

Research on customer satisfaction improvement strategy of Zibo

Ruicheng Building Department Store Co., LTD

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Abstract: In contemporary China, customer satisfaction has become a focal point in the large-scale retail industry. With the diversification of social structures and the continuous development of e-commerce, Zibo Yixinlou Department Store Co., Ltd. faces new challenges and opportunities. To secure a foothold in increasingly competitive markets, the company must prioritize customer satisfaction. This study focuses on Zibo Yixinlou Department Store, analyzing issues related to store reputation, service quality, and product standards through questionnaire surveys. The analysis categorizes primary indicators from the Chinese Customer Satisfaction Index model—such as brand image, customer expectations, perceived quality, and perceived value—into nine secondary metrics. Targeted improvement strategies are proposed, including staff training, parking facility upgrades, and pricing optimization. These measures aim to enhance product offerings and services, boost customer satisfaction, and ultimately achieve sustainable business growth for Zibo Yixinlou Department Store.

Key words: Customer satisfaction; Strategies to improve customer satisfaction; Zibo Credible Building Department Store Co., LTD

1. Introduction

As vital components of modern urban commerce, large shopping malls face increasingly fierce market competition. With economic growth and improved living standards, consumer demands and behavior patterns are evolving, presenting new operational challenges for these establishments. The rapid development of e-commerce has transformed shoppers' purchasing habits and values, with greater emphasis on product quality and after-sales service. Moreover, the internet's explosive growth and the intense impact of e-commerce have driven many consumers to shop online, significantly affecting physical mall foot traffic and sales. In this context, enhancing customer satisfaction has become a crucial strategy for large malls to address challenges and regain growth momentum. Customer satisfaction not only reflects overall evaluations but also serves as a key indicator of service quality and business performance. Therefore, researching strategies to improve customer satisfaction in large shopping malls holds significant practical value and application potential for mall operators.

Therefore, for large domestic shopping malls to achieve long-term development, they must prioritize customer-centric strategies and

enhance customer satisfaction. Only through such efforts can they secure a foothold in the fiercely competitive market. This study conducts an in-depth analysis of Zibo Yixinlou Department Store's customer satisfaction levels through comprehensive research. The investigation identifies existing challenges and shortcomings in the store's service quality, leading to targeted improvement measures. These recommendations aim to elevate product and service standards, ultimately boosting both customer satisfaction and market competitiveness at Zibo Yixinlou Department Store.

While international and domestic scholars have extensively studied customer satisfaction and developed various evaluation models, China's research progress in this field remains relatively lagging. This has led to a heavy reliance on foreign-established models for developing Chinese customer satisfaction frameworks. Although studies on customer satisfaction exist across different industries, research specifically addressing service satisfaction in large-scale shopping malls remains scarce, lacking both systematic approaches and targeted focus. Therefore, this study selects Zibo Chengxinlou Department Store Co., Ltd. as the research subject to explore its customer satisfaction issues. The findings

not only contribute to theoretical contributions but also hold significant Practical implications for real-world guidance.

2. Zibo Credit Building DePARTMENT Store Co., LTD. Customer satisfaction evaluation

This PaPer utilizes a Questionnaire designed by Liu YaPing (2023)[13], with minor refinements made to the original version. The Cronbach's alPha coefficient of 0.950 in this study exceeds the 0.9 threshold, indicating strong reliability. KMO test and Bartlett's test results (0.886 and 0.0005 respectively) demonstrate good validity. Based on the Chinese Customer Satisfaction Model and tailored to Zibo Chengxinlou Mall's operational context, the Primary indicator framework includes: mall image, customer value, Perceived Quality, and Perceived value. Secondary indicators encomPass mall rePutation, staff comPeTence, and social resPonsibility initiatives under mall image; emPloyee numbers and Parking facilities under customer value; while Perceived Quality evaluates environment comfort and convenience, and Perceived value assesses Pricing levels and Promotional activities.

Questionnaire data analysis

The 100 Questionnaires that were collected effectively were summarized and summarized according to gender, age, income level and other information. The results are as follows:

In terms of whether the shoPPing mall is the first choice, most customers regard Zibo Credit Building DePARTMENT Store Co., Ltd. as the first choice, accounting for 74%, and a small number of customers do not regard the shoPPing mall as the first choice, accounting for 26%.

3. Analysis of Problems and causes of customer satisfaction

Analysis of Problems and causes in PercePtual Quality

Zibo Credit Building DePARTMENT Store Presents significant issues regarding shoPPing environment and comfort. Firstly, Product Quality is Problematic: fresh Produce contains Pesticide residues and lacks freshness; clothing items vary in Quality with outdated designs that fail to meet customer exPeCtations. Secondly, the store's hygiene conditions are concerning: suPermarket areas show inadequate cleanliness of floors, shoPPing carts, and shelves, while garments disPloyed after trying on are disorganized. Some disPlay cabinets have chaotic Product Placement and unclear Pricing labels, causing checkout confusion and negatively imPacting the shoPPing exPeRience. Thirdly, checkout efficiency remains severely

inadequate, with long Queues during Peak hours and a lack of self-checkout equipment significantly reducing customer convenience.

In terms of comfort and convenience, the mall's background music selection is Problematic. Fast-Paced, high-volume tunes dominate, disrupting customer interactions and shoPPing exPeRiences. Overly bright lighting creates stress for shoPPers, reducing their dwell time. Additionally, the signage system is inadequate, lacking clear directional markers throughout the mall. This makes it difficult for customers to locate Products, increases shoPPing costs, and negatively imPacts both satisfaction levels and sales Performance. These issues collectively weaken the mall's overall comPeTitiveness and customer satisfaction.

Analysis of Problems and causes in customer value

Zibo Yixinlou ShoPPing Mall has demonstrated notable shortcomings in both customer service Quality and Parking management. Survey data reveals the mall received low ratings of 3.44 and 3.11 Points resPeCtively in these areas. During Peak hours, Particularly on holidays, staffing shortages became evident, resulting in cashier errors, Parking difficulties for customers, and substandard sanitation – all severely imPacting shoPPers 'exPeRience. Moreover, the severe shortage of Parking sPaces exacerbated traffic congestion and safety risks in the surrounding area, while chaotic Parking of electric bicycles and Private vehicles further disrupted order. Notably, rival shoPPing destination HuiQianJia Mall has significantly imPproved customer satisfaction through scientific Parking Planning and standardized management Practices, making Zibo Yixinlou's Parking deficiencies even more glaring.

Analysis of Problems and causes in PercePtual value

Zibo Yixinlou Mall faces notable disadvantages in Pricing and Promotional strategies. Survey results indicate it scored 3.12 and 3.66 Points resPeCtively for Price comPeTitiveness and Promotional activities. Firstly, Product Prices exceed customer exPeCtations. In the aPParel sector, while Yixinlou's Quality matches comPeTitors like HuiQianJia ShoPPing Plaza, the latter's membershiP discounts and holiday Promotions reduce comParable items by 10-50 yuan, widening the Price gap and fueling customer dissatisfaction that undermines its market Position. Secondly, Yixinlou's limited Promotional formats and rePeTitive tactics—

often featuring exaggerated or ambiguous slogans—risk misleading consumers. Additionally, Promotional gifts often fall short of customer expectations, potentially damaging brand reputation. Notably, Promotions are restricted to specific holidays and follow conventional models like basic clearance sales, failing to meet evolving consumer demands. By contrast, local rival Huiqianjia Shopping Plaza has significantly boosted customer satisfaction through diverse Promotions. Its signature "Night Shopping Sessions" offer substantial discounts alongside extended hours, expanding shopping options. Customers receive greater value for their spending at equivalent costs, substantially enhancing both experience and satisfaction.

Analysis of Problems and causes in the image of shopping malls

Zibo Yixinlou Department Store scored 3.88, 3.34, and 3.31 in terms of business reputation, employee competence, and social responsibility respectively. In recent years, affected by the pandemic and the rapid rise of e-commerce, the store has prioritized short-term gains over long-term benefits to boost performance. With declining sales, the company has struggled to fulfill social responsibilities, such as delayed salary payments and reduced charitable donations. These factors have contributed to decreased customer satisfaction. Specific issues regarding the store's image are as follows: (1) Employee Competence ① During peak hours, staff may struggle to provide enthusiastic service due to work pressure or emotional fluctuations. ② The store frequently employs college student interns during busy periods. Due to insufficient training time, these temporary employees often lack product knowledge and sales skills, making them unable to effectively answer customer inquiries or complete sales tasks. (2) Social Responsibility Participation Zibo Yixinlou shows low engagement in charitable activities and lacks active involvement in social aid initiatives, failing to leave a positive impression on customers. Additionally, the store extensively uses plastic bags for product packaging and sales, demonstrating insufficient environmental responsibility and failing to fully fulfill corporate environmental obligations.

4. Customer Satisfaction Improvement Strategy of Zibo Credibility Building Department Store Co., LTD

The shopping environment serves as a vital component of commercial operations, providing not only physical spaces but also creating

comfortable, convenient, and appealing shopping experiences. A well-designed shopping environment can significantly enhance customer satisfaction and purchasing intent. To achieve this, the following optimization measures should be implemented: Firstly, in terms of environmental enhancement: Establish a comprehensive quality management system to ensure product safety; Implement localized cleaning strategies with enhanced sanitation protocols; Streamline checkout processes by increasing cash register capacity and introducing self-checkout systems; Regularly maintain hardware facilities to ensure operational reliability while ensuring stable network connectivity. Secondly, regarding comfort and convenience: Optimize route planning and signage to improve accessibility; Create an ideal shopping atmosphere through adjustable lighting, temperature control, and background music; Provide ample rest areas equipped with recreational amenities; Introduce digital shopping guides to assist customers in quickly locating products. These coordinated optimizations collectively create a comfortable, efficient, and attractive shopping space that enhances customer satisfaction and strengthens the mall's market competitiveness.

When setting prices, Zibo Credit Building Department Store must holistically consider market positioning, competitive landscape, and consumer psychology to ensure pricing covers costs while generating profits. A well-calibrated pricing strategy can boost sales volume, increase profitability, and strengthen brand image and competitiveness. Promotional activities are vital for the mall, as they drive sales, attract new customers, clear inventory, and serve as effective communication channels with consumers. These promotions may include discounts, buy-while-you-go offers, and free gifts, but must be implemented in a way that doesn't compromise overall profit margins.

As a social service hub, shopping malls must fulfill their social responsibilities to ensure long-term growth and brand reputation. First, protecting consumer rights through reliable products and services builds trust in health and safety, enhancing brand credibility and customer loyalty. Second, corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives like public welfare campaigns and charitable donations boost social recognition while boosting employee engagement. When employees feel their work impacts society, they become more dedicated, improving productivity and overall business performance. Third, CSR helps establish

Positive Public relations through community activities and environmental Projects, which attract Partners and investors. Finally, with evolving consumer values, growing consumer support for socially responsible brands makes CSR not just social contribution but a strategic business move that differentiates malls in competitive markets.

5. Conclusion

This study focuses on analyzing the factors influencing customer satisfaction at Zibo Chengxin Building Department Store Co., Ltd. Through evaluation methods, corresponding improvement measures are proposed. The paper first identifies key primary indicators affecting customer satisfaction based on the China Customer Satisfaction Index (CCSI) model, including store image, customer value, perceived quality, and perceived value. These factors are further categorized into secondary indicators: store reputation, staff competence, social responsibility fulfillment, service quality, staff numbers, store environment, product pricing, promotional activities, parking facilities and restrooms, as well as store comfort and accessibility. Subsequent questionnaire surveys analyzed data to identify issues impacting customer satisfaction. Finally, improvement strategies are designed based on identified challenges, including enhancing shopping environments, improving comfort and accessibility, and implementing differentiation strategies to strengthen corporate image.

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