

BRAND POSITIONING OF FITNESS CLUBS IN FUZHOU, FUJIAN, CHINA BASED ON CUSTOMER LOYALTY

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the brand positioning strategy of Fuzhou, Fujian, China, based on customer loyalty. Through literature review and field research, combined with quantitative and qualitative analysis methods, the influence mechanism of customer loyalty on the brand positioning of fitness club is revealed. Customer loyalty is not only directly affected by service quality and member experience, but also closely related to brand image, market positioning and customer relationship management. This study aims to provide a scientific basis for the brand positioning of Fuzhou fitness club, and also provide theoretical reference and practical guidance for the brand management in the industry.

Keywords: Brand positioning, Customer loyalty, Fitness club, Service quality

INTRODUCTION

Problem statement and significance of the study

Under the background of globalization and increasing health awareness, the fitness club industry, as an emerging service industry, has become a growth point that cannot be ignored in the global economy. Developed countries such as Europe and the United States started early in the development of the fitness industry, and have formed a relatively mature market system and business model. The health club market in the United States has attracted a large number of consumers with its highly specialized and diversified services, while the health clubs in Europe pay more attention to the integration with the community culture and emphasize the promotion of a healthy lifestyle. In contrast, in Asian countries, especially In China, although the fitness industry started late, the fitness club market has shown a trend of explosive growth in recent years with the improvement of economic level and the change of lifestyle. International experience shows that effective brand positioning and customer loyalty management are the key for fitness clubs to gain a foothold in the fierce market competition. Therefore, exploring how to enhance customer loyalty through brand positioning has important theoretical and practical significance to the global fitness club industry.

As the world's second largest economy, China's development of its health club market is particularly striking. With the implementation of the National Fitness Program (2021-2025) and the promotion of the "Healthy China 2030" strategy, the Chinese government has continuously increased its support for the sports industry, and the fitness club industry has ushered in unprecedented opportunities for development. According to the statistics of the General Administration of Sport of China, by 2023, the number of fitness clubs in China has exceeded 50,000, the number of members has reached more than 50 million, and the market size has exceeded 100 billion yuan. However, the rapidly expanding market also brings about fierce competition and homogenization problems. Many fitness clubs lack

characteristics in brand positioning, which is difficult to effectively attract and maintain customer loyalty, leading to the phenomenon of market saturation and customer loss. In addition, Chinese consumers have increasing expectations for health club services, including not only the quality of equipment and courses, but also more attention to the values and emotional experiences conveyed by the brand. Therefore, how to build customer loyalty through unique brand positioning while meeting the diversified needs of consumers has become an important challenge for China's fitness club industry.

As an important city in the southeast coast of China, its fitness club market has distinct regional characteristics and potential research value. As the political, economic and cultural center of Fujian Province, Fuzhou residents have a high income level, and their pursuit of a healthy lifestyle is increasing. However, the fitness club market in Fuzhou also faces some unique problems in the process of development. Compared with first-tier cities, health clubs in Fuzhou have certain gaps in scale, facilities and service level, while consumers' awareness and loyalty to the brand are low. In addition, the cultural background of Fuzhou (such as Minnan culture, tea culture, etc.) has exerted a profound influence on consumers' behavioral preferences.

This study focuses on fitness clubs in Fuzhou, Fujian Province, to explore how to enhance customer loyalty through brand positioning. Based on the relevant theories and practical experience at home and abroad, the paper analyzes the current situation and problems of Fuzhou fitness club market, and puts forward the brand positioning strategy based on customer loyalty. The significance of the research is mainly reflected in the following aspects: Theoretically, the research will enrich and expand the research framework of the relationship between brand positioning and customer loyalty, especially in the context of the Chinese regional market, to provide a new perspective for academic research in related fields. In practice, it will provide practical brand positioning suggestions for the fitness clubs in Fuzhou and even Fujian Province, to help enterprises stand out in the fiercely competitive market and achieve sustainable development. It will provide a reference for the Chinese government to formulate relevant policies and contribute to the implementation of the "Healthy China" strategy.

Research question

- 1.What are the key factors affecting the customer loyalty of Fuzhou Health Club in Fujian Province, China?
2. What is the relationship between customer loyalty and the brand positioning of Fuzhou Fitness Club, Fujian Province, China?
- 3.How to evaluate the brand positioning of customer loyalty to Fuzhou Fitness Club, Fujian Province, China?

Research objectives

- 1.To investigate the current customer loyalty status of Fuzhou Fitness Club, Fujian Province, China.
- 2.To analyze the relationship between customer loyalty and the brand positioning of Fuzhou Health Club, Fujian Province, China.
- 3.To evaluate the impact of customer loyalty on the brand positioning of fitness Club in Fuzhou, Fujian Province, China.

Scope of the study

1.Scope of Content

This study aims to explore the development factors of customer loyalty on the evaluation This article in Fuzhou, Fujian province fitness club as the .characteristics of brand positioning empirical research object, comprehensive use of literature survey, questionnaire survey, interview survey and field survey method, the research scope includes the use of brand positioning theory, customer loyalty theory, Fuzhou fitness club background and market environment, brand positioning strategy analysis, customer loyalty empirical research, strategic optimization Suggestions and industry Fully understand and optimize the brand positioning strategy of Fuzhou fitness club, to .influence provide valuable reference for the relevant research and practice of the fitness industry.

2.Scope of population and sample

According to the .Mainly interview with Fuzhou fitness club members and fitness coaches about 10 industry experts, about 30 club :requirements of the research scope, the specific population is .managers, about 80 fitness coaches, and about 1,500 fitness club members

3.Scope of time

The study period is from January to 1,2024 toOctober 31,2024.

Literature review

Basic theory

Through the study of "brand positioning of Fuzhou Fitness Club in Fujian Province based on customer loyalty", the concept, theory and related knowledge of the research object were studied, and the important research contents were studied, and the research process was analyzed and synthesized by knowledge-based methods.

One of the cornerstone theories in the context of brand positioning and customer loyalty in fitness The CBBE .(2016) Model proposed by Keller (CBBE) Based Brand Equity-clubs is the Customer model emphasizes the importance of customer perceptions, brand meaning, and customer relationships In the fitness industry, this model can be applied to understand how fitness .in building brand equity clubs can create unique brand experiences that resonate with customers, thereby enhancing their .loyalty

Brand personality is a concept that has gained significant attention in the marketing literature, highlights (2019) A study by Aaker .particularly in the context of service industries like fitness clubs how brand personality traits such as sincerity, excitement, competence, sophistication, and ruggedness In the fitness industry, brands that are perceived as sincere and .can influence customer loyalty .competent are more likely to attract and retain customers

oriented -Service quality is a critical factor in shaping customer loyalty, especially in service The SERVQUAL Model developed by Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry .industries like fitness clubs reliability, :provides a framework for measuring service quality based on five dimensions (2018) In the context of fitness clubs, these dimensions .responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangibles High service quality can .can be applied to evaluate how well the club meets customer expectations .lead to higher customer satisfaction and, ultimately, greater loyalty

The .The emotional connection between customers and a brand is a powerful driver of loyalty suggests that brands that create emotional (2020) Emotional Branding Theory proposed by Kapferer .term loyalty-bonds with their customers are more likely to foster long

.Social media has become an essential tool for brands to engage with customers and build loyalty explores the role of social media in enhancing customer loyalty in (2019) A study by Liu and Zhang The research suggests that active engagement on social media platforms, such as .the fitness industry .Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, can increase brand awareness, customer engagement, and loyalty generated content, provide tips and advice, and foster -Fitness clubs can use social media to share user For example, posting testimonials from satisfied customers .a sense of community among members and encouraging members to share their fitness journeys can create a positive brand image and .strengthen customer loyalty

These theories collectively provide a comprehensive framework for understanding and implementing brand positioning strategies in fitness clubs to enhance customer loyalty.

Related research

investigated the impact of branding strategies on customer (2018) A study by Smith and Johnson The research, conducted through surveys and interviews with members of .loyalty in fitness clubs various fitness clubs in the United States, found that a strong brand identity significantly influences The study highlighted that clubs that effectively communicate their unique value .customer loyalty .propositions and create a sense of community among their members tend to have higher loyalty rates Additionally, the study found that consistent branding across all touchpoints, from marketing materials .club experiences, plays a crucial role in building trust and loyalty-to in

explored the role of emotional connection in fostering (2019) A research paper by Lee and Kim The study utilized both quantitative and qualitative methods, .customer loyalty in fitness clubs .including surveys and focus groups, to understand how emotional factors influence member retention The findings indicated that emotional connections, such as a sense of belonging and emotional support The study also found that clubs that invest in creating a .from staff and peers, are key drivers of loyalty building activities and personalized interactions -positive emotional environment through community .have higher customer satisfaction and loyalty levels

conducted a study to examine how social media influences brand (2020) Liu and Zhang. The research involved an analysis of social media positioning and customer loyalty in fitness clubs. The findings activities of various fitness clubs and their impact on customer engagement and loyalty generated content, and suggested that active social media engagement, including regular updates, user The study also interactive campaigns, can significantly enhance brand visibility and customer loyalty highlighted the importance of authenticity and consistency in social media communication to build trust and strengthen customer relationships.

focused on the relationship between service quality and (2020) A study by Patel and Brown. The research employed a survey of fitness club members in the customer loyalty in fitness clubs. The findings United Kingdom to assess their perceptions of service quality and its impact on loyalty revealed that dimensions of service quality, such as responsiveness, empathy, and reliability, are The study also found that clubs that excel in these areas not strongly correlated with customer loyalty mouth and -of-only retain existing members but also attract new ones through positive word recommendations.

explored the effect of personalization in marketing (2021) A research article by White and Carter. The study used a mixed methods approach, and services on customer loyalty in fitness clubs combining quantitative surveys with qualitative interviews, to understand how personalized The findings indicated that members who receive personalized experiences influence member loyalty. The study also attention and tailored fitness programs are more likely to exhibit higher loyalty levels emphasized the importance of data privacy and member trust in implementing personalized strategies effectively.

In recent years, research on the brand positioning of customer loyalty has focused on brand strategy, emotional connection, social media influence, service quality and personalized experience. Together, these studies provide comprehensive theoretical and practical guidance on how health clubs can enhance customer loyalty through brand positioning.

Research hypotheses

- H1: customer loyalty has a significant positive impact on brand identity
- H2: customer loyalty has a significant positive impact on brand recognition
- H3: customer loyalty has a significant positive impact on brand positioning
- H4: Brand identity has a significant positive impact on brand positioning
- H5: Brand cognition has a significant positive impact on brand positioning
- H6: Brand identity plays a mediating role in the influence of evaluating characteristics on brand positioning
- H7: Brand cognition plays a mediating role in the influence of evaluation characteristics on brand positioning

Research Methodology

Population and sample

Due to the need for semi-structured interviews, we mainly interview the members of Fuzhou Fitness Club and fitness coaches. According to the requirements of the research scope, the specific population is: about 10 industry experts, about 30 club managers, about 80 fitness coaches, and about 1,500 fitness club members.

Research tools

A semi-structured interview. The method is a qualitative analytical method. We interviewed the members and fitness coaches of Fuzhou fitness Club to understand the status quo of brand positioning of Fuzhou fitness Club based on customer loyalty, and further understand the specific situation of brand positioning of Fuzhou fitness Club.

Data acquisition and analysis

Determine the time and place of the survey according to the business hours of different health clubs. The researchers arrived at the fitness club to collect the data, distributed the "Fuzhou Fitness Club Customer Loyalty Questionnaire" according to the research scope, and guided the tester to express their opinions objectively.

Screening and statistical survey questionnaires, and dealing with invalid questionnaires. Conduct the confirmatory factor analysis through the collected data. Multiple regression analysis was used to explore the factors affecting customer loyalty in Fuzhou Fitness Club.

Expected Results

Through brand positioning based on customer loyalty, Fuzhou Fitness Club in Fujian Province is expected to achieve the following results:

1. by providing personalized service and continuous value proposition, improve customer satisfaction and loyalty, so as to reduce customer turnover rate and enhance customer stickiness.
2. Loyal customers are more likely to recommend clubs to friends and family, thus bringing more new customers, reducing customer acquisition costs and improving word of mouth.
3. By meeting and exceeding customer expectations, to build a reliable and professional brand image, attract more potential customers, and build a positive brand image.
4. By collecting and analyzing customer feedback and behavioral data, the club can more accurately adjust strategies, optimize services, and further enhance customer loyalty and data-driven decisions.
5. In such a competitive market in Fuzhou, through the unique brand positioning and loyalty strategy, the club can establish differentiation advantages, stabilize the market share, and deal with the market competition.

Research Limitations

Although brand positioning based on customer loyalty for fitness club has many benefits, but there are still some limitations in the process of implementation:

1. Fuzhou area economic and social environment changing, the customer's needs and preferences may also change, the club needs to continue to adjust strategy to adapt to these changes, the market environment changes.
2. When collecting and using customer data to improve personalized services, you must comply with relevant data protection regulations to avoid violating customer privacy.
3. The success of the loyalty strategy depends heavily on the quality of service of the employees. Lack of necessary training or lack of motivation may affect the customer experience.

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