

INTEGRATED MARKETING COMMUNICATION

PHASE 2 Fitness Center

Final Paper Solution

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1- Types of research employed by the Phase 2 Fitness Center

Following are the types of research used by Phase 2 fitness center

(i) **Product-specific research**: This involves identifying a key product characteristic that become selling points. It sells the benefit that the product provides. For Phase 2 Fitness Center, designing a fitness program into two phases made them different from other fitness centers or gym. First phase involved teaching members and visitors how to stay healthy via diet and lifestyle. This was an untapped area for people who run fitness centers or gym. Most gym operators at the time just focused on people coming to participate in physical exercises which Phase 2 Fitness Center saw beyond that.

(ii) **Consumer-oriented research**: This type of research assists marketers in identifying the context of a product's use. Methods used in this type of research could be anthropological, sociological analysis, or psychological approach. Phase 2 Fitness Center used a focus group in its Phase 2 part of the program where groups are targeted to come in and participate in various group activity-based programs like the Zumba, class re-union, and activities that would stress socialization and having fun as parts of getting fit.

(iii) **Target Market research**: This is done by identifying who would be the recipient of planned communication campaign. The researcher achieves this by segmenting customers from a larger market. Phase 2's market segmentation technique was to identify customers that patronizes its competitors like Curves, which attracted women to a 30-minute workout program.

From the three types of research discussed above, target market research should be given more preference. This is because needs are identified, and products are created because of consumers. It is therefore quicker and time saving to channel energy identifying the market such product is to be sold to, segment and drive the campaign to increase sale.

2- Potential consumer market segments for Phase 2 Fitness Center

Market segmentation refers to subdividing a market along some commonality or similarity. Members of the market segment share something in common which could either be demographic, psychographic, geographic, generations, geodemographic, benefits and usage. For the fitness center, based on their product offering, it cuts across almost all market segment as every individual needs to stay healthy. This is further explained below;

(i) **Demographic segmentation**: This is the most common as it is the easiest when it comes to segmenting. Variables include gender, age, income, house type and educational level.

Men and Women, young and old, the rich and middle class all have need to be on a healthy lifestyle.

(ii) **Psychographic segmentation**: Also known as lifestyle segmentation, which is based on multivariate studies of consumer attitudes, values, behaviors, emotions, perceptions, beliefs and interests. Designing programs that stress socialization and having fun as parts of getting fit by the fitness center would meet the needs of consumers whose lifestyle covers analyzed segments stated. Customers willing to create individually tailored programs for special events and re-unions would be targeted. An easy way would be to look out for associations, corporates with sizeable number of employees, to sell its specialized fitness programs to.

(iii) **Generation segments**: like age analyses done under demographic segmentation where it was stated that everyone of no matter the age requires some level of fattiness exercise, this would focus on targeting areas where certain age groups would be found. Examples are old peoples' home, veterans, primary school groups etc.

(iv) **Benefit segmentation**: This focuses on consumers who maximizes the advantages they can derive from a product. Phase 2 fitness center knows people will enroll in their fitness program for various reasons such as keeping fit which is a lifestyle for some people, dieters who want to keep shape by losing weight, and for medical reasons. The phase 1 and 2 programs designed meets the needs of people looking to derive this from the fitness center.

(v) **Usage segmentation**: This seeks to target certain consumers based on purchase history. Phase 2 fitness being aware of its competitors and going after the consumers who use their competitors' gym is a form of usage segmentation. Because they know this certain cluster use the gym, they designed their program to stand out and attract these customers.

3- Business-to-Business (B2B) opportunities for Phase 2 Fitness Center

The fitness center opened a lot B2B buying opportunities. This included;

- (i) Contacting vendors for renovation and purchasing of equipment that would suit the needs of the fitness program designed. This is an industry on its own.
- (ii) Nutrition experts who want to teach people on nutrition quality
- (iii) Hiring local advertising and promotions company who would be engaged in constantly helping to find the right mix of targeted consumers
- (iv) Vendors who would want to sell light meals and snacks, including self-vending machines.

4- Recommendation for positioning approach for Phase 2 Fitness Center

Product positioning entails strategically building a perception in the minds of a consumer. It is the development of the image of a product directly against to the competitor products and other products produced by the company's own. Approaches could include product attributes, competitors, use or application, price/quality, product user, product class, and cultural symbol. Prominent among the approaches used by Phase 2 fitness center is the Competitors and Products attributes approaches.

For competitors' approach, the company established this by designing products that made it stand out from its competitors- Gold's gym and Curves that attracted women for 30 minutes daily work out. The combination of Phase 1 and Phase 2 program made it stand out. However, recommendation would be for Product attributes approach as the best approach. This because the fitness center has been able to give the its consumers a perception that being healthy is not just about coming to the gym or fitness center, but also about staying healthy via diet and lifestyle. So when the word "fitness" comes to mind, they remember the programs outlined by the center and key themselves into it by living healthy and coming to the center for fun activities that keep them fit.

5- Viable marketing communications objectives for the opening of the Phase 2 Fitness center

Recommended communication objectives would include;

- (i) Developing brand awareness by letting consumers around the area who they are, what they represent and unique products they have that are different from their competitors.
- (ii) Change customer beliefs and attitude by letting them know that staying fit is not just about exercising but living a healthy life style and diet
- (iii) Build customer traffic by creating fun activities to include swimming pool, walking track, weight training machines, dining area etc.

The success of these communication objectives would change over time as focus would lead change to encouraging repeated purchase, increasing market share, enhance firm's image and increase sales.

6- Communication strategies and tips for Phase-2 Fitness Center to Retain its Customers during COVID-19

The Phase 2 Fitness center team can put together some of these specific campaigns or strategies to retain its loyal customers during the Covid-19 crisis. They can utilize to keep members engaged while at home. Whether or not they actually use them is up to the customers but it will ensure their service availability during the pandemic.

- (i) **Send at-home workout plans.** With everyone being stuck at home due to social distancing, there's never been a better time to get started with an at-home workout plan. This can be achieved with personalized SMS or email messages to the customers keeping in mind their previous history and training routine. This will give the customers the impression that Phase-2 Fitness center cares and is staying connected and is concerned about the health of its customers even during the pandemic.

- (ii) **Nutrition plans and online cooking classes.** Similar to sending personalized workout plans is sending custom nutrition plans and providing nutritional guidance. As Phase 2 fitness center already has a cooking module in place it can make tutorial and procedural cooking videos and make them available to their customers. This angle is catered to the members who are not into heavy workout schedules but still want some aspect of 'being healthy' in their life. Establishing a back-and-forth with your members will be critical to make sure they know you care about them. This is not a time for over-automation, but for showing that you care enough to personalize each message and value each customer. Building up its value now will be how it retain members in the long-term.

- (iii) **Stream online classes.** Along with providing workouts to them, another avenue for member engagement is to stream online classes. Some gyms have already begun doing this and more will soon follow suit, but this is an excellent way to keep both the employees and members engaged. There are plenty of options to choose from for online streaming. Platforms such as *Zoom, whatsapp, Facebook, YouTube, and others* are helping fitness companies engage with their members. Furthermore, the video of the class can be recorded and made available to the members.

(iv) **Schedule one-on-one calls with trainers.** Maintaining fitness goals is going to be one of the largest concerns for Phase-2 members during this time of social distancing. Rather than wait for them to tell you they are having trouble keeping up with their fitness goals, which will likely happen when stuck at home, proactively schedule one-on-one calls with trainers to give them guidance. By simply asking them if they can sit down for a quick call, what they see from this is that 1), you care, and 2), maintaining goals is possible. It will be up to Phase-2 Fitness center and its trainers on what recommendations should be made, but providing this level of guidance will not only keep them engaged, but it will give the Fitness center even greater insight into its customers wants and needs.

(v) **Create an at-home exercise contest.** One thing we haven't discussed yet that can often get lost with training outside the gym is a sense of community. Sure, members might notice their friends from the gym are watching the same live-stream, but Phase 2 fitness center members will likely miss contact with others in the sense of being in the same room as them. This is why I recommend building community with competitive spirit by holding an at-home exercise contest.

There are lots of different avenues for hosting this contest, but a social media page like Facebook would be ideal so that community members can engage with the management and each other. This would allow them to post updates, share tips, and even stream workouts as part of the contest all in one place.

(vi) **Encourage Outdoor Training.** A tried and true engagement strategy for members outside the gym is encouragement to train outdoors. Create and share a list of workouts suited for outdoors with members and help them boost their immune systems in the process. Since being outside (but still away from others) is a recommended way for staying healthy during the Covid-19 outbreak, this option is a no brainer. Being outside will not only help put your members in a better mood, but it will diversify at-home exercise options, something that will be critical in the coming days.