

Apple's Secret to Being Successful: Research on Apple's Commercial Marketing Strategy Based on Multi-marketing Framework

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Abstract. Apple Inc., a renowned technology brand, wields an immense influence in the industry, consistently captivating consumers with its innovative products. Over time, Apple has transcended its status as a mere technology provider, evolving into a global fashion trendsetter. This article delves into the factors contributing to Apple's unparalleled success, focusing on its remarkable sales figures and extensive network of physical offline stores. One of the key pillars of Apple's success lies in its ability to consistently offer insights and creativity that resonate with consumers. Apple's relentless pursuit of innovation sets it apart from competitors, as evidenced by the iconic iPhone, MacBook, and other groundbreaking products that have redefined the technology landscape. Furthermore, Apple's dedication to providing exceptional after-sales services contributes significantly to its allure. The brand's commitment to customer satisfaction, with its user-friendly interfaces, prompt software updates, and responsive support teams, ensures a loyal customer base that continues to grow. Another essential aspect of Apple's success is its willingness to take on social responsibility. The company actively engages in environmental sustainability efforts and ethical sourcing, aligning its business practices with societal concerns. This commitment enhances Apple's reputation and appeals to socially conscious consumers. As a peer into the future, Apple Inc. faces both opportunities and challenges. On one hand, the company is poised to continue pushing technological boundaries, offering consumers even more cutting-edge innovations. With advancements in artificial intelligence, augmented reality, and other emerging technologies, Apple has ample room to expand its product offerings and maintain its competitive edge.

Keywords: Apple Inc.; After-sales service; Technology; Customer loyalty; Social responsibility.

1. Introduction

What is Apple Inc.'s secret to being successful and leading the industry to grow? In 2021, Apple was valued at over 2 trillion dollars and is a prized technology company globally. As a successful and extremely mature technology brand, Apple uses its slogan "Think Different" to tell the world that they are able to provide creative products and innovative philosophy on the brand. Apple's founder Steven Jobs and his friend Steven Wozniak paired up to create the very first Apple computer on April 1st, 1976 in StevenJobs' basement at the time they were the staff of Hewlett Packard [1].

It is the start of their successful entrepreneurship journal, although there are many difficulties they encounter the efforts they put in to make a perfect brand. However, a unfortunate happened the death of Jobs on October 5th, 2011, This led Apple to drastically lose its mind until Tim Cook took his place as the new CEO of Apple. Steven Jobs, Tim Cook, and many staff made a vast contribution to the insight and creativity of Apple Inc. represented at annual Apple events, the official website, advertising clips, and the Apple offline store. What is quite noticeable is that Apple Inc. is devoted to offering customers the best experience in order to enhance the loyalty of customers. For example, the trade-in products activity is pleasing for the customer, the surprisingly accessible connection of each different product, the great after-sell service via Apple Care, the "back to school" discounts for university students and the genius bar for customers who are willing to learn more about soft and hardware. All those strategies enrich customers' faithfulness in the brand and develop potential customers.

This article will give the direction of how Apple Inc. became successful from the aspect of its marketing strategies, the activity it held, its offline store, and its willingness to take social

responsibility. The analysis of the strategies that helped Apple Inc. become successful can become a standard for the same industry to follow up, allowing the industry to work hard, and provide innovative ideas for entrepreneurs and managers. Meanwhile, it let the industry and people realize that Apple's success is not only because of the product itself but also its commitment to social responsibility.

2. Overview of Apple Inc. and its Marketing

Apple has consistently demonstrated remarkable progress and an unwavering commitment to delivering excellence to its customers over the years. This dedication is exemplified by Apple Inc.'s impressive operating income, which stood at \$22,998 million for the three months ending in June 2023. Moreover, over the past twelve months leading up to June 2023, Apple reported a staggering \$112,226 million in operating income [2]. These exceptional financial figures unequivocally convey that an ever-growing number of individuals are choosing Apple as their preferred brand, underscoring the company's enduring popularity and financial strength in the market.

The great selling supports Apple in expanding its retail stores globally. Apple has more than 522 stores in 25 nations, the US accounts for the half of stores, China has around 50 stores, and the UK has 38 Apple stores [3]. What is more, Apple has an extensive dealer network in order to sell Apple products worldwide. These dealers can be specialized Apple-authorized dealers. Through cooperation with dealers, Apple can cover its products to a wider range of regions and markets, and people can purchase Apple products in more ways.

Apple has It is evidence to demonstrate how popular Apple is. The first Apple offline store was opened in 2001 by the brand founder Steve Jobs. The online Apple store opened in 1997 was not enough for Apple to become better. The Apple offline store came out and perfectly made it better. In Apple's offline stores, amidst the beautifully minimalist decoration, many tables display all of Apple's products for people to experience the product in reality instead of only learning about the product through the website or advertising clips. People can see and touch the products, such as the new iPhone, iPad, MacBook, Apple TV, etc., which gives people a sense of safety and satisfies their curiosity about the new products; that is the reason why many people would like to go to the Apple offline store.

Apple, via different marketing strategies and its brand value, raised its reputation and gained support from folks. One of the strategies that Apple uses most in advertising is to use narratives to share the story and the meaning behind it. They believe that using narratives to tell the audience is much more convincing and personal and is able to make the distance closer compared with an expert. Once customers feel the related feeling with a brand, they are more likely to purchase the products and see it as an unforgettable products they ever bought. Apple also takes serious consideration of the needs of customers. In other words, what customers expect to see from Apple is precisely vital. Apple recognized that its customers were more interested in understanding the why behind its product creations rather than delving into the intricate technical details of the product development process. This customer-centric philosophy was exemplified by Steve Jobs, who famously stated, "people with passion can change the world for the better" [4]. Jobs not only espoused this philosophy but also lived it during his lifetime.

Steve Jobs channeled his passion into making Apple a trailblazer in technology, relentlessly pursuing innovation and pushing the boundaries of what was possible. He was unwavering in his commitment to providing people with high-quality products that were not only functional but also aesthetically pleasing. Additionally, he recognized the importance of creating compelling narratives and experiences around Apple products that captivated and delighted customers.

In essence, Steve Jobs embodied the idea that passion, innovation, and a dedication to improving people's lives were at the core of Apple's mission. His visionary approach has left an indelible mark on Apple's culture and continues to inspire the company's commitment to excellence and customer satisfaction.

3. Successful Factor One: Insight and Creativity

3.1. Apple Event

Each year, Apple Inc. hosts an annual Apple Event where they unveil their latest products and initiatives. The Apple Event is often likened to a captivating performance by a leading actor, with the spotlight shining on the new products rather than the executive presenters on stage. Journalists, critics, and internet users eagerly anticipate the event, poised to offer their commentary on the products. However, until the official announcements are made during the Apple Event, any news or rumors about the products should be taken with a grain of skepticism. This anticipation is akin to the excitement one feels when a highly recommended movie, which everyone has been eagerly awaiting, finally premieres. People are drawn to the Apple Event out of both curiosity and enthusiasm, eager to witness the unveiling of Apple's latest innovations [5]. It can also make a connection with people who are ready to leave their comments and whose work need to give people advice about technology purchase. They have to buy the product and use every function in their daily life in order to offer real feedback and to check out whether the information on Apple Event match with the product or not instead only exaggerate the product. Apple Event became the first stop to launch products to the public's eye annually, also the key of this first company that made one trillion dollars historically.

3.2. Apple Official Website

The website of a company is considered crucial as it establishes authority and attracts people's attention. When a business is looking for a perfect website from a designer, they will struggle with it, but Apple tells what a perfect website looks like for customers and becomes a wonderful business website in many people's hearts. Apple made a brilliant website because of several factories, the easy navigation, the minimalist design, and the images chosen. First, the easy navigation provides a sense of convenience for people who view the website. Apple fully understands a complex operating website will only annoy customers, that is why they have a very clear hierarchy for the design of the website, which is represented in the top navigation bar once your mouse up in the top it will pop up all the category of Apple products, the clear icons and simple words lets people could find what they want to learn [6].

Second, the Art of Minimalism website page offers people a visually pleasing. In fact, many companies will face the problem of too many images or words being crowded on one page, which just confuses customers and affects their satisfaction with the company. Apple did a great job in the part of minimalism, and they applied the design of negative space to highlight itself [6]. Meanwhile, they will extract a lot of information into several keywords or an impressive slogan. The minimalism style that Apple applied both visually and informationally, such as Apple's slogan "Think Different". Apple held some activities to invite public speakers to have speeches to share their views of "Think Different", and the photographers to take clips and advertisements to express the philosophy behind this minimalist-style slogan.

3.3. Apple Offline Store

A well-known marketing strategy nowadays is to create a connection between the customer and the brand. Making the customer feel themselves being a part of the brand could be crucial. It could be very hard for an online store to achieve the connection since people can only see the picture provided by the seller, which might be untrustworthy. As an alternative, the experience of an offline store can be the key to making the connection between customers and the brand because they can experience products by themselves. Apple Inc. mentioned a smart concept called "try before you buy", in which not only people can go to offline stores and experience it without any purchase pressure, but also customers can find staff in the store to ask them to introduce more about the product while you have any related problem about it [7]. The Experience stores can both show the staff's professional working ability and enthusiasm for customers and give customers an opportunity to enjoy the products, which is absolutely a win-win for all perspectives.

3.4. Apple's Advertisement

Studies have shown that TV advertising does create brand awareness. Apple is convinced of this and spent \$69.68 billion on advertising in 2018 [8]. Apple's advertisements captivate the public like a movie, with beautifully rendered animations of both the catch often and the product shots. what is quite important is that Apple Inc. uses different ethnicities to make the advertising more convincing and give a sense of caring. As for modern people, the reason to buy a product can vary; that is why commercials have to find the bridge to connect with consumers and let them feel a part of the brand. For example, the commercial by Apple shooting about Beats earphones invited an African American to show a different identity. there are more examples that can be provided in the Apple commercial: an Indian kid reading the news about the iPhone 6 and an Asian kid playing with the iPhone X in the 2018 commercial [8]. Different ethnicities can express a united motion which is much more meaningful than only selling the product. It is also a very touching way to capture the audience's heart.

4. Successful Factor Two: Focusing on Customer Loyalty

After-sales services can have a huge influence on the customers' favorable of the brand, only wonderful after-sales service can make customers continue to buy new products from the same brand because they feel that this brand will give them security. One noteworthy example of a company that excels in providing after-sales service is Apple Inc. Apple goes the extra mile to ensure that its customers have a remarkable post-purchase experience. They actively solicit and listen to customer feedback regarding their products. This proactive approach not only allows Apple to understand its customers' needs better but also demonstrates a genuine commitment to improving its products and services based on customer input. A good instance is Apple Inc. offers customers a great experience of after-sales services that learn customers' feedback on certain products and what is the needs of customers, which aims to bond with customers [9].

Apple Inc. has many kinds of services after-sales, and the Genius Bar is the most effective after-sales service to enhance the loyalty of customers. Staff working in Genius Bar have to take strict training and frequent tests of their technology skills in the cause to give customers the best experience and services. When staff working in Genius Bar encounter an issue they can't deal with, they are told not to say "unfortunately" or related language that expresses any negative feeling to customers. Instead, they should say "As it turns out", in those formal and scientific languages to express professional knowledge and apologize attitude [10].

What is more, there are other after-sales that are provided by Apple Inc. and welcomed by consumers Trade-in activity, is described as a win-win-win activity by Apple itself. Once you trade your old Apple product, you have three options for applying the old product toward a certain proportion of the new one's price and getting a lower price for the new one, the second option is to get some value from the old product, the last option is if old products are not eligible for credit, Apple will recycle it for free due to it is environmental-friendly for the planet [11]. This activity has made a huge contribution to the world and given benefits to the customer, which fits the aim of Apple Inc. to bond with customers and establish a trustworthy image for the brand.

5. Successful Factor Three: Adhere to the Construction of Social Responsibility

Apple Inc. has embraced its role as a leader in society, actively promoting positive values and making a meaningful impact on various social causes. This commitment to social responsibility is exemplified through their actions.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Apple demonstrated its dedication to helping those in need by donating a substantial \$10 million to a COVID-19 fundraiser organized by [12]. This generous contribution not only provided much-needed support to the relief efforts but also set an example for other organizations to follow.

Furthermore, Apple has shown a strong commitment to supporting minority groups, particularly the LGBTQ community. They have taken proactive steps to raise awareness and promote inclusivity by creating rainbow-themed wallpapers. These wallpapers serve as a visible symbol of support and encouragement for LGBTQ individuals and their allies. Apple's stance of inclusivity and support is not only commendable but also widely appreciated by those who value diversity and equality.

What is more, Apple Inc. has always been concerned about environmental issues and they try to contribute to dealing with environmental issues. Apple has rolled out an activity program that encourages people to give up their old products and give them to Apple the recycling instead of just keeping them at home. In 2020, Apple Inc. has made a commitment that products to be 100% carbon-neutral in 2023. It is a tough goal to achieve, to deal with it Apple has invented a robot called Daisy to help sort every product component to make the work much more efficient [13]. In the same year, as world's largest technology company, Apple publicized their environmentally- friendly awareness to everyone and cancelled the offer of iPhone chargers for consumers in order to lower carbon elimination, this action contributed to the natural saving of 2 million tons of carbon emissions [12].

6. Future Development and Challenges of Apple Inc.

Apple has very strict management of their brand, and they have a quest to surpass themselves and reflect on any disadvantages of the brand, they also realize there are some problems that will cause them trouble. For example, the iOS system for iPhone always has some technical issues which lead customers to have a not good experience with the product. Furthermore, the Memory Limitations of the iPhone system cause users to have no longer enough capacity to update the app in order to get the newest function. What coming next is many apps in the App Store will have bugs and breakdowns when the app running, the battery life storage, and the concern of app security [14].

In terms of solving those technical issues, they focus on updating the iOS system for users, and supervising the inventors of apps to keep updating their app but without occupying more capacity of users' iPhones in the cause of giving users a smoother experience. To deal with the problem led by the breakdowns of apps, Apple Inc. has invented "Beta Testin" for applications to check if it is safe and functional, if there is any problem during the checking, Apple needs Applications to fix the issue to get the application live in iOS App Store. As for the problem of short battery life, Apple Inc. concentrates on overseeing the inventor of Applications design the program that wastes less battery. Last but not least, Apple uses proper data encryption to prevent black hat hackers from stealing any data or privacy [14].

7. Conclusion

Overall, as a successful and mature technology brand, Apple Inc. uses marketing strategies such as Apple Event, its official website, offline store, and advertisement to demonstrate they are a technology brand that not only concentrates on offering an excellent product for customers but also insist to provide people with a sense of belong and show cultural diversity. In addition, after-sales services are a great part that Apple Inc. is good at via customer feedback. Apple Inc. set up Genius Bar to give consumers a better experience and a sense of security when consumers encounter any issue after they purchase the products instead of the concept of leaving customers alone after they have spent their money. What is quite noticeable is that Apple Inc. adheres to social responsibility and cares the environmental issues It made a commitment that make carbon-neutral products in 2030 in order to illustrate it cares caring the world. Apple also calls for minority groups such as LGBTQ and designed a related theme to support LGBTQ groups.

The discussion above demonstrates many marketing strategies that make Apple Inc. successful. However, it does not exactly mention how people think about the price level of Apple products. Learning how consumers' affordability in purchasing Apple products could be a crucial factor that makes Apple grow.

Since Apple Inc. already has a leading role in the industry, it can be very tough and tricky for it to become more innovative. In future development, except to create more advanced technology and taking social responsibility, how can Apple Inc. do better and still be in the leading role of the industry? It is a question that even Apple needs to think about in the cause of making better brand value.

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