

Marketing program design - the case of K Smart Cat Toilet

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Abstract: Under the background of rapid economic development and the expanding pet-keeping population, the demand for pet supplies from pet-keeping families continues to rise, and related companies continue to develop pet supplies that meet consumer's demand and at the same time are in line with the development of product intelligence. By focusing on a leading brand of pet supplies, the article analyses the macro and micro environments of the pet industry in which K Smart Cat Toilet is currently located, conducts an STP analysis of this favourable environmental background, and designs the marketing plan for K Smart Cat Toilet using 4P theory.

Keywords: Smart Cat Toilet; STP Analysis; 4P Theory; Marketing Programme

1. Introduction

With the domestic pet economy rapid development, the scale of pet industry has been expanding, pet products are gradually progressing towards smartness and pet owners are more willing to invest costs and time to purchase smart products. Newly launched K Smart Cat Toilet has attracted a wide range of consumers. This paper proposes a marketing plan for the K Smart Cat Toilet to respond to the changing environment and create greater benefits.

2. Environmental analysis

2.1 Macro environment

The Pet Industry Blue Book: 2023 China Pet Industry Development Report shows that the global pet products market continued to grow at a CAGR of 9.4% during the period of 2018-2023. Although the growth rate in the next five years is expected to slow down as the impact of COVID-19 epidemics lessens, inflation and other reasons, the global pet market is expected to increase to \$216.5 billion in 2028.

Through analyzing different categories of pet consumer preferences and new trends in services and channels, it can be seen that the pet cat-related industry will become the biggest proportion. Meanwhile, pet home appliances are rapidly developing as a segment of the pet economy. Developing to 2023, the pet smart home appliance industry presents a new development trend.

2.2 Micro-environment

In recent years, the pet-keeping population has been expanding, and highly educated, middle- and high-income people have become the main force of a new generation of pet owners, who have a high degree of acceptance of smart devices and a more modern lifestyle. Smart pet-keeping hardware will become a major trend in pet consumption upgrade. More than half of pet owners plan to increase their budgets for smart products that can improve the convenience of their life.

According to consumer demand, smart pet products will allow pets to develop healthier habits while reducing the stress of frequent care by owners. Consumers want to use technology to make pet ownership less difficult and spend more time interacting with their pets.

3. STP Analysis

3.1 Segmenting

Based on cat-owning households, it can be divided into single-cat households and multi-cat households. While based on the size of cats, it can be divided into large-sized cats and small-sized cats. According to the interest segmentation, the market can be divided into people who have short-term travelling or need smart cat toilet and others. Based on geographic segmentation, the market can be divided into domestic and foreign markets, the foreign market can be further subdivided into the U.S. market and other markets. According to the income factor

segmentation, the consumer population can be divided into middle and high-income people and low-income people.

3.2 Targeting

According to the cat family situation and the size of the cat, single-cat family or their cats have small size can consider small volume and lower price K Smart Cat Toilet. The larger and cost-effective PURA MAX is recommended for both multi-cat households and households with larger cats.

According to the segmentation of interests, K Smart Cat Toilet targets the market for people who have short-term trips and need unattended smart devices which can take care of their cats, or people who have a demand for smart functions and need to free their hands.

According to market research, about 70% of families in the U.S. have pets while the Chinese national spiritual demand for pet companionship is becoming more and more prominent and the size of the pet consumption market is rapidly increasing. K smart cat toilet chooses to develop the US market and the Chinese market simultaneously.

K Smart Cat Toilet select middle and upper income group market. It has a high investment in technological research and development, so the price is high. This segment of the population can afford to pay and they are busy at work. Temporary business trips and other situations occur from time to time, K Smart Cat Toilet can help them to solve the problem of unattended cat toilet cleaning.

According to its own resources and strength, K Smart Cat Toilet should adopt focused marketing strategies. Targeting the above market segments, the strategy can help K focus on understanding the needs of customers in the market segments, improve the quality of their own product features, and improve customer satisfaction.

3.3 Positioning

Market positioning is the position^[1] of the company and its products in the target market^[1](Li, Y.H., 2022). Understanding customer needs is the basis of market positioning for companies^[2](Zhou, W., 2023). K Smart Cat Toilet won the NO.1 sales of pet cleaning category on network. K adopts a number of exclusive research and development of high technology to provide a comfortable experience for cats and their owners.

By analyzing K's current position in the industry and the development trend, other brands want to enter the market is more difficult, the threat to K is small. K Smart Cat Toilet in the industry has reached a certain scale of operation, the new entrants to enter the industry with a smaller scale will be in a disadvantageous position in terms of cost. Meanwhile, the smart cat toilet industry has higher investment requirements and higher barriers to entry for new entrants. K Smart Cat Toilet has formed a good and stable sales channel through online website and online shop, offline physical pet care institutions and pet hospitals and open up sales channels overseas, which further increases the difficulty of new entrants. As K has formed its own brand advantage and occupied a considerable share of the market, new entrants have to spend a lot of money to establish their own good corporate image and product reputation.

By analyzing the threat of alternatives to K Smart Cat Toilet, it can be seen that the traditional manual cat litter box as an alternative is low-functioning and inconvenient to use. While the people's living standards continue to improve, more and more people are willing to buy high-quality, high-performance pet cleaning and care products for pets, improve the quality of life of pets. By referring to the evaluation of different brands of smart cat toilets, it can be seen that K Smart Cat Toilet is significantly higher than other products of the same type in terms of cost-effectiveness. Consumers need to pay a higher conversion cost if they want to buy other similar products. The number of competitors in the industry is large and competitive, but K accounts for a larger share of the market both online and offline, and is more powerful and competitive.

Market positioning is not only to match the different needs of the market, but also through self-analysis of strengths and weaknesses to capture the deep psychological needs of the target consumer groups, and ultimately matching consumer groups with the value of the brand's products in terms of aesthetics, functionality, quality, service, etc.^[3](Li, Y.J., 2023). On balance, K Smart Cat Toilet should be positioned as the leading brand in the industry, becoming the leader of the industry norms, entering the minds of consumers and occupying the major markets.

4. Marketing Mix Analysis

4.1 Product strategy

Product is a holistic concept, including the core product, the form of products and additional products. Product strategy focuses more on the development of functionality, requiring products to have the uniqueness of the selling point^[4](Kotler, P.& Keller, K.L., 1967).The selling points of the core product include the use of comfortable EVA material, wear-resistant and scratch-resistant, soft texture and odourless, smart cleaning procedures and functional design as well as large-capacity litter box, which is sufficient to meet the cleaning needs. Its automatic flap sealing door with embedded sealing strip prevents the spread of odour, and the innovative structural design is safe. The additional products that can be chosen by customers according to their needs include magnetic dust curtains that can be used for a long period of time, heightened thresholds, cleaning brushes, automatic litter boards, and odour purifiers to improve customers' sense of use. Consumables such as cat litter, rubbish bags, and deodorant squares to increase corporate sales.

4.2 Pricing strategy

K could adopt the brand pricing method. Many consumers are more willing to choose branded products, so the company has to build a corresponding brand from it. K are supposed to promote the smart cat toilet mainly, promote the brand at the same time, and open up smart products, food factories and pet hospitals and many other business divisions. The use of such methods can not only effectively promote the enterprise's brand, but also open up the market, give consumers a high-quality product information and then consumers are more assured to buy, stimulate the purchasing power of consumers.

The price of K Smart Cat Toilet takes into account the high cost of smart products and the pet economy presents a trend of strong viscosity, rigid demand and other characteristics. Referring to the average price of the smart cat toilet in different markets, the price should be different. In order to attract more consumers, K could launch a discount pricing preferential strategy. K could put forward the membership marketing system and members enjoy discounts, hitchhiking and other benefits, launching coupons, full reduction, promotions, group activities in shopping platform.

Pricing in terms of the current smart pet market, is partial to the middle and high-end, the main is also a larger city of pet lovers, there is a clear positioning of the crowd.

4.3 Place strategy

The underlying support of K shops connect shopping and services, and build a sunken commercial management business model. Omni-channel development trend, based on the characteristics of different channels combined with consumer preference feedback, with the help of digital means to carry out differentiated operations, in order to achieve multi-scene, multi-dimensional marketing, so as to enhance brand awareness has become a necessary development strategy. In terms of product distribution, online channels can focus more on short video platforms and social platforms. Pet shops are still the main force and pet hospitals and exhibitions are also important distribution venues.

4.4 Promotion Strategy

K could push Smart Cat Toilet ads as star products launching in the official website and look for high-profile celebrities who fit the tone of the product as a spokesman, using celebrity effect to open the product awareness.

With the development of the Internet and media, the concept of business promotion and marketing has also been constantly enriched^[5](Lin, X.X., 2021). In addition to traditional e-commerce, new product and pet breeding knowledge promotion can be more focused on social platforms and short video platforms. Short video platforms can place ads to attract fans to expand product sales, and they can also recruit users from social platforms to post their experiences.

IP co-branding is a good marketing strategy for brands, which can launch co-branded products through in-depth cooperation with popular IP. At the same time into the public welfare project, not only can assume the responsibility of the national enterprise, but also express the social group of the depth of awareness of K. It can also achieve cultural resonance with consumers by co-branding with national trend products.

Offline shops, pet hospitals and pet supply shops display K Smart Cat Toilet, which can carry out regular pet knowledge exchange meetings to attract pet owners and convey the brand concept and enhance the brand influence. With online sales as the main sales channel and physical shops as the experience place, the online and offline are closely integrated to promote sales.

5. Conclusion

The article takes K intelligent cat toilet as the research object and analyses the background in which it is located to see the significant upside of the development of K intelligent cat toilet. In view of the product attributes and performance of K intelligent cat toilet, the corresponding market analysis, through the market segmentation of the target market and the target positioning in the market, and formulate the corresponding marketing plan, to promote the K intelligent cat toilet to achieve a greater degree of occupation of the market share.

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