

Changing trends in Hospital marketing: delivering luxury with Medicare

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Abstract

Marketing is a complex arrangements of steps which creates an environment that compels a consumer to get attracted towards a good or service and when it comes to advertise or promote a service than it is certainly a cumbersome task. Nearly all those corporations which are retained by the government like post office, railways etc are connected with traditional perspectives, and such traditional views are also affixed with the hospital industry. Now the time is heading towards a major change in the entire economy and hospital sector is also one of those industries which are influenced by this changing trend. This article highlights some existing and emerging trends, which are being adopted by the hospital industry. The article also throws light on the fact that in India large section of population resides in rural areas and this part of population is still deprived of these innovative facilities.

Keywords: Hospital Marketing, trends, service marketing

Introduction

Our nation, with a population of more than 1.25 billion, needs many facilities for the people over the basic needs of a man among which health comes somewhere on top of the chart but when it comes to development of healthcare, it is found at the end of the list. In a nation where a major part of population comes under the poverty line, Medicare facilities need to be taken care. In most of the nation's government hospitals holds the responsibility to serve the society and provide a high quality of healthcare facilities but in India conditions are much worse where they are not able to provide even the basic medical facilities. In such circumstances the people with fewer resources are the sufferers.

In such changing sphere, hospital marketing is the need of the hour and the only tool which can bring everything on track. Hospital marketing adopts various ideas and techniques which makes medical service a quality experience for the person.

Service Marketing

Service marketing is all about marketing and making people buy something which is intangible. In this era of marketing, customers are compelled to buy the time, skills and knowledge of a service provider. It is an art of selling a promise. This part of marketing is very difficult task as in service marketing a marketer fails to understand at which stage such promises falls (Jha, 2003).

Out of the seven Ps of service marketing mix “People” are found to be most crucial component because service marketing is all about satisfying customers.

Hospital Marketing

No matter, whether it is a profit making or nonprofit making organization it is vital for them to popularize their products, by the way of marketing.

Earlier it was believed that it is mandatory only for a profit making organization to seek assistance of marketing, but nowadays the marketing problems are also an issue for nonprofit making sectors such as educational & health and this task becomes even more problematic when it comes to the issue of marketing a services.

To overcome these problems associated with the outdated technologies being used in the health sector, that hinders the growth of medical sector and services, hospitals nowadays adopt various new technologies and trends and seem to gain popularity in a short span of time.

With these emerging new trends of hospital marketing , some pale colored buildings, rooms full of phenyl odor and a very small chemist shop are not sufficient symbolize hospitals.

On the top of all this the concept and mission of hospitals had been restructured. Today hospitals are providing world class experience to the patients and the attendants, which is no way less than the facilities which are available in a five star hotel.

These changing trends are helping hospitals to make population turn towards them.

Why New Trends

Some people are of view that why we need a florist or a celebration area in hospital. But the reason why these new trends had been incorporated as a part of hospital marketing are as follows:

- Requirement of automation and updation of the existing technologies being adopted by hospitals in India.
- To give more emphasis on the quality of the services
- Unlike the earlier tradition now customers are treated as the centre of the process.
- These new trends help to deliver a world class experience.

All the aforesaid reasons for adopting new trends in this segment of services are being properly justified by the hospitals in today’s time. Along with all these reasons there are numerous factors which can be held responsible for such a change in hospital marketing sector.

New Trends in hospital Marketing

Florist

In earlier times, no one could have imagined a flower shop in a hospital, when they were in a crucial need of buying flowers for wishing a mother who just has given birth to a child. But in this changing scenario a florist shop within the boundaries of a hospital itself is a new trend of marketing and making required things available in the same place.

Celebration Hall

India is nation, where people need small reasons to celebrate and the birth of a child is nothing less than a festival. For celebrating birth of a new born infant hospitals are coming forward with providing a separate celebration section within the same premises along with making available the other requirements such as need of the manpower and various other arrangements which are being done on the part of hospitals. Such services helps to attract customers as they can easily find a place where they can celebrate the most auspicious occasion of their life and making it more memorable in a hassle free way.

These kinds of other value added services are gaining popularity these days and helps in the overall marketing strategies being adopted by the hospitals.

The best example of this kind of service is available in Cocoon Hospital Jaipur, where they are providing a celebration hall within the hospital.

Medical Tourism

Another new trend in India with regards to health care services that is gaining popularity these days is medical tourism. It has been noticed over a short period of time that a large number of persons are turning their ways towards India when it comes to a matter of medical treatment. The reasons why this aspect of tourism is being popular are the good standards of treatment. As compared to some other nations the cost of treatments in India are less, the attendants of the patients and sometimes even the patient himself can have a tie-up with the hospital for sightseeing, provision of spacious rooms with all the necessary and luxurious facilities are some of the reasons behind growth in this sector (Srinivasan, 2004).

Prayer Room

Many religions in a single country is a feature of a nation like India where the population has a deep belief in sacred things. By keeping this fact in mind some high-ranked hospitals in India also have a separate room for making the toughest moments easy with the feeling of god's presence.

Cinema Hall

For changing someone's mood entertainment is the best method. To move on with this concept few hospitals have come forward with an unusual feature that is provision of cinema hall inside the hospital. This feature is a distinctive one in itself which helps to attract people.

Luxury Rooms

All those patients who are able to afford costly treatments can experience leisure in some high ranked hospitals. Luxury wards can also be called suites because they are in no way less than a five star hotel's suite. Everything, from lights to furniture or from ambience to LED, are just perfect and are of best standards which are enough to appeal a well off person.

Health Spa

In today's era all over the country patients are being treated by new trends of medicare. It includes lots of things by which a patient can feel so better in his sufferings. Nowadays every hospital is adopting Health spa because it gives pleasure and relaxing hours to the patients.

Shopping Mall

Some of the hospitals are having shopping mall with good interior and are fully air conditioned for patients and the attendants so that things are easily available at one place and they need not to move at any other place in search of any stuff. In such shopping malls they can find everything from grocery to clothing on very affordable prices.

Aesthetic Environment

Earlier whenever someone used to imagine hospitals the first few thoughts which came to their minds were green curtains, bad odor of phenyls, stinking bed covers but as the time is changing, hospitals are moving on the path of modernization now the bad odor of phenyls has been replaced by good aroma of room fresheners, colorful curtains, designer interiors in the wards with better facilities which are sufficiently able to take out the patients out of the hospital phobia.

Other Facilities Provided by Luxury Hospitals

- Yoga centre
- Spa & saloon
- Post office
- Gymnasium

- Gift shops
- Library & cyber cafes
- Food Chain
- Booking Birth

Customer Satisfaction

It is a matter of great significance that service industry is a sector where service generation and its consumption take place at the same time. Procuring a high level of customer satisfaction is the ultimate objective of every service industry and hence to ensure this service should be provided up to the benchmark of customer's satisfaction. These inventive techniques being adopted by the luxurious private hospitals are pretty much capable of meeting customer's expectations but sometimes it has been witnessed that in the line of generating and making available the new ideas to the customers the major motto of hospitals has been diluted that is to provide world class treatment to the patients (Apte, 2008).

Conclusion

All those new trends which have been incorporated as a part of hospitals in the present era had certainly changed the mindset of people connected with the hospitals. The pool of wealthy patients can experience these changes as a much awaited change in this sector but this changing trend of hospital marketing is not only having the glorious and glittering side, apart from all the above mentioned benefits this modernizing service sector is also having some demerits which need to be given due consideration in order to make this sector completely perfect. Although these private hospitals are having all the modernized techniques and machineries but all these are available only for the wealthy population of our nation and a major part of population are still facing challenges linked to their treatments. It has been stated that approximately 68% of our population is still rural based and most of them are residing in remote areas, so these private hospitals should take an initiative to mobilize these services. The modernized private hospitals are investing a huge sum of money in promotion of their hospitals and their up gradation but if these institutes come forward and start some campaigns by which their high class treatments can be made available to the rural people than that could be more positive for our growth and their own marketing because serving hands are always better. The main and foremost agenda of this sector that is to serve patients in the best possible way and to provide them finest levels of treatment is being diluted with the entrance of all the new trends. Methods should be adopted to make these facilities available to a large part of population along with providing them world class treatments.

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