively seek out the promotions. Similarly the manufacture might have deep relationships with “Apple Bees” but they are missing many of the local restaurants. The lack of coverage means their campaign cannot be as successful.

An alternative would be to have a central service which builds the relationships with the restaurants and the manufactures. They bridge the technology gap and also supply the direct marketing to the drinker. This reduces the complexities for all parties, while improving the probability of reaching the target audience. These opportunities would lead to impressions and engagements, that can help drive an efficient marketing campaign for all parties (Keller, 2013).

**Identify the Primary Audience**

There are three primary members of the strategy, with the first being sales personal within alcohol manufacturing facilities. They would be instrumental to providing the budgeting and to incentivize restaurants.

Next is any restaurant owner with an alcohol license that would like more customers. As the customers come in to collect their free beer, they are likely to stay and purchase food. This generates revenue and encourages participation within the program.

Finally is the drinker, which should be an adult with disposable income. While not required, it is advantageous to find drinkers that are alcoholics. This improves the probability they will purchase additional drinks, which provides additional revenue to the other two parties. College students, unmarried, and members of social clubs are good identifiers of the targets. The drinker also needs to be in compliance with any legal requirements, such as being 21+ years old.

As each member in the supply chain would moves the free beer, value is gained for the others encouraging future participation (Keller, 2013). Through this mechanism the needs of all three are being addressed.

**Develop One Overarching Goal for the Research**

Each section of the audience will need to be researched so that the highest value can be acquired for the other two. For instance the drinker receives more value when the program has more bars and manufactures. Meanwhile the bar gains the most from larger numbers of manufactures to encourage larger numbers of customers.

In order to ensure that everyone gains significant value research will need to: identify what exists today; how could it be expanded; and what limitations exist on their ability to help the other two entities. The scope of these questions needs to be limited to where immediate value can be delivered (Keller, 2013).

Good research needs to start with identifying what exists today. This would include finding any rivals or existing partnerships. If there are existing collaborative projects it might be more efficient to enhance or join those efforts. The next area to focus on is what prevents the business from making these changes immediately. These risks could include office politics or legal restrictions (Mallor, Barnes, Langvardt, & Prenkert, 2014). The researches will need to come back with an assessment toward which partners are too complex or great to start with.

As answers to these questions are found, care needs to be taken that they are representative of the whole (Lind, Marchael, & Wathen, 2013). For example, the sample needs to include different types of bars and restaurants. It would not be sufficient to ask three “Papa John Pizza’s” for their input, and conclude how every other pizzeria would answer.

**Develop a Script to Elicit the Information**

**Manufacture**

When interviewing the manufactures the key areas to address are around providing the free beverages. In exchange the customers will purchase additional beverages which compensates the business.

A potential area to start questioning is to first identify what free drink programs they already participate in. An inventory should be created of their programs, along with the membership fees to participate.

Across each of those programs, it will also be interesting to know how customers are connecting back to the company. What complexities exist with creating and establishing those relationships?

**Restaurant**

The incentive for the bars and restaurants to participate is that customers will buy food to pair with the free drink. Based on secondary research it would be possible to identify the general trend, though asking the customer to describe the scenarios can be an ice breaker.

Another focus area would be around the quantity of beers that typical customers are purchasing from the bars. Focus toward the extreme drinkers and their characteristics can also be helpful in identifying more customers to feed the loop.

**Drinker**

The focus with the drinker is to identify how they are finding promotional offerings. For example; do they use Facebook, Snapchat, or another form of social media?

Another area to review is which promotional deals they have redeemed in the past, and how was the experience surrounding it? Did they frequently have difficulties with coupon codes or was it a seamless experience. For areas that they encountered challenges, how could they have been prevented?

The third area to focus on is what types of free beverages would be most appealing to the drinker. Do they prefer micro brews or common brand names such as Absolute? This will assist in selecting manufactures, as the most commonly requested should be included.

**Conclusion**

Free beer vouchers can be help alcohol manufactures sell beer, restaurants to sell food, drinkers save on beer. Currently there are complexities associated with managing the customer relations and making the discovery straightforward. To mitigate these challenges a central service could exist to bridge the peers together.

In order for the project to be successful they first need to identify their primary audiences. For this scenario it would be: restaurant owners with liquor licenses; adults over 21+ with disposable income; and finally alcohol manufactures that want to increase their products availability.

After selecting the primary audience research goals needs to be declared and questions selected for a focus group. Within the focus group there are three sub groups with their specific deliverable within the supply chain. Questions for that group need to be targeted to the task at hand.

**References**

Keller, K. (2013). *Marketing Management.*

Lind, D., Marchael, W., & Wathen, S. (2013). *Statistical Techniques in Business and Economics.* McGraw-Hill Publishing.

Mallor, J., Barnes, A., Langvardt, A., & Prenkert, J. (2014). *Business Law: The Ethical, Global, and E-Commerce Environment 16th Edition.* McGraw-Hill Education.