

Case Study Exercise One – Canadian Blood Services

Case Study Questions

Question 1: Perform a SWOT analysis for Canadian Blood Services.

Strengths:

1. **Positive brand image:** CBS was formed in 1998, and was funded by health ministry's hence it has a strong reputation and brand image (Mulholland, 2011). CBS has further taken measures to reduce transfusion-related injuries (Lin et al., 2012) hence its brand image had improved over the years
2. **Increase in blood collection:** According to the case statistics, there was increase in number of donors and units of blood collected by Canadian Blood Services. CBS has a strong and improved recruitment process because of which blood collection has increased drastically (Mulholland, 2011).
3. **Safe supply of blood and blood products:** It has a strong policy whereby safe supply of blood is ensured and hence CBS have positive status. According to recent research 80 percent of total population has trust in CBS. Furthermore according to research, current incidence and residual risk of HIV at CBS has decreased (O'Brien, et al., 2012). Similarly CBS provided all vital services and was able to manufacture 100 percent of blood products.
4. **Strong Distribution Network:** It has a strong network with 43 permanent collection sites (Mulholland, 2011). According to Blake and Hardy (2014) CBS has an effective distribution network that ensures inventory level is according to required demand.
5. **Effective Cost Maintenance:** CBS employs a staffing model whereby staffing cost is kept minimum ((Blake & Shimla, 2014).

Weaknesses:

1. **Demand < Supply (unable to fulfill demand):** CBS is unable to fulfill the supply for increased demand.
2. **Limited resources:** being a non for profit organization it has limited resources to keep up with growing demand.

Opportunities:

1. **Increase in demand for blood and blood products:** The demand for blood products was increasing at the rate of two percent per year (twice the rate of population growth) mainly because of aging population and from hospitals to reduce wait times.
2. **CBS enjoys strong national support:** it has a strong network (Blake & Hardy, 2014) and hence can expand.
3. **Marketing on cost effective mediums:** social media is one effective way of marketing in limited budget.

Threats:

1. **Blood donors are limited:** Blood donation in Canada was less compared to other countries.
2. **Variation in demand:** The demand for blood was affected by several seasonal variations.
3. **Problems in storage:** Storage of blood cells is problematic because red cells undergo several physicochemical changes (Pavensk, et al., 2012) hence maintain safety standards is a challenge.
4. **Effective Plasma utilization:** According to Zeller et al., (2015) achieving optimal plasma utilization remains a challenge.
5. **Awareness increasing among donors:** Iron deficiency is increasing among blood donors specifically in Canada and awareness about that is increasing among donors (Goldman, et al., 2014).

Question 2: What is the consumer – decision process in blood donation? Be specific and justify your answers.

Consumer decision making process refers to set of activities or behaviors (Mulholland, 2011) that consumer goes through while selecting, purchasing, using and eventually disposing off a product or a service (Solomon et al., 2014). Generally in blood donation, consumer similarly goes through various stages. A typical consumer starts with “problem recognition stage” where consumer identifies that a problem exists and situation is not ideal. In this stage consumer identifies that a situation occur where something must be done to reduce tension, as a result consumer starts gathering information through both primary and secondary sources (Mulholland, 2011).

After information stage consumer moves to “awareness stage” and becomes motivated to solve the problem or to satisfy the need that exists and create tension. Eventually the stage comes where consumer makes the decision to donate blood however several barriers exit in this stage, for example personal, physical and psychological barriers (Mulholland, 2011).

There are various factors that influence consumers in decision making model. Overall in this process (all of the stages mentioned above) consumer is influenced by peers, family and friends, one of the major factor that motivates consumer to donate is “altruism” where consumer feels that donation process is safe and secure (Hyde, et al., 2013). However according to research by CBS, altruism is important but more important is that the process is simple and consumer is further motivated if he feels that donation process is easy and convenient (Mulholland, 2011).

There are major factors that demotivate consumers. Firstly if there is lack of awareness, in that case although consumer wants to reduce tension but he won’t donate because he is not aware. This issue can be solved by developing an effective marketing plan. According to Renner, et al., (2013) guilt appeals are effective to motivate consumers to donate blood and organs. Secondly consumer is demotivated if he feels that the donation process is complicated and hence won’t donate even if he is motivated to donate (Mulholland, 2011).

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