
TRANSFORMING HEALTHCARE MARKETING IN NCR: A STUDY OF INTEGRATED PRACTICES

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study article is to examine the function that integrated marketing strategies play in NCR healthcare businesses. The healthcare industry is now addressing the topic of healthcare integrated marketing with great sincerity, notwithstanding its delayed start. Healthcare marketing professionals may create and execute marketing communications more consistently and successfully with the help of integrated marketing communication, which is a potent instrument. The creation of this notion has become one of the most important examples of progress in the marketing discipline, even though nothing is known about its physical or visual shape in the marketing communication process, despite its ongoing popularity. The most crucial weapon for promotion has long been thought to be advertising, and this study aims to determine exactly what factors consumers consider when choosing to visit hospitals, one of the biggest industries in both India and the rest of the globe. However, others continue to argue that the healthcare industry does not need marketing tools. Similar to other industries that rely on a combination of highly skilled professionals and technology, hospital marketers should evaluate how to promote what patients want and need. Since production and consumption of healthcare goods happen simultaneously, it is common for the producer that is, the doctor to be regarded as the promoter in this highly complex equation. The current study investigates the possibility that integrated marketing communications may be viewed as an attempt to promote in real-world settings. It also looks into the future and issues facing integrated marketing communications for healthcare businesses.

Keywords: Integrated Marketing Communications, Healthcare, Advertisement.

INTRODUCTION

Decades ago, many sectors started taking an extensive perception of marketing communication and witnessing the demand for an increased cardinal integration of their promotional tools. The contemporary period has been categorized by the fast growth of areas including sales promotion, direct marketing, and public relations that actually started challenging promotion's role as the major form of marketing communication. Various sectors started moving toward the progression of integrated marketing, which is likely to coordinate the different promotional components and other marketing deeds, which connect with a firm's end users. The underlying principle of healthcare marketing is to comprehend the actual demands of prospective patients so as to be capable of meeting those demands at the highest values. By taking all these into account, the current study deals with the role of integrated marketing practices in healthcare organizations in NCR.

INDIAN HEALTHCARE SECTOR: OVERVIEW

In India, there is the proof of large gap between first commercial hospital and the movement of corporatization. The healthcare industry is promptly transforming towards corporatization. Table 1 exhibits the movement of corporatization in the industry. Encouraging demographics, developing middle-class and increasing healthcare consumption, increased investments are some of the important key factors involved in healthcare sector of India. Across six leading states in India, NCR has an important role in developing the economy of the country. All existing service providers and the prospective players are engrossed in marketing the products in number of ways Shweta, (2015).

Hospital Groups	Appolo	Wockhardt Hospitals	Fortis Healthcare	Max Healthcare	Manipal Health Systems	Care Hospital
Number of Locations	11	8	5	1	9	11
Number of Hospitals	11	10	13	6	11	14
Number of Beds	53000	1400	1855	765	3000	2000
Coverage	All Metros	Bangalore, Mumbai and West India	North India	Delhi & NCR	South India	South and West India
Annual	779	210	100	137	-	-
Revenue (2005-06 (In Rs. Crore)						
Care Hospital	11	14	2000		-	-

Table 1: Corporate hospitals: list and number of hospitals and their spreadSource: Indian Healthcare Sector, (2014)

The Indian healthcare sector has a long history of coping with inadequate doctor-patient ratio, deficiency of medical experts, inferior healthcare communications, and inadequate expenses on health care information technology. Healthcare system here is

principally owned by private players around ratio of 70% to 80%. The development has been associated with the mix of private equity and external investments. The contribution of the public sector has been a moderate 1.1% of GDP. The integrated marketing mix for low-cost health care assistance is studied by George and Shah (2017) in order to create a comprehension of the factors met in every successful healthcare enterprises developed for the low income divisions in India.

Healthcare in India is undoubtedly considered as one of the major service sectors, with over and above 4 million people involved. The hospital services market considers as one of the most profitable parts of the Indian healthcare sector. Various scenarios such as increasing competition and costs have induced Hospital service marketing, which involves connecting patients, practitioners, and hospitals in communal relationships. By employing the appropriate balance of integrated marketing approach, it is possible for hospital service marketers to make sure that their marketing attempts bring them targeted result (Shrimali and Motwani 2014).

ROLE OF INTEGRATED MARKETING IN HEALTHCARE SECTOR

Integrated marketing has now turned out to be more significant than ever before and concentrating on the user and their necessities entail a more incorporated view with a large stress on digital, traditional and the material world all performing together. Integrated marketing has transformed from being a consumer-centric practice to a consumer-facing procedure and is the past, present and future of promotion. This kind of marketing contributes to develop brand awareness and equitableness in order for individuals to identify, trust and eventually prefer one's brand over competitors. It assures that a message is being passed on through various platforms in line with a particular strategy. An integrated marketing method is essential to provide the right message, at the right time, to the right users and exactly in the right place. Marketing can obviously act as the voice of healthcare sector. On account of the current global transformations in the healthcare sector, healthcare marketing has been considered as paramount significance for survival and development of the majority of hospitals. Marketing healthcare services denotes granting access to the healthcare services to the various groups of the users in such a way that they obtain quality services, at a satisfactory fee configuration, on right time and in a right way. In the perspective of healthcare, social marketing makes an effort to intensify healthy performances in a population by employing proven marketing methods used to endorse commercial services and products McCormack and Evans (2008). The integrated marketing is considered as the set of tools adopted by a hospital to effectively report to clients of the values of its products. A large number of the individuals are now of the belief that their preference over opting a hospital was at least as considerable as that of their general practitioner, and would possibly change practitioner if doing so would give them access to the healthcare of their preference Ahmad, (2016).

IMPORTANCE OF INTEGRATED MARKETING IN CONTEMPORARY HEALTHCARE SECTOR

As increasingly customers look for information in terms of their health and wellbeing, a consumerism trend in the healthcare sector has emerged. It becomes usual for healthcare companies to directly promote medicines and healthcare to and correspond with consumers. Interactive marketing complement traditional marketing strategies. The most important purpose of healthcare marketing is to promote patients to be well-informed regarding their treatment options and to commence the discourse between patients and practitioners. As Ibson, (2014) emphasized the healthcare sector must be a strong advocator of patient-practitioner discussions. Transformations in the marketplace paved the new way for marketing professionals. After all, healthcare has finally attained the third stage in the growth of the marketing function. The growth of integrated systems introduced a new method in pre-managed-care advertising, promptly purchasing groups increased in significance. The customer has been rediscovered and the direct- to-

consumer trend was a consequence of these advancements. As consumers become well-informed, marketing became progressively more integrated into the processes of healthcare organizations. Also, the growth of the Internet as a means of healthcare information stimulated the rise of consumerism. Recently empowered customers were adopting an increasingly influential role in restructuring the global healthcare system. PR, publicity, advertising, lobbying, fund raising programs are the different tool adopted for promoting a service in hospitals as pointed out by Rahil, (2014). Seeing that the number of policies increases in intensity, integrated marketing started gaining the consideration of more prospective customers. Integrated marketing in healthcare enables patients to get hold of wherever they believe most contented. In general, it provides the customer choice: an option to listen, connect and acquire what they wish for, when they need and where they yearn for. Marketing is absolutely not the only managing department, which has witnessed vast changes in its contribution in healthcare management, but indeed it is one of the most notorious departments since its role is being concerned. Regardless of having considerable literature on the progression of the global healthcare sector, limited studies exist to exhibit that integrated marketing techniques are being used by healthcare organizations beyond the conventional techniques the sector has been familiar with. There are gaps in existing information on the multiplicity of service providers and healthcare services accessible and their relative effect on healthcare integrated marketing. This paper contributes to the theoretical and practical learning as being one of the primary efforts to explore experientially the effect of the integrated marketing in healthcare organization. Along with identifying the important roles of integrated marketing in enhancing the healthcare service and patient satisfaction, this study includes, refines and expands the experiential work carried out in the field of healthcare integrated marketing in NCR.

The current study intends to look into the role of integrated marketing practices in healthcare organizations in NCR. Having taken a long time to get initiated, healthcare sector is currently dealing with the subject of healthcare integrated marketing very sincerely. Where, businesses are investing large amounts in marketing of products to build brand equity and to progress the focused brand image of products amongst customers, in order that their product is the highest wanted products amongst customers. Advertisement has always been regarded as the most important tool employed for promotion and an effort by this research has been carried out as what accurately do customers bear in mind whilst making their decision in visiting hospitals which is one the largest sector in India and also worldwide. Nonetheless, some still debate that marketing tools are unnecessary to the healthcare sector. Like other sectors that depend on a blend of technology and exceedingly specialized experts, hospital marketers should assess marketing what patients demand with what they wish for. Healthcare marketing is a quite complicated equation since most frequently the producer, i.e., the doctor himself is considered as the promoter as production and consumption occurs concurrently.

CONCLUSIONS

As the quantity and intensity of policies increased, more potential clients began to take integrated marketing into consideration. Patients can contact healthcare providers wherever they are most satisfied thanks to integrated marketing. Generally speaking, it gives the consumer a choice: the ability to hear them out, establish a connection, and obtain what they want, when they need it, and where they want it. While not the only managing department that have seen significant shifts in its position in healthcare management, marketing is undoubtedly one of the most infamous when it comes to this aspect of its work. Although there is a wealth of literature regarding the development of the global healthcare industry, there is a dearth of research demonstrating that healthcare firms are utilizing integrated marketing strategies in addition to the traditional approaches that the industry is accustomed to. The amount of available data on the variety of healthcare service providers and services that are accessible, as well as their

respective impacts on healthcare integrated marketing, is lacking. As one of the main attempts to investigate the impact of integrated marketing in healthcare organizations through experience, this research adds to both theoretical and practical learning.

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