

Service marketing and its impact on customer acquisition in a general services company, Lima, 2024

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Abstract– This study aimed to determine the impact of service marketing on customer acquisition in a general services company in Lima, Peru in 2024. Using a quantitative approach and an explanatory level, the incidence between the services marketing variable and customer acquisition was analysed. The sample consisted of 154 customers randomly selected from a population of 350 customers. The results show that service marketing has a positive and significant impact on customer acquisition, with a coefficient of determination of 76.73%. This suggests that service marketing is a key factor in attracting new customers and retaining existing ones. These findings indicate that the company should focus its efforts on developing effective service marketing strategies that comprehensively address the different aspects that impact on customer attraction and retention.

Keywords: Marketing, Service marketing, Customer acquisition, Lima.

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Context

In a highly competitive and continuously evolving market, service companies face unique challenges when trying to stand out and attract the attention of customers, constantly innovating, adapting their strategies and offering a differentiating experience to stand out from the crowd and connect meaningfully with their prospects and customers, those organizations that develop a solid capacity for analysis and interpretation of their reality tend to achieve better results and adjust to changes in the environment. To remain relevant, the company must respond with agility to these changes in consumer demands [1]. Given that companies offering services face unique challenges within a highly competitive and constantly changing context, services marketing establishes itself as an essential discipline to address the particular needs of this sector. In such a dynamic marketplace, marketing is critical for companies to adjust and thrive. This specialty has the potential to help organizations maximize the value they can bring to their customers by enabling them to develop strategies and tactics tailored to the unique characteristics of their offerings and the expectations of their target audience [2].

Service marketing can be seen as the interplay between the artistic and scientific aspect of marketing intangible goods and offerings. In essence, service marketing represents the balance between the more emotional side and the more rational side of the sales process when the final product lacks a tangible physical form [3]. Contrary to tangible products, services are distinguished by their intangible and experiential nature, in which the customer is directly involved in their delivery. This particular nature of services distinguishes them from physical goods [4]. This type of offer covers a wide variety of activities, such as financial services, transportation, health, tourism, consulting, among many others. The lack of a tangible material form is what fundamentally distinguishes services from traditional products.

The main strength of services marketing lies in its ability to exert a significant influence on the elements that consumers take into account when assessing the quality and value of the intangible propositions offered to them. This ability to shape customer perceptions is what constitutes the differential value of services marketing [5]. Since services lack a tangible physical existence, it is crucial that marketing strategies and actions effectively convey the benefit and experience to be provided to the end user. In this regard, Services are characterized by their intangibility, inseparability, variability and perfectibility, which implies additional challenges in the management and marketing of these services [6]. In this context, services marketing focuses on addressing the distinctive characteristics of this sector, while prioritizing customer satisfaction, retention, maintaining lasting ties and inventing sustainable competitive advantages are critical to success. This holistic approach enables service companies to effectively address specific market needs, making them more competitive and resilient in the long term [7].

In today's business environment, the importance of service marketing has increased significantly due to the relevance of customer satisfaction in achieving success. Authors such as Dam & Dam have highlighted the relevance of properly ensuring a service delivery and offering exceptional experiences stands out as a key strategy to gain a competitive advantage and build lasting bonds with consumers [8].

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In that sense, it is crucial to allocate adequate resources to support costly acquisition and retention practices [9]. Companies allocated approximately 10% of their revenue to their marketing budgets. Since much of a company's budget is applied to fixed operating expenses, such as materials, manufacturing, salaries, and utilities, it is not imperative to increase spending to grow a business. Therefore, it is essential for any type of business, regardless of whether it is a global enterprise or a small business, to have a comprehensive plan that encompasses all available strategies to attract customer interest.

In the case of Peru, it was identified that these types of companies do not know how to orient their clients in relation to the services they offer, nor do they know how to choose their target public. Likewise, they do not know how to position or promote their brands. According to an INEI report, in Peru there was an increase of 15.78% in investment in advertising and market research. This increase is due to the excellent performance of the advertising industry, supported by higher investments in projects and the implementation of advertising campaigns through different strategies, such as digital marketing, conventional marketing, guerrilla marketing, BTL and merchandising.

Within the scope of companies located in Metropolitan Lima, Peru, a significant challenge arises from the lack of effective strategies to guide clients to the services available, the difficulty in identifying an appropriate target audience, and the complications in establishing a strong presence and promoting their brands effectively. The absence of strategic direction in the management of service marketing by these companies significantly limits their ability to positively influence how customers perceive high quality and value-added work provided, which can make it difficult to stand out in the marketplace, as well as maintain sustainable competitive performance. In addition, the absence of an adequate orientation towards the target audience prevents the development of effective customer acquisition and retention strategies, which is costly for organizations.

B. Research Problem

In this context, the general problem is formulated: To what extent does service marketing impact customer acquisition in a general services company, Lima, 2024?

The theoretical justification was based on the importance of the findings to improve the theories and concepts associated with the variables examined in the study, such as service marketing and the other theme corresponds to customer acquisition. These results would not only be useful for researchers interested in the same topic, but also facilitate the understanding of the behavior and interrelation of the variables studied.

C. Justification

In terms of practical justification, the objective was to determine whether service marketing strategies had a significant impact on new customer acquisition. Assuming that such an impact was identified, the objective was to determine the level or degree of that influence. Based on these results, the aim was to develop and implement marketing strategies that would boost and increase the company's sales.

D. Research Objective

The general objective of the study is to determine to what extent service marketing has an impact on customer acquisition in a general services company, Lima, 2024.

E. Previous works

Regarding previous works on the research topic, some national and some international works have been considered.

In Indonesia, researchers Dewi and others [10] presented a research at the high-impact research exposure conference, indexed in Scopus. The descriptive study involved 98 individuals who had used health functions, the purpose of which was to explore issues related to "union marketing" and "consumer loyalty". The external analysis revealed that, in three specific aspects, the companies failed to stand out, suggesting an opportunity to improve their marketing strategy and cultivate consumer loyalty. The research revealed that the price component was responsible for the highest percentage, at 96.9%, in terms of product, people, place, promotion, process and physical evidence, as well as customer loyalty. This analysis provides significant data on how customers perceive the components of the marketing mix and their loyalty in a hospital setting, which can direct the development of marketing strategies and the refinement of the services provided.

In Taiwan, researchers Yeh and others [11] conducted an analysis to investigate the connections between experiential marketing, service innovation and user pleasantness in the field of tourism factories in Taiwan. This study published in the Scopus-indexed journal Sustainability focused on analyzing the relationship between three key variables: experiential marketing, delivery innovation, and user pleasantness. The research was conducted using a quantitative explanatory level approach on a sample of 356 participants from a tourism factory in Taiwan. The main findings of the study indicate that both experiential marketing and service innovation have positive and significant impacts on customer satisfaction. In other words, when tourism companies implement experiential marketing strategies and develop innovations in their services, this translates into greater satisfaction on the part of tourists. Specifically, the study revealed that tourists show high levels of awareness and appreciation for the sensory and emotional experiences provided by experiential marketing. This implies that companies should pay special attention to how they design and deliver memorable experiences to their customers, as this has

a direct impact on their satisfaction. This study offers valuable insights into how tourism companies, such as factories, can foster customer satisfaction through two key strategies: experiential marketing and service innovation. The findings suggest that by focusing on providing memorable sensory and emotional experiences for tourists, while continually developing new and improved services, companies can achieve higher levels of visitor satisfaction.

In Oman, researchers De-Bruin and others [12] executed a preparation with the objective of examining the extent to which internal marketing practices impact the perceived talent of assistants to present an upright service in Islamic banking in Oman. This study was published in the Journal of Islamic Marketing, indexed in the Scopus database. The inquiry was conducted using a quantitative approach with an explanatory level. A sample of 272 retail bank branch employees in Islamic banks in Oman was analyzed. The main findings were: Internal organizational factors, such as internal promotion, internal processes and internal purpose, which help employees feel competent in providing efficient work in Islamic banking in Oman. The quality of service provided by employees exerts an authentic and representative power on the perceived pleasantness of Islamic banking customers. Elements of internal marketing, such as promotion and career development policies, work processes and communication of organizational purpose, affect the quality of service that employees can deliver. The research provides new insights, as the internal marketing mix model is predominantly Western and has been tested mainly in mature Western markets, while this study applies it to the Islamic banking context in Oman.

F. Theoretical framework

Services marketing

In relation to marketing dimensions, the 6 P's of service marketing have been considered as effective and efficient in the commercial sector [13]. These dimensions comprise:

Product:

The product, as defined by Aramendia [14], includes any good, service or idea that is made available in the market with the fundamental objective of the organization, which is to meet the needs and preferences of consumers. On the other hand, Patricia [15] indicates that the product consists of the concrete and abstract aspects that the buyer is willing to accept to meet his requirements. These aspects may include packaging, color, value, the reputation of the manufacturer and retailer, the services and guarantees offered by the company, as well as the image of the product.

Price:

Price is established as the amount that customers must disburse to obtain the product [14]. Of all the elements of the marketing strategy, this is the only one that produces revenue; the others involve costs. It is one of the most adaptable components, as it can be adjusted quickly, unlike product properties and relationships with distribution channels [15].

Square:

The distribution or marketing channel comprises the actions taken by the company to make the product accessible to target consumers [14]. Furthermore, distribution channels are composed of networks of interconnected companies that work together to make a product or service available to the end consumer or corporate user [15].

Promotion:

Promotion encompasses actions aimed at communicating product qualities and persuading target customers to make a purchase. The elements that make up promotion are advertising, personal selling, sales promotions, public relations and direct marketing [16]. These persuasive communication tools are used to generate a positive perception of the organization and its products, as well as to stimulate sales [17].

Personnel:

Personnel refers to all people directly involved within the process of manufacturing and supplying the product or service to customers [18]. It is one of the critical elements of service marketing, since customers interact directly with the company's personnel. In this sense, hiring, training and motivation of service personnel are essential to achieve customer satisfaction [15].

Processes:

Processes refer to the processes, tools and sequence of tasks required to offer the service [18]. They include the service delivery systems, the steps the customer must follow, waiting times, feedback mechanisms and problem resolution processes. These processes must be carefully designed and managed to ensure efficient and consistent service delivery.



FIG. 1 THE 6 P'S OF MARKETING.

Customer acquisition

In relation to the second variable, customer acquisition involves identifying and attracting individuals who have the capacity to acquire a specific product or service. A potential customer is defined as an individual who has not yet made a specific purchase, but who shows aspirations and the possibility of becoming a buyer, user or consumer [19]. Potentiality implies a latent capacity that may materialize in a commercial transaction in the future.

The process of pleasing new consumers to buy the products offered by the organization [20]. The purpose is to transform potential customers into current, constant and loyal customers [21]. Customer acquisition consists of the process of incorporating new consumers into the company, with the aim of getting them to purchase our products and become a valuable revenue generator [22].

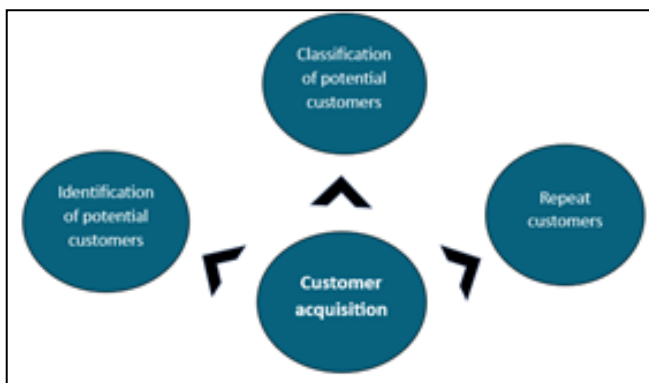


FIG. 2 CUSTOMER ACQUISITION MODEL.

Potential customer identification:

Lead identification involves locating and choosing individuals or companies that are most likely to become consumers who actively purchase the organization's goods and services [23]. That this procedure requires the application of lead generation tactics, such as examining demographic information, evaluating market research, and monitoring internet interactions, for the purpose of identifying prospects with the highest potential and developing tactics to attract and retain customers [24].

Classification of potential customers:

Lead segmentation is about the process of categorizing and structuring potential customers into groups or segments with similar characteristics, to prioritize and customize marketing and sales strategies [25]. This classification is based on criteria such as degree of interest, purchasing power and alignment with the target customer profile and the likelihood of conversion into active customers. Likewise, the objective is to focus marketing resources and efforts on the segments with the greatest potential and to maximize the effectiveness of customer acquisition and retention activities [26].

Reiterative customers:

Reiterative customers are those customers who have made multiple purchases or transactions with a company over time [27]. That they are loyal and recurring customers who demonstrate a continued preference for the goods and services offered by the organization [28]. These customers are valuable to the company, as they generate stable revenues and have a longer potential customer lifetime. In addition, repeat customers typically require less marketing and sales effort compared to acquiring new customers.

G. Research hypotheses

Service marketing impacts customer acquisition in a general services company, Lima 2024.

II. METHODOLOGY

A. Study design

The approach adopted was quantitative, based on numerical and statistical information to confirm the hypotheses proposed in the inquiry [29]. This involved the collection and analysis of data with the purpose of answering the questions formulated and addressing the hypotheses established, relying on numerical measurement and statistics as fundamental tools.

The type was applied. This kind of study aims to expand existing knowledge by exploring different realities related to a specific and problematic issue [30]. Its purpose is to acquire new knowledge that complements existing knowledge.

The level was explanatory, since it established a causal relationship by describing a problematic and searching for its cause. This type of cause-effect associations are generalized to similar situations with the aim of identifying and understanding the underlying causes [31].

The design was non-experimental. The facts were observed without any manipulation of the variables, and the causes were subsequently analyzed [32].

The cross section was cross-sectional. This research was conducted over a specific period. Here we describe the study variables, in detail the variables used in this study, their concept and dimensions.

B. Population and sample size

The population was considered finite. The population consists of a group of related elements that are the focus of an observation or exploration.

The population amounts to 350 clients. Details were provided by the organization being studied.

The sample constitutes a portion of the population to which a tool is used to collect information that will be analyzed later [29]. Within the framework of this research, 184 customers participated as a sample. For this study, participants were selected through the simple random

sampling method, ensuring that all clients had the same opportunities to be chosen to participate in the study.

C. Instrument

The use of a questionnaire allows the efficient collection and documentation of data [33]. This questionnaire evaluated the variables of service marketing and customer acquisition and consisted of 28 items.

D. Data collection and analysis

Regarding the data collection procedure, a meeting was held with the company's manager to explain the objective of the research and the need to apply a survey to potential customers. The purpose of this survey was to analyze the effectiveness of the service marketing strategies applied by the organization to boost sales. In addition, a request was made for the assignment of a time slot in which data could be collected in the store. Fortunately, the business leaders agreed to this request.

The method of data analysis included hypothesis testing using Spearman's rho statistic.

III. RESULTS

A. Measurement of the levels of variables

TABLE I
MEASUREMENT OF THE LEVELS OF VARIABLES

Levels	Services marketing	Customer acquisition
High [3.66 a 5.00]	97.28%	92.39%
Medium [2.33 a 3.66]	2.72%	7.61%
Low [1.00 a 2.33]	0.00%	0.00%
Total	100.00%	100.00%

According to the data in Table I, the percentages obtained for each of the variables evaluated were calculated. Regarding service marketing, 97.28% of the respondents perceived it at a high level, while 2.72% placed it at a medium level. On the other hand, in the case of customer acquisition, 92.39% of the subjects rated it at a high level, and 7.61% placed it at a medium level.

B. Measurement of the levels of dimensions (independent variable)

TABLE II
MEASUREMENT OF THE LEVELS OF DIMENSIONS (INDEPENDENT VARIABLE)

Levels	Service	Price	Plaza	Promotion	Staff	Process
High [3.66 a 5.00]	98.91%	94.02%	95.65%	94.02%	90.76%	94.57%

Medium [2.33 a 3.66]	1.09%	3.26%	4.35%	5.98%	9.24%	3.80%
Low [1.00 a 2.33]	0.00%	2.72%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	1.63%
Total	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

According to the data in Table II, percentages were calculated for each of the service marketing dimensions. The service dimension was the one that showed the highest level, with 98.91% of respondents perceiving it at a high level. In addition, the place and process dimensions also showed high levels, with 95.65% and 94.57% respectively at the high level. On the other hand, the only dimensions that showed low levels were price and promotion.

C. Measurement of the levels of dimensions (dependent variable)

TABLE III
MEASUREMENT OF THE LEVELS OF DIMENSIONS (DEPENDENT VARIABLE)

Levels	Identification of potential customers	Classification of potential customers	Repeat customers
High [3.66 a 5.00]	94.02%	87.50%	94.02%
Medium [2.33 a 3.66]	4.35%	10.87%	5.98%
Low [1.00 a 2.33]	1.63%	1.63%	0.00%
Total	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

According to Table III, the percentages corresponding to each dimension of the customer acquisition variable were calculated. The dimensions of identification of potential customers and repeat customers were perceived at a high level, reaching 94.02% each. On the other hand, the classification of potential customers was perceived at a medium level, while the identification of potential customers and the classification of the latter were perceived at a low level.

D. General hypothesis

Service marketing impacts customer acquisition in a general services company, Lima 2024.

TABLE IV
ESTIMATED CORRELATION OF MARKETING SERVICES AND CUSTOMER ACQUISITION

		Services marketing	Customer acquisition
Spearman's rho	Services marketing	1	0.876**
		Ratio coefficient	p. value
		.	<0.001

		N	184	184
Customer acquisition		Ratio coefficient	0.876**	1
		p. value	<0.001	.
		N	184	184

Since the “service marketing” and “customer acquisition” variables did not follow a normal distribution, the researchers used Spearman's correlation to analyze the association between these two variables. Spearman's correlation is a non-parametric test, i.e., it does not depend on assumptions about the shape of the data distribution. The results of this analysis show a Spearman correlation coefficient of 0.876, which is a fairly high value. This indicates that there is a considerable positive relationship between service marketing and customer acquisition. Furthermore, the p-value associated with this correlation coefficient is 0.001, which means that the probability that this relationship is due to chance is very low, less than 0.1%. Therefore, it can be accepted with a high degree of confidence that there is a significant association between service marketing strategies and the ability to attract new customers.

TABLE IV
ESTIMATED MARKETING DETERMINATION OF SERVICES IN CUSTOMER ACQUISITION

Estimate (r)	Estimate (r ²)
0.876	0.7673

According to the results presented in Table 10, the coefficient of determination (r²) obtained is 0.7673. The coefficient of determination is a measure that indicates what percentage of the variability observed in a dependent variable (in this case, customer acquisition) can be explained or determined by the independent variable (service marketing activities). In this case, the value of r² is 0.7673, which means that approximately 76.73% of the observed variability in customer acquisition can be explained or determined by the service marketing activities performed by the company. In other words, service marketing has a significant impact, explaining about 76.73% of the scenarios analyzed in the acquisition of new customers. This indicates that the service marketing strategies and tactics implemented by the organization play a crucial and determining role in its ability to attract and engage new customers within the context of this study.

IV. FINAL CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

A. Conclusion

The results reveal that service marketing strategies have a positive and significant impact on new customer acquisition, as evidenced by a coefficient of determination (r²) of 0.7673. This value indicates that approximately 76.73% of the changes or variations in customer acquisition can be attributed to or

explained by the service marketing efforts and activities undertaken by the company.

B. Discussion

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the effect of service marketing strategies on the acquisition of new customers in a general services company located in Lima, 2024. The results obtained reveal that service marketing strategies have a positive and significant impact on the acquisition of new customers, as shown by a coefficient of determination (r²) of 0.7673. This value indicates that approximately 76.73% of the changes or variations in customer acquisition can be attributed to or explained by the company's service marketing efforts and activities.

To contextualize these findings, it is relevant to compare them with the background and previous studies conducted in other places and years, as well as to analyze the approach, variables, sample and results of each of them.

In the study conducted by Dewi and others in Indonesia [10], issues related to “marketing mix” and “customer loyalty” were explored in the field of health services. Although the focus and context are different from the present study, it is interesting to note that the importance of the price component was also identified in that research. In our study, the impact of service marketing strategies on attracting new customers was found to be significant, suggesting that the general services company in Lima can benefit from implementing competitive and attractive pricing strategies to attract new customers.

On the other hand, the study conducted by Yeh and others in Taiwan [11] focused on experiential marketing, service innovation, and customer satisfaction in the tourism factory environment. Although the context and sample differ, the results obtained in that study support the findings of our research regarding the positive and significant impact of service marketing strategies on customer engagement. The implementation of experiential marketing strategies and the continuous improvement of services can generate greater customer satisfaction and, therefore, increase the likelihood of attracting new customers.

In Oman, De-Bruin and others examined how internal marketing practices influence the perceived ability of employees to provide quality service in Islamic banking [12]. Although the approach and sample are different, a connection was found between the quality of service provided by employees and perceived customer satisfaction. This supports the importance of service marketing strategies in attracting new customers, as service quality plays a key role in customers' perception and their willingness to continue using the company's services.

V. RECOMMENDATION

The technical recommendations are as follows:

The marketing manager is advised to focus efforts on personalized, data-driven service marketing strategies to effectively attract and retain customers. This includes segmenting the market, as it is crucial to understand consumer requirements and preferences. Likewise, marketing campaigns should be designed to target each segment in a relevant way. In this way, customers can be reached more effectively and retention can be improved. This will help to increase the efficiency and quality of internal procedures by incorporating technologies, optimizing workflows and focusing on continuous improvement. This will enable us to provide a more agile, reliable and excellent service, which, in turn, will attract more customers.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

This work was derived from the undergraduate thesis at Universidad César Vallejo. Both the student and the advisor are grateful to the institution for its policies to encourage research.

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