

STUDY OF CONSUMER BEHAVIOR ON TINTING WALL PAINT PRODUCT PURCHASING PROCESS: CASE STUDY AT RKM SOEKARNO HATTA, BANDUNG

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Abstract: *Despite the inventory efficiency and unlimited color, the investment in a paint tinting system is quite expensive. Many unproductive tinting machines made PT XYZ need to improve its strategy in marketing tinting paint. This study aims to understand consumer behavior in purchasing tinting wall paint and the factors considered in choosing a product and place of purchase. The research results are expected to be a reference to PT XTZ to improve its marketing strategy for tinting wall paint. The methodology used in this study was qualitative research with Primary data obtained from observations, interviews, and surveys of respondents who purchased tinting wall paint at RKM Soekarno Hatta Bandung. Meanwhile, secondary data were obtained from a number of books, the internet, and other data that supported this research. The results showed that homeowners dominated consumers of tinting wall paint, but intermediate consumers such as contractors bought a more significant amount. Homeowners, family members, and intermediate consumers both have a role in selecting tinting wall paint products. Quality is the main factor in choosing tinting wall paint. Meanwhile, in deciding where to buy paint, the completeness of the product is the primary consideration. The colorist, which functioned as a salesperson and tinting machine operator has a significant role in influencing purchasing decisions that occur in stores.*

Keywords: *consumer behavior, tinting wall paint, modern building material outlets, marketing mix*

Introduction

According to the GEF UNEP-IPEN Lead Paint Project 2019 Baseline Report, Indonesian paint and coating industry growth rate is 6% annually for the past five consecutive years. The government programs, such as developing 10 million new housings for middle-low income communities, also push the demand for paint and coatings. With the variety of paint products on the market, consumers need to learn which products are suitable before purchasing. The paint consumers can be the homeowners as final consumers or contractors as intermediate consumers. Both types of consumers are also related and can influence each other. To develop the right strategy, paint manufacturers and retailers need to study consumer behavior when selecting and seeking information about paint and who plays a role in purchasing decisions.

PT XYZ in Tinting Paint Business

Paint tinting machine technology has been present in Indonesia since the 90s. The use of a tinting machine can provide operational advantages such as ease of stock and warehouse management and produce unlimited colors. The tinting system for paint companies requires a significant investment in providing machines, point of sale booths, and colorist, who act as salesperson and tinting machine operators.

PT. XYZ started adopting the tinting system in 2007 and currently operates around 250 tinting machines under two brands, Brand A & Brand B. This number is relatively small compared to the number of registered outlets which almost reached 20,000. As a comparison, PT Propan Raya in July 2020 claimed to have 3000 tinting machines throughout Indonesia. This number is also still small compared to the estimated number of building shops in Indonesia, which reached 100,000.

Brand A is the leading brand of PT XYZ, which targeted the middle class. When the first-time tinting machines developed, the target consumers were the upper class. To anticipate this, PT XYZ launched Brand B as a more premium brand. By 2020, all tinting machines generated an average sale of 87% of the target. Many of PT XYX's tinting machines generate low sales, even less than the operating costs.

RKM is a West Java regional building materials supermarket chain based in Bandung, with the average sales of PT XYZ's products are greater than other stores. In RKM Soekarno Hatta, Brand A and Brand B tinting machines come together, generating an average of 90% of the sales target. Among the five paint companies with tinting machines at RKM Soekarno Hatta, PT XYZ's sales rank third. With 2 tinting machines and 2 colorists, PT XYZ expects higher revenue compared to other brands which only have one machine and one colorist.

Literature Review

The field of consumer behavior is the study of individuals, groups, or organizations and the processes they use to select, secure, use, and dispose of products, services, experiences, or ideas to satisfy needs and the impacts that these processes have on the consumer and society (Mothersbaugh, Hawkins, 2010, 6). The study of consumer behavior draws upon social science disciplines of anthropology, psychology, sociology, and economics (Dadhe, 2014, 38).

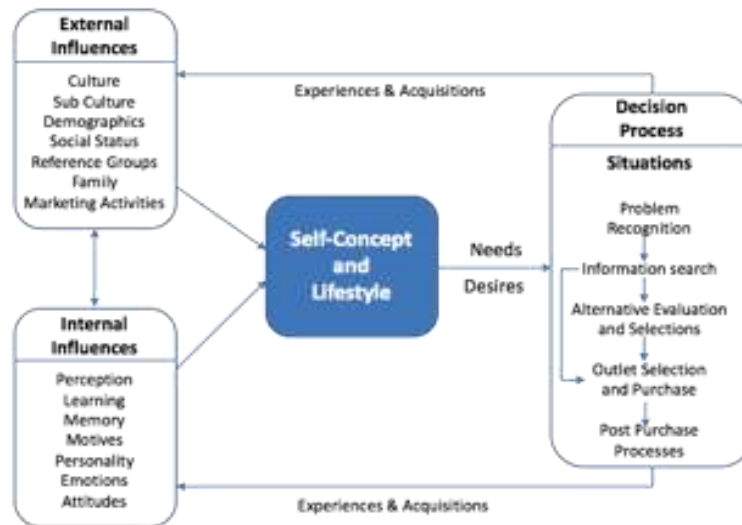


Figure 1: The Model of Consumer Behavior (Source: Mothersbaugh, Hawkins, 2010)

Factors that Influence Consumer Behavior

Culture

Culture is the complex whole that includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, customs, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by humans as members of society (Mothersbaugh, Hawkins, 2010, 40). Culture is the most fundamental determinant of a person's wants and behavior (Kotler, 2001, 88).

Houses and buildings are tangible cultural products. Customs and culture significantly influence the house's shape and materials and the timing of building and renovating houses. Indonesians tend to beautify their homes when welcoming celebrations or holidays, one of which is by repainting them.

Subculture

A subculture is a segment of a larger culture whose members share distinguishing values and patterns of behavior. The unique values and patterns of behavior shared by subculture group members are based on the social history of the group as well as its current situation (Mothersbaugh, Hawkins, 2010, 148).

In Indonesia, there are many subcultures, both based on ethnicity and religion. Therefore, paint companies & retailers need to study these subcultures to determine consumption patterns and who is involved in decision making.

Demographic

Demographics describe a population in terms of its size, structure, and distribution. Size refers to the number of individuals in society. Structure describes the society in terms of age, income, education, and occupation. Distribution refers to the physical location of individuals in terms of geographic region and rural, suburban, and urban location (Mothersbaugh, Hawkins, 2010, 63).

Based on the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) data, Indonesia is currently experiencing a demographic bonus, the phenomenon of increasing the number of the working-age population,

which brings benefits to the economy. The demographic bonus is dominated by millennials aged 20-40 years. In 2021, it will amount to around 31.92%, and in 2022, it will increase again to 32% of the total population of Indonesia. This condition is an opportunity for the development of the property industry, increasing the demand for paint products.

Social Status

Social classes are relatively homogeneous and enduring divisions in society. They are hierarchically ordered, and their members share similar values, interests, and behavior (Kotler, 2001, 89). The relatively high price of tinting paint targets the middle and upper class. Based on the author's chats with several consumers, buying tinting paint is a prestigious thing and provides a pleasant experience.

Reference Group

According to Turner (2005), Group references have the power to persuade people because they have power, power is the capacity for influence, and that influence is based on the control of resources valued or desired by others. The customers for decorative paints exhibit dissonance buying behavior (Kochukalam C. A., Mathews S., 2016). Since the product (paint) is a semi-technical and infrequently purchased nature, consumers can keep very limited knowledge about paints. So, when they want to have their house painted, they go to experts who keep knowledge about paint and painting technology for taking advice from them. Architects, engineers, paint dealers, painters, and company representatives are the experts in this industry.

Family

Family plays a significant role in paint purchasing decisions. This is portrayed in a study conducted by MARS Indonesia:

Tabel-107. Penentu Pembelian Merek Cat Tembok Berdasarkan Usia dan SES (%)

	Total	USIA			SES			
		25 - 34 tahun	35 - 44 tahun	45 - 50 tahun	A	B	C	D/E
Saya sendiri	67,2	67,5	63,4	75,2	64,7	80,4	58,3	65,0
Keluarga	29,8	28,9	33,6	22,7	31,1	17,9	38,6	35,0
Pemilik/Pejawai toko/Sales	1,9	2,4	0,5	4,0	2,9	1,1	1,6	0,0
Tukang Bangunan	1,3	1,0	1,9	0,6	2,7	0,2	0,6	0,0
Orang lain yang punya pengalaman	1,1	1,5	0,9	0,4	0,1	1,9	1,7	0,0
Kontraktor	0,2	0,0	0,6	0,0	0,1	0,0	0,7	0,0

Sumber: MARS Indonesia
 www.marsindonesia.com

Figure 2: Wall paint brand purchasing decision-maker based on age and social class (Source: MARS Indonesia, 2017)

According to Dadhe (2014), family is perhaps the strongest reference group for most people because of its intimacy and relative permanence. A strong association means that individuals within this group will influence each other.

Marketing Activities

The American Marketing Association (2017) defines marketing as the process of planning and executing conception, pricing, promotion, and distribution of ideas, goods, and services to create exchanges that satisfy individual and organizational objectives.

Both paint producers and retailers carry out marketing activities to attract consumers. Paint producers communicate their brand through above-the-line and below-the-line activities, in order to be in the minds of consumers before they come to the store, but once consumers come to the store, the store also significantly influences what products customers end up purchasing.

Perceptions

Perception is a process that begins with consumer exposure and attention to marketing stimuli and ends with consumer interpretation (Mothersbaugh, Hawkins, 2010, 272). According to Zeithaml (1998), consumer perception is a perceived value by the consumers, an overall assessment of a product or service. By providing superior values to consumers, business enterprises could achieve a competitive advantage, making perceived values by the consumers as the new strategic imperatives (Lu & Hsiao et al., 2010).

Learning and Memory

The way consumer learning is in various ways, which can be classified into two categories, High-involvement learning and Low-involvement learning (Hawkins, et al., 2010, 329). High-involvement learning occurs when an individual is motivated to acquire the information or learn the material. Low involvement occurs when an individual only has little or no motivation for the information or message. Memory is critical to learning because it consists of two related components: Short term and long-term memory.

Paint & coatings were considered a low-involvement product for the end consumer as more consumers left purchasing decisions to intermediate consumers such as contractors and developers. Homeowners leave it to the contractor because they think all paint brands at the same price will have the same function and quality, the contractor will better understand which paint product is suitable for their home. With the increasing variety of products offered by paint manufacturers as well as massive marketing and branding activities, the involvement of final consumers is getting higher.

Motive, Personality, Emotion, & Attitudes

Motivation is the reason for the behavior. A motive is a construct representing an unobservable inner force that stimulates and compels a behavioral response and provides specific direction to that response (Mothersbaugh, Hawkins, 2010, 354). The motivation of paint purchase could be biogenic such as discomfort with the house condition, or psychogenic such as the need for recognition, esteem, or belonging by owning a nice house.

Like individuals, brands also have personalities, and an individual likely to choose a brand whose personalities match their own and pleasing them. Marketers design and position products to both arouse and reduce emotions. Advertisements include emotion-arousing material to increase attention, degree of processing, remembering, and brand preference through classical conditioning or direct evaluation (Mothersbaugh, Hawkins, 2010, 377). An attitude is a person's enduring favorable or unfavorable evaluations, emotional feelings, and action tendencies toward some object or idea (Kotler, 2001, 96).

Consumer Buying Decision Process

Kotler divides the roles in purchasing as follows (Kotler, 2001) in Table 1.

Table 1: Roles in buying decisions. (Source: Kotler, 2001)

Roles	Explanation
Initiator	Suggests the idea of buying the product or service
Influencer	The person whose view or advice influences the decision
Decider	Decides whether to buy, what to buy, how to buy, or where to buy
Buyer	Makes the actual purchase
User	Consumes or uses the product or service

Besides the five roles already mentioned, Hawkins also mentioned information gatherer as the person who has expertise and interest in a particular purchase.

In deciding to buy a product, consumers usually pass the stages of the buying decision process.

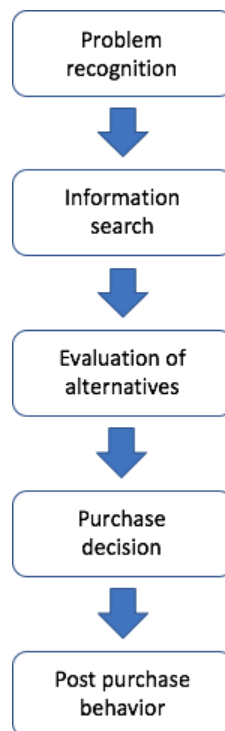


Figure 3: Five stages of buying decision process (Kotler, 2001)

Although the model implies that consumers pass sequentially through all five stages in buying a product, consumers sometimes skip or reverse some stages.

Problem Recognition

The buying process starts when the buyer recognizes a problem or need that can be triggered by internal stimuli or external stimuli (Kotler, 2001, 98). Internal stimuli refer to a personal perception experienced by the consumer, while external stimuli include outside influences such as advertising or suggestion for other people.

Information Search

At this stage, consumers who have recognized a particular problem or need are likely to seek information, both internally and externally. The consumer usually receives the most information from commercial (marketer-dominated) sources, although the most influential information comes from personal sources (Kotler, 2001,98)

Evaluation of Alternatives

In the alternative evaluation stage, consumers evaluate all product and brand choices based on the attributes they consider important to meet the required benefits. Knowing that consumers pay the most attention to attributes that deliver the benefits they seek, many successful marketers segment their markets according to the attributes that are salient to different consumer groups (Kotler, 2001,99).

Purchase Decision

According to Dadhe (2014), Consumer buying behavior is determined by the level of "involvement" required to make a purchase decision. This is the stage where the consumer chooses a buying alternative. This choice includes the store, the product, the package, the method of purchase, and so on. The purchase actually takes place on this stage after the consumer has evaluated all alternatives and identified the value it will provide.

Post Purchase Behavior

Post-purchase behavior is the final stage in the consumer's decision process when customers judge whether they are satisfied or dissatisfied with a purchase. Marketers must monitor post-purchase satisfaction, post-purchase actions, and post-purchase product uses (Kotler, 2001, 101). According to Nelson (1996), the post-purchase behavior phase is also critical, because customers will share their experiences, good or bad, with other customers. And with the way information spreads through social media, that can be really helpful or hurtful to the marketing campaign.

Methodology

The methodology used in this study was qualitative research. Qualitative research is used in social science to help draw conclusions about the topic and relies on observation and inferences. Qualitative researchers study behavior naturalistically and holistically. They try to understand multiple dimensions and layers of reality (Johnson, 2014, 85).

Qualitative research encompasses a variety of methods that can be applied in a flexible manner, to enable respondents to reflect upon and express their views or to observe their behavior. It seeks to encapsulate the behavior, experiences, and feelings of respondents in their own terms and context (Malhotra, 2006). According to Sutopo (2006, 9), data collection methods in qualitative research are generally grouped into two types of methods, namely interactive and non-interactive techniques. Interactive methods include interviews and participant observation, while non-interactive methods include non-participant observation, questionnaire techniques, document notes, and non-participation.

Data collection was carried out with both interactive and non-interactive techniques. Primary data were obtained from observations, interviews, and surveys of respondents who purchased tinting wall paint at RKM Soekarno Hatta Bandung in the period of August-Dec 2020. The number of respondents is 100 customers from a total population of approximately 2000 customers.

Secondary data were obtained from several books, the internet, and other data that supported this research. The data obtained were analyzed by first classifying consumers, whether final consumers or intermediary consumers. Then the author analyzes the behavior of each type of consumer in purchasing tinting wall paint.

Findings

Finding from observation & interviews

According to PT XTZ colorist at RKM Soekarno Hatta, homeowners dominate tinting paint consumers, but intermediate consumers buy in larger quantities and more frequently. The peak season of homeowners consumers was during the fasting month; consumers repaint their homes to prepare for the Eid Al Fitr feast. Meanwhile, contractor consumers' peak season was at the end of the year with many corporate and government projects

Very few architects purchase paint directly from the store because they usually delegate the budget plans and project execution to the contractor. Most painters make purchases in a small amount because the paint that was bought before by their superior was not enough, they did not make any purchase decision. Homeowners' consumers usually come with their spouses and children. They come to the store to buy various building finishing needs that require design and color decisions. Some consumers first discuss with the contractor or painter the required paint specifications and brand recommendations.

Colorists have a significant role in sales because all purchasing decisions are mainly obtained from consulting with colorists. Colorists are required to master all brand's tinting machines to help consumers of other brands whose colorists are on their day off. However, the absence of a colorist can make the company lose the opportunity to acquire consumers who do not yet decide which brand to buy. The service process at the tinting booth, including consultation, color selection, and paint mixing, can take an average of 30 to 45 minutes. When serving customers during peak hours, the colorist may lose the opportunity to serve other customers who come simultaneously. Still, during low hours the colorist cannot make an offer to prospective customers. The colorist records all sales in an order list containing transaction date, customer name, contact, and a sample of each tinting result. Two of the five companies at RKM Soekarno Hatta already use digital databases; meanwhile, PT XYZ & 2 other companies still use manual data.

Finding from questionnaire

Among the 100 respondents, 63% of them were homeowners. meanwhile 37% are intermediate consumers, consisting of 25% contractors, 6% architects & 6% painters. The table below shows the demographic profiles of the respondents:

Table 2: Demographic profile of respondents. (Source: Author)

	<i>Homeowners</i>	<i>Intermediate Consumers</i>
<i>Gender</i>		
<i>Male</i>	44	36
<i>Female</i>	19	1

Age		
<i>Below 25 years old</i>	4	1
<i>25-35 years old</i>	16	16
<i>35-45 years old</i>	28	17
<i>46 years old or more</i>	15	3
Marital Status		
<i>Single</i>	8	
<i>Married with children</i>	51	
<i>Married with no child</i>	2	
<i>Empty Nester</i>	2	
Monthly Expenditure		
<i>Below IDR 3 million</i>	4	
<i>IDR 3 million - 7 million</i>	26	
<i>IDR 7 million - 10 million</i>	27	
<i>More than 10 million</i>	6	

73% of the homeowner respondents & 70% of the intermediate consumer respondents purchase wall paint for repainting projects. Most homeowners (48%) repaint their house in the period of 1-3 years. 70% of them repaint the house to make it more comfortable.

Most homeowner respondents are married with children (81%). Both husband and wife have the role of initiating the house repainting. In making paint color decisions, wives have the biggest role, followed by husbands and children. Meanwhile, the husband decided to choose the type and brand of paint, accompanied by the role of the wife, which was also quite significant, and the role of the child, which was very minimal.

Most home-owner consumers decide which paint brand to buy after looking around the store (61.9%). In comparison, intermediate consumers are predominantly aware of what brand to buy before coming to the store (62.2%). Contractors tend to be loyal to one brand but may buy another brand at the client's request, or the product to be purchased is not available.

Stores are the primary source of information about paint, especially from colorists and brochures, despite the decision-making process for purchasing tinting wall paint begins when consumers receive information about the product before coming to the store. The Source of information outside the store for homeowners is mainly obtained from electronic media and the internet. Meanwhile, intermediate consumers get more information from their colleagues.

In choosing tinting wall paint products, quality is a top priority for both homeowners and intermediate consumers. Color choice is the second important factor for homeowners, while intermediate consumers are more concerned with price than color choices. In choosing a place to shop, product completeness is essential for both homeowners and intermediary consumers. Competitive pricing and promotions are considered more important by intermediate consumers. Likewise, online ordering is preferred by intermediate consumers because they were already familiar with the products compared to home-owner consumers. Finally, distance is considered

quite important, but consumers are willing to go further to a store with a complete product selection.

Data Interpretation

Below are the Buying roles in the tinting wall paint purchasing process.

Table 3: Buying Role. (Source: Kotler, 2001. modified by author)

Roles	Person
Initiator	- Homeowners, both husbands, and wives - Institution
Influencer	- Colorist as the most significant influencer
Decider	- Homeowners, with a more significant role on husband - Contractors - Institution
Buyer	- Homeowners - Contractors
User	- Contractors apply the products, homeowners, and institutions as final consumer

The figure below shows the various purchasing processes. The author divides the final consumers into household and institutional consumers. Some household consumers use the services of architects, but very few architects purchase paint directly from the store. The architect will delegate the budget plans and project execution to the contractor. Household consumers who do not use the services of an architect can also choose whether to leave all work and materials purchasing to the contractor or shop for building materials by themselves. All building materials used in a project are based on mutual agreement between the contractor and the homeowner.

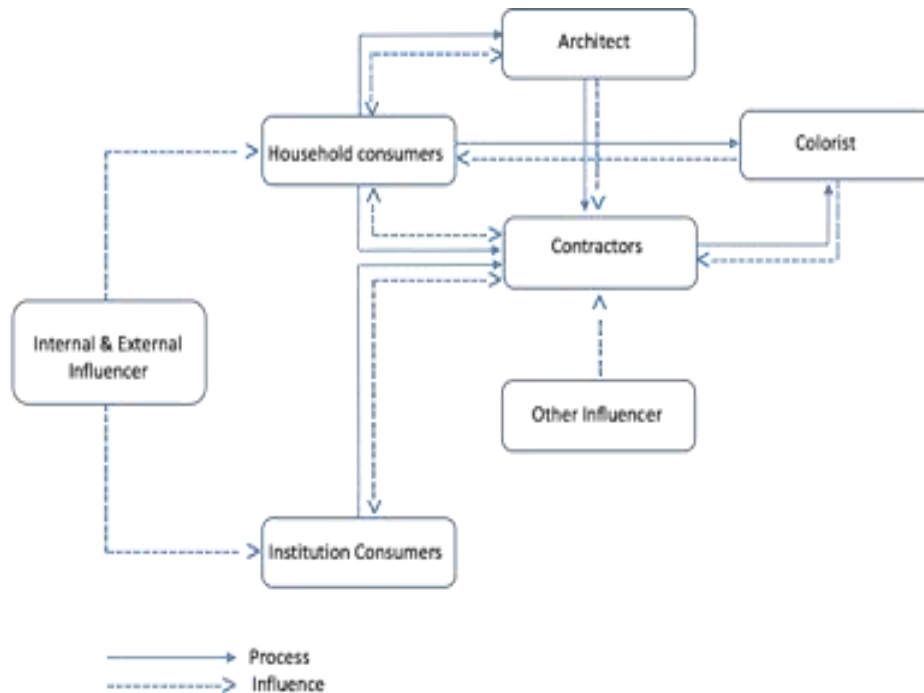


Figure 4: Tinting Paint Product Purchasing Model

Business Solution

As the alternative solution, the author formulates several things based on the marketing mix theory. Based on consumer behavior and company objectives, a marketing mix is developed next out of four ingredients, called the four P's: Product, Place (that is, channels and institution), Promotion, and Price (McCarthy, 1960, 10). Next, Bernard Booms and Mary Bitner built a model consisting of seven P's (Booms, B. and Bitner, M. 1981) by adding "People" and "process".

Product

Product quality is the most important attribute in choosing tinting paint both for homeowners and intermediate consumers. Therefore, PT XYZ must maintain the quality of its products. Excellent actual product quality must be supported by good perceived quality. Perceived quality can be defined as "consumer's judgment about a product's overall excellence or superiority" (Zeithaml, 1988, 3). According to Aaker (1991), Perceived quality will directly influence purchase decisions and brand loyalty, especially when a buyer is not motivated or able to conduct a detailed analysis.

Price

Homeowners are willing to pay more for better-quality products. They tend to purchase premium products due to their higher perceived quality. PT XYZ can apply a competitive price strategy by determining an equal competitor product to determine the right price. For intermediate consumers, price is an important factor as it affects project margins. PT XYZ can offer volume discounts to loyal customers. Price alterations can be made by the manufacturers in order to attract the buyers in the form of discount, allowances etc (Dadhe, 2015, 46).

Place

According to Dadhe (2015), place is the combination of decisions relating to marketing channels, storage facility, inventory control, location, transportation & warehousing. To market tinting paint products, paint companies can choose a large modern outlet that offers complete products as well as a central building materials shop area where there are many traditional building shops in one area. Most homeowners determine which paint products to buy after coming to the store, and the store is the main source of information about the product to be purchased. The paint company must ensure that the products in the shop are properly displayed, and the tinting booth is visible as soon as a potential customer enters the store.

Promotion

Promotion includes advertising, public relations, and consumer promo, & trade promo. Both homeowners & intermediate consumers mostly seek information about paint products in the store, so that paint company should focus their advertising on the point of sales materials and instore branding such as wall signs. More than 30% of the homeowners seek information through search engines, so those paint companies should do targeted search engine optimization and search engine marketing. Public relations activities that can be carried out include publishing product innovations, good corporate governance, and CSR activities. The company could also endorse some reputable architects, interior designers, mural artists, and other experts. Promotion, specifically consumer promo, is considered somewhat important by both homeowners and intermediate consumers, with higher importance by intermediate consumers. Paint companies can provide volume discounts to intermediate consumers to make them more loyal. Free merchandise could be given to the construction workers. Meanwhile, most homeowners repaint their homes in 1-3 years. Companies can provide a “consumer get consumer” program to encourage consumers to promote the product to their colleagues & family. Trade sales promotions could encourage retailers to sell more of the company’s products. Paint companies can provide trade promos in the form of higher margins, funds to support store promotion costs, as well as gifts for the owner or person in charge of the store.

People

According to the questionnaire, the colorist is the primary information source and influencer for homeowners and intermediate consumers. Colorists have a very significant role in maintaining good relationships with existing consumers and acquiring new consumers. The company must have a standard that applies to all colorists in each store to maintain the service level. These standards are maintained by ongoing evaluation and training. According to Harvard Business Review (2013), the successful salesperson understands and appeals to the emotional, political, and subconscious decision-maker. A sales training program should not solely educate salespeople about features, functions, and business benefits but also explain the psychological reasons customers buy and provide practical, real-world examples on how to incorporate the elements of customer behavior into a winning sales strategy.

Process

According to the blog.hurree.co, process describes a series of actions that are taken in delivering the product or service to the customer. Colorists are not allowed to use cell phones during working hours. Given the online sales opportunity, store principals and paint companies may review this policy. Colorists may be allowed to use cell phones when not serving customers in stores to establish relationships with customers online, especially for project customers with

large purchases. They could also create a digital customer database based on the existing written customer data so that the marketing and selling team could analyze the data.

Physical Evidence

This element of the marketing mix will distinguish a company from its competitors. Physical evidence can be used to charge a premium price for a service and establish a positive experience (Dadhe, 2015, 48). The tinting booth is the main attraction of potential buyers as soon as they enter the store. Therefore, the company must ensure that the booth has an attractive and neat design. Based on the questionnaire results, color cards and brochures are the primary sources of color inspiration and product information. These selling tools must always be available in good condition. The company can also provide a sample panel of paint applications so that potential buyers can see the application results.

Conclusion

Based on the results of observations and questionnaires, consumers of tinting wall paint at RKM Soekarno Hatta are dominated by homeowners, but intermediate consumers generate more revenue. Both husband and wife have a role in being the initiator of house repainting, with the wife's decision on color selection. In contrast, the husband's choice of paint type and brand is dominated. Children are pretty involved in color selection and very little involved in choosing paint type and brand. All building materials used in a project, including paint, are based on mutual agreement between the contractor and the homeowner. If homeowners decide to buy the paint on their own, they will consider the input of the contractor or painter.

Quality is the main factor to consider when choosing a tinting wall paint. Meanwhile, product completeness is the main factor in choosing a place to shop. Stores are the primary source of information about paint, especially from colorists and brochures. In addition, information from outside the store is obtained from the internet and advertisements in electronic media. Colleagues are also sources of information for intermediate consumers.

To overcome the many unproductive tinting machines and increase sales at RKM Soekarno Hatta, the researcher suggests four strategies formulated based on the marketing mix: (1) market development, (2) product development, (3) people development, and (4) process improvement. Market development is carried out by mapping distribution areas as well as holding consumer promos and trade promos. Product development is carried out by maintaining product quality, improving perceived quality, and involving consumers in developing new products. People development is carried out focusing on developing colorist skills by making guidelines, training, and reward & punishment programs. Process improvement is carried out by creating a digital consumer database and involving colorists in approaching potential customers outside the store.

Further research is needed to analyze consumer behavior in traditional outlets, consumers in rural areas, barriers that prevent consumers from choosing tinting wall paint, and brand preference.

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