

Analyzing the Impact of Service Remediation on Consumers and Businesses

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ABSTRACT

In a modern service economy, service quality is critical to consumer satisfaction and firm competitiveness, but service quality problems are difficult to avoid. Therefore, firms need to take measures for service remediation to solve the dissatisfaction problems encountered by consumers. This thesis will explore the impact of service remediation on consumer satisfaction, loyalty and consumer protection as well as corporate reputation management, profit, revenue and cost of quality from both consumer and firm perspectives to help firms better understand the impact of service remediation on consumers and firms as well as to provide some management recommendations. These recommendations will help to improve service quality, enhance consumer satisfaction, and strengthen the competitiveness and sustainability of enterprises.

KEYWORDS

Service remediation; Consumers; Corporations

1. INTRODUCTION

In a modern service economy, service quality plays a crucial role in consumer satisfaction and business competitiveness. However, even with the most conscientious operations, service quality problems remain unavoidable. When consumers experience unsatisfactory service quality problems, companies need to take steps to remedy the situation in order to maximize consumer satisfaction and trust. This concept, known as "service remediation", has attracted extensive research interest in recent years.

The purpose of this thesis is to explore the meaning of service remediation and related research, as well as its theoretical implications in terms of the cost of quality for both consumers and firms. From the consumers' perspective, service remediation not only affects consumer satisfaction and loyalty, but also has implications for consumer protection and word-of-mouth (WOM) communication. And from the firm's perspective, there is a correlation between service remediation and firms' reputation management, profits and revenues, and quality costs. This thesis will analyze these effects at the theoretical level.

In order to achieve the above objectives, this paper will carry out the following steps in sequence: first, introduce the concept and research on service remediation, and emphasize its importance in the service economy; second, explore the impact of service remediation on consumer satisfaction, loyalty, and consumer protection from the consumer perspective; and lastly, study the impact of service remediation on corporate reputation management, profits and revenues, and quality costs.

Through in-depth discussion of service remediation research, we can better understand its impact on consumers and enterprises, and provide targeted strategic and management recommendations for

enterprises, so as to improve service quality and consumer satisfaction, and thus enhance the competitiveness and sustainable development of enterprises.

2. SERVICE REMEDIATION

The definition of service remediation is the starting point for subsequent research on service remediation. As early as 1981, Etzel & Silverman pointed out that it is almost impossible for service providers to provide zero-failure services at any time, and therefore, it is necessary to study service remediation. Scholars have defined service remediation from different perspectives. At first, scholars thought that service remediation is equivalent to dealing with customer complaints and is a reactive behavior of service providers after a service failure occurs. However, in fact, service remediation includes situations where service failure has occurred but customers have not complained, and service remediation should be a kind of anticipatory behavior rather than a "fire-fighting" reactive behavior. Therefore, Wei Fuxiang (2002) defines service remediation as a kind of immediate and proactive response made by a service company when a service failure occurs. All of these definitions view the occurrence of service failure as a result, and service remediation is the correct and timely rescue measures for this result.

Tax & Brown (1998), on the other hand, defined service remediation from another perspective, and they believed that service remediation is a management process, which firstly needs to find out service failures, analyze the causes of failures, and then, on the basis of quantitative analysis, evaluate the service failures and take appropriate management measures to solve them. The focus of their research has been not only on the correction of a single failure, but also emphasizes the continuous improvement and refinement of the entire service system. This viewpoint views service remediation as a process, which is in line with today's mainstream viewpoint, but ignores the ultimate goal of service remediation.

In summary, the study concluded that service remediation is a series of proactive, anticipatory, timely and effective management measures centered on improving customer satisfaction and loyalty, aiming at the formation of a systematic, dynamic and constantly improving service quality improvement mechanism.

3. IMPACT OF SERVICE REMEDIATION FROM THE CONSUMER'S PERSPECTIVE

3.1. Impact of Service Remediation on Consumer Satisfaction and Loyalty

In the service industry, when consumers encounter service quality problems, the service remedial measures of enterprises can have an important impact on consumer satisfaction. The timeliness and effectiveness of service remediation will directly affect the level of consumer satisfaction with the company. Consumers' experience of receiving a solution and fair compensation will have a positive impact on their psychological feelings. On the contrary, if a firm fails to adequately fulfill its service remediation obligations, consumers may become frustrated with the firm and further reduce their satisfaction and loyalty.

Tax (1998) introduced the principle of service equity to construct a model of the relationship between service remediation and consumer satisfaction as well as trust and commitment, and the empirical results showed that satisfaction with service remediation directly affects consumer trust and commitment. The more satisfied consumers are with a company's response to service remediation after experiencing service quality problems, the more their trust and loyalty to the company will increase. When consumers perceive that an enterprise takes positive action to provide timely and

effective service remedies after realizing the problem, they are more likely to continue to do business with the enterprise and actively recommend the enterprise to other potential consumers.

3.2. Impact of Service Remedies on Consumer Rights

Service remedies play a crucial role in consumer protection. Whether shopping in brick-and-mortar stores or online, consumers expect to receive quality services and products. However, it is inevitable that there will be instances of poor service quality, such as product defects, delivery delays or poor customer service. In these cases, it is crucial for consumers that companies take proactive service remediation measures.

First and foremost, service remediation demonstrates a business's responsible attitude towards consumers. A proactive business will make every effort to remedy any distress caused to consumers due to service problems. This attitude not only shows the company's respect for consumers, but also shows the company's attention to its own brand image and reputation. Through service remediation, companies send the signal that "we care about your satisfaction, and we are happy to take responsibility for our mistakes and compensate you for your losses."

Second, service remediation can effectively address the problems and issues faced by consumers. When consumers experience service quality problems, they often feel frustrated and disappointed. If a company can take timely steps to resolve the problem, consumer dissatisfaction is often alleviated. For example, if a restaurant has a service problem, such as poor food quality or bad service attitude, if the restaurant can apologize and offer a free meal or discount in a timely manner, consumers are likely to feel valued, thus forgiving the restaurant's mistake and willing to patronize it again.

By offering appropriate compensation, alternative solutions or redoing the service, businesses are able to safeguard consumers' rights and ensure that they are treated fairly and reasonably in the purchasing process. Consumers want more than just an apology when they experience a problem; they want substantial compensation or a solution. Therefore, enterprises need to take into account the real needs and interests of consumers when formulating service remediation programs, and take practical measures to solve problems rather than just coping with them.

When consumers feel the positive response and remedial efforts of a business to a service quality problem, they are often more willing to choose to maintain a long-term relationship with that business. Consumers perceive that the company cares about their feelings and is capable of solving the problem, and therefore trust the company more. At the same time, consumers' overall image of and trust in the business will increase. A company that is good at service remediation tends to win the reputation and trust of consumers, thus attracting more customers and achieving sustainable growth.

Service remediation not only helps to safeguard consumers' rights and interests, but also enhances the relationship and cooperative trust between consumers and businesses. If an enterprise can deal with service quality problems in a timely and effective manner, it can not only protect the interests of consumers, but also enhance its own competitiveness and brand value. Therefore, enterprises should pay attention to service remediation work and establish a sound service remediation mechanism, so as to win the trust and support of consumers and realize sustainable development.

3.3. Impact of Service Remediation on Consumer Word-of-Mouth

After consumers experience a service quality problem and receive a satisfactory service remedy, they tend to share this positive experience with others. Consumer word-of-mouth and positive word-of-mouth have a direct impact on a company's reputation and image.

Research has shown that good service remediation can stimulate the word-of-mouth spreading effect among consumers. After consumers experience positive problem-solving efforts by a company and receive satisfactory service remediation, they tend to pass on positive reviews and recommendations

on social media, word-of-mouth sites, or in face-to-face interactions with others. This kind of word-of-mouth communication helps to increase a company's visibility, attract more consumers and potential customers, and further enhance its reputation and market competitiveness.

Positive word-of-mouth also has a higher degree of influence and credibility. When consumers share their positive experiences and appreciation of a business's problem solving with others, this information is often seen as a reliable reference by other consumers and enhances their trust in that business. On the contrary, negative comments and dissatisfaction from consumers about a firm's failure to provide satisfactory service remedies may damage the firm's reputation and credibility.

Therefore, businesses should emphasize and devote appropriate resources to implement effective service remedies. By responding to consumers' problems in a timely manner and providing good solutions, firms can proactively influence consumer word-of-mouth and word-of-mouth, thus making service remediation an important factor that contributes to consumer satisfaction and loyalty as well as to the firm's reputation.

4. IMPACT OF SERVICE REMEDIATION FROM A BUSINESS PERSPECTIVE

4.1. Impact of Service Remediation on Corporate Reputation

The reputation of an enterprise is crucial in the current fiercely competitive market. It is not only the intangible assets of the enterprise, but also affects the degree of consumer recognition and trust in the enterprise. And when the enterprise faces service quality problems, it is especially important to take active service remedial measures. The essence of service remediation is to regain consumer satisfaction and trust through proactive attitudes and proactive solutions after problems arise.

Proactive service remediation helps to recover consumer satisfaction. Consumers often want timely and effective solutions to problems they encounter. If a company is able to act quickly and provide appropriate solutions, consumer dissatisfaction with the company will be alleviated, increasing the willingness to repurchase. Service remediation can make up for service defects, thus avoiding the spread of negative word-of-mouth. When a service problem occurs, if a company leaves it unattended or takes its time in responding to it, it may lead to further fermentation of consumer dissatisfaction and spread to more potential consumers through word of mouth. By taking active service remediation measures, companies can quickly resolve problems and avoid the spread of negative word-of-mouth, thereby protecting their reputation.

Effective service remediation can also build consumers' trust and goodwill towards the company. When a company pays sincere attention to a consumer's problem and takes active measures to solve it, the consumer will feel the company's sincerity and care, and then build up a sense of trust in the company. This sense of trust will not only deepen consumers' positive evaluation of the enterprise, but also make them more inclined to choose the enterprise's products or services and become its loyal customers.

In addition, active service remedial measures can also enhance the enterprise's reputation and brand value. A company that is known for its decisiveness and timeliness in resolving problems will be viewed by consumers as trustworthy and professional. With the accumulation of a good reputation, the brand value of the enterprise will gradually increase, thus enhancing its competitiveness in the market.

However, if an enterprise fails to fulfill its service remediation obligations adequately and ignores or responds improperly to consumer problems, it may cause serious negative impacts on its reputation. Consumers' disappointment and distrust of the enterprise will spread rapidly, leading to damage to the brand image, loss of original loyalty, and other potential customers will be deterred as a result.

In summary, service remediation is critical to a company's reputation and brand image. Proactively resolving service quality issues, recovering consumer satisfaction, and remedying possible defects not only builds consumer trust and goodwill, but also brings more business opportunities and long-term development for the enterprise. Therefore, companies should consider service remediation as part of a strategy that focuses on maintaining and enhancing their good reputation in the marketplace.

4.2. Impact of Service Remediation on Business Profits and Revenues

Service remediation has a direct impact on the profitability and revenue of a business. By resolving consumer issues in a timely manner and providing quality service remediation, a business is able to increase consumer satisfaction and loyalty, which leads to more sales and repeat purchases. This will significantly increase sales and market share and generate more revenue for the business.

Positive service remediation can also lead to positive word-of-mouth communication from consumers and a favorable reputation for the business. Consumers are often willing to share with businesses where they have had a good service experience and recommend them to others. This word-of-mouth spread can lead to more trust and recognition, attracting more new customers. The arrival of new customers will not only expand the potential market for the business, but will also increase sales opportunities and revenue.

However, if a business fails to properly address service quality issues or carry out appropriate service remedies, it may face the risk of consumer attrition and negative word-of-mouth. Consumer dissatisfaction with the business could potentially spread to other potential consumers through negative word of mouth, which could lead to a decrease in sales and loss of customers. In addition, negative word-of-mouth can damage a firm's brand image and reputation, leading to a decrease in consumer trust in the firm and further affecting its profits and revenues.

In summary, through proactive service remediation, an enterprise can increase consumer satisfaction and loyalty, promote sales and repeat purchases, and attract more new customers, thereby increasing its sales and market share. However, if service remediation is not done properly or if consumer problems are ignored, there may be a risk of consumer attrition and negative word-of-mouth, which can adversely affect a firm's profits and revenues. Therefore, companies should pay high attention to service remediation and consider it as one of the important strategies to enhance profits and revenues.

4.3. The Impact of Service Remediation on the Cost of Quality for Firms

When consumers experience service quality problems, companies need to take appropriate remedial measures to resolve the problem and restore service quality. This may require additional investment in human, material and time costs. Proactive and efficient service remediation can reduce the cost of quality for firms. Identifying and resolving problems in a timely manner and preventing further expansion of quality issues can reduce consumer complaints and refunds, thereby reducing subsequent quality restoration costs. By taking remedial actions quickly and precisely, companies can effectively control and minimize the scope of quality problems to avoid affecting more consumers and orders.

In addition, effective service remediation can lead to positive word-of-mouth effects and increased consumer loyalty, thereby reducing marketing and customer acquisition costs. Actively solving consumer problems and providing quality remedial services can enhance consumers' trust and satisfaction with the company, stimulate positive word-of-mouth spreading among consumers, and prompt more potential customers to choose the company's products or services. This favorable word-of-mouth spread can reduce the enterprise's investment in marketing and brand promotion, reduce publicity costs, and lower customer acquisition costs.

Positive and efficient service remediation can also capitalize on existing customer resources and enhance customer loyalty and retention. When companies are able to quickly resolve consumer issues

and provide satisfactory remedies, consumers will feel the care and effort of the company, which will increase their trust and loyalty to the company. This means that businesses can better retain existing customers and attract more potential customers through positive word-of-mouth communication, reducing the cost of churn and replacement.

Positive and efficient service remediation reduces the cost of quality for businesses. By resolving consumer problems in a timely manner and providing satisfactory remediation services, firms can control and minimize the cost of quality repair and reduce the cost of marketing and customer acquisition through positive word-of-mouth effects and enhanced consumer loyalty. Therefore, firms should consider service remediation as an important part of their management and operations, and focus on improving service quality and satisfaction in order to reduce quality costs and enhance overall competitiveness.

5. MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1. Management Recommendations

(1) The establishment of a sound framework for a service remediation system is of vital importance to enterprises. This institutional framework aims to maximize consumer satisfaction and, through systematic processes and strict standardized operations, effectively handle problems arising in the course of service and provide quick and effective remedies, thereby enhancing consumers' trust and loyalty to the enterprise.

Enterprises can collect data through online and offline big data platforms to gain a comprehensive understanding of the probability and causes of service errors that may occur during the service process. Through data analysis, companies can identify common trouble spots and pain points, and establish fast and efficient institutionalized processes for service remediation in a targeted manner. For example, if an e-commerce vendor experiences frequent delays in the delivery process, the enterprise can establish a specialized handling process for this issue to ensure that consumers are notified in a timely manner and provided with a compensation plan, thereby alleviating consumer dissatisfaction and protecting consumer rights and interests.

When establishing the framework of the service remediation system, enterprises need to clarify the responsible subjects and processes for emergency handling of service failures. Determine the time window for service remediation, i.e., stipulate how long it takes to activate emergency handling measures after a service failure occurs. At the same time, enterprises should also set up service compensation standards, specifying the forms and standards of compensation available to damaged consumers, so as to ensure fairness and reasonableness in dealing with service failures. These provisions and standards will constitute a pre-planned plan for emergency handling and service compensation after a service failure occurs, providing clear operational guidelines and norms for enterprises and helping to improve the efficiency and accuracy of service remediation.

More importantly, the emergency handling and service compensation plan for service failures will be built into an important part of the corporate culture. Consider service remediation as one of the core values and missions of the company, and emphasize the importance and responsibility of employees for customer satisfaction. Through employee training, incentives and performance appraisals, create a corporate culture that emphasizes service quality and consumer experience. Only with the participation of all staff and a high degree of attention can the service remediation system really work, and the interests of customers can be effectively protected.

(2) Proactive service remediation and the development of effective remedial measures are very important for enterprises. An enterprise that can achieve effective implementation of service remedies before, during and after the sale will be able to greatly enhance consumer satisfaction and loyalty, while protecting its own brand reputation and competitiveness.

In the pre-sale stage, enterprises should clarify the service indicators and clear service commitments of the online and offline service platforms. This includes clear service specifications and detailed product information so that consumers can have a clear understanding and expectation of the product before purchase. Through clear service commitments, companies can build consumer trust in service quality while laying the foundation for possible future service problems.

In the mid-sale stage, the specific service behavior of the service subject should match the service pre-sale commitment in order to maximize the provision of high-quality services. This means that companies need to ensure that their services are timely, professional and friendly during the service process to ensure that consumers' shopping experience meets or exceeds their expectations. If a problem occurs during the service process, companies should take immediate action to rectify the issue through direct communication or immediate solutions to avoid amplifying the problem and impacting consumer satisfaction.

After-sales service is a critical period for service remediation. Companies need to establish open and effective consumer communication channels to ensure that consumers can easily reflect service dissatisfaction and complaints. These communication channels can include customer service hotlines, online chats, emails and other means so that consumers can express their needs and opinions in a timely manner. Enterprises should also establish a sound service protection mechanism, such as setting clear standards and time windows for service compensation, to ensure that remedial measures can be initiated quickly and effectively after a service failure occurs.

When dealing with consumer complaints and service dissatisfaction, firms should be proactive, correcting errors in a timely manner and shortening the time consumers have to wait for remedies. Consumers usually want to get a quick response and solution after expressing a complaint or dissatisfaction, so companies need to set up a mechanism to check the progress of remediation in real time to ensure that consumers' problems can be followed up and handled in a timely manner.

Through these measures, enterprises can not only alleviate consumer dissatisfaction and reduce the likelihood of consumer complaints and grievances, but also improve after-sales service and maximize consumer satisfaction. The quality of after-sales service is often one of the most important factors for consumers to be impressed by an enterprise, and quality after-sales service can effectively retain old customers and also help attract new customers.

(3) Attaching importance to consumer emotional identity and actively guiding consumer participation is crucial for enterprises. Consumer emotional identity refers to the emotional recognition and loyalty of consumers to the enterprise or brand, which is often deep-seated, not only based on the products and services themselves, but also based on the recognition of corporate culture, values and service concepts. Guiding consumers to actively participate in the process of service remediation is one of the important ways for enterprises to enhance consumers' emotional identity.

Enterprises should make better use of consumer participation in service remediation to reduce the perception gap between the two parties by enhancing information exchange. Consumers often feel disappointed and dissatisfied because of service errors or problems. If enterprises can take the initiative to invite consumers to participate in the process of service remediation and fully communicate with them, consumers will understand more about the efforts made by enterprises to solve problems, and increase their trust and identification with them. This two-way information exchange can narrow the cognitive gap between the two parties and establish a closer relationship.

Enterprises should endeavor to enhance consumers' understanding of the content and process of service remediation, and consider consumer participation as an investment of resources. By transparently disclosing the content and progress of service remediation to consumers, consumers can better understand the efforts made by the company in solving the problems, thus increasing their trust and recognition of the company. In addition, by fostering a humanized service atmosphere, companies

can encourage consumers to participate in the service remediation process with a sense of ownership, so that consumers can feel that their voices and opinions are respected and valued.

Consumer participation in the process of service remediation not only increases consumer satisfaction, but also enhances emotional identity. A high level of consumer satisfaction tends to trigger repeat purchasing behavior as consumers are more inclined to choose companies that proactively solve problems and provide a good experience. After consumers are involved in the service remediation process, they are more likely to take the initiative to spread positive word-of-mouth and share positive consumer experiences with their friends, family and even social media, thus further establishing the company's good reputation and image and attracting more potential customers.

Therefore, enterprises should pay attention to the establishment of consumer emotional identity, by guiding consumers to actively participate in service remediation, strengthening information exchange and transparency, creating a humanized service atmosphere, encouraging consumers to participate in service remediation with a sense of ownership, thus enhancing consumer satisfaction and loyalty, and promoting consumer recognition and trust in the enterprise brand. Only by establishing consumers' emotional identity can enterprises continue to attract and retain consumers and realize long-term stable development. By actively guiding consumers to participate in service remediation, companies can establish closer ties and interactions with consumers, and promote the sustainable development and enhancement of the relationship between the two parties.

5.2. Conclusions

Research on the impact of service remediation from a consumer perspective shows that good service remediation can increase consumer satisfaction and loyalty, protect consumer rights and promote positive word-of-mouth communication. This is of great significance to enterprises because building good consumer relations can maintain cooperative relationships over time and enhance the competitiveness and market position of enterprises.

First, good service remediation can increase consumer satisfaction and loyalty. When consumers are faced with problems or complaints and the enterprise is able to act quickly and provide effective solutions, consumers will feel respected and valued. This satisfaction will motivate consumers to have positive emotional connection with the company and enhance their favorability towards the company.

Secondly, good service remediation can protect consumers' rights and interests. When consumers face service quality problems, they expect enterprises to compensate and solve the problems fairly. Timely and effective service remedies can meet the reasonable needs of consumers, protect consumers' rights and interests, and enhance consumers' trust and sense of security in the enterprise.

Finally, good service remedy promotes positive word-of-mouth communication. When consumers are faced with problems that are satisfactorily resolved and fairly compensated, they are more likely to share their positive experiences with others. This word-of-mouth communication will help companies attract more potential consumers and enhance their brand image and awareness.

At the same time, companies should emphasize and invest in service remedies to achieve a long-term relationship between consumers and the company, enhance trust, and strengthen the company's competitiveness and market position. By proactively resolving problems, providing satisfactory solutions and compensation, and continuously improving service quality, firms can build good consumer relationships and gain consumer support and loyalty. This will ensure the continued growth and success of the business in a highly competitive market.

First of all, through timely and effective service remediation, companies can build a good corporate image and reputation. Consumers develop a positive impression of a company's ability to solve problems and strive for excellence. This good word-of-mouth will spread to other potential consumers, attracting more customers to choose the enterprise's products or services, thus increasing the enterprise's sales and market share.

Secondly, service remedies can enhance consumer satisfaction and loyalty. When consumers receive timely responses and solutions to their problems, they will feel valued and cared for, thus increasing their trust in the company. This trust and loyalty will motivate consumers to continue choosing to transact business with the business and build a long-term relationship. In addition, loyal consumers are also more likely to become loyal advocates of the brand and actively recommend the firm's products or services to others.

In addition, a good service remediation strategy helps reduce the cost of quality. By resolving problems in a timely manner, firms can avoid additional costs such as refunds and compensation due to service quality problems. In addition, actively pursuing service remediation can also help reduce marketing and customer acquisition expenses. Retaining existing customers is more cost-effective than acquiring new customers because existing customers have developed trust and loyalty to the organization, and they are more likely to make repeat purchases and engage in long-term cooperation.

Therefore, companies should consider service remediation as an important strategic measure to cope with and solve service quality problems. By establishing a sound service remediation mechanism and cultivating a good corporate image and reputation, enterprises can enhance consumers' trust and loyalty and realize sustainable profitability and development. In addition, enterprises should also focus on quality management and improvement to radically reduce the occurrence of service quality problems, further reduce quality costs, and improve their competitiveness and market position.

Service remediation has a significant impact on a firm's reputation, profits and revenues, and cost of quality. Enterprises should recognize and value the importance of service remediation and take active steps to optimize and improve their service remediation strategies to provide consumers with a quality customer experience and achieve long-term sustainable development. By doing so, companies will be able to win the support and loyalty of consumers and stand out in a competitive market.

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