

MARKETING FOR ORNAMENTAL FISH AQUARIUM SELLER'S BUSINESS SERVICE

* SANKARAN A. ** SELVARASU A.

* Research scholar, Dept. of Business Administration, Annamalai University.

** Associate professor, Dept. of Business Administration, Annamalai University

ABSTRACT

Aquarium business service in India recorded a value of US\$ 1.3 million in the export trade in the year 2006 according to Food and Agriculture Organization. Internationally, Singapore ranks first with US\$ 49.5 million, and Zech Republic, Japan and Malaysia stood almost equally 7% in aquarium fish trade. Robert fanner (2001) reported that the concept of running a service company in contrast with retail business is not new to many industries. The service sectors provide employment for favourable economic growth. In this direction, in order to develop market for aquarium business service, there is need to studying consumer preference and existing marketing strategies, adopted by aquarists. The objectives of the study are to identify consumer preference for ornamental fish with profile of aquarium sellers and to study the existing marketing strategies adopted by ornamental fish aquarium business service providers.

Key words: *marketing strategy, aquarium, hobby, aquarium business service, pets, ornamental fish*

I. MARKET SITUATION OF AQUARIUM BUSINESS SERVICE

Ornamental fish keeping is one of the most popular hobbies in the developed countries and is gaining popularity in many developing countries. The growing interest in aquarium fishes has resulted in steady increase in aquarium fish trade, globally. According to Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) (2006), export earnings from ornamental fish trade is US \$ 251 million and more than 60% of the production comes from households of developing countries. The wholesale value of the global ornamental fish trade is estimated to be US \$ 14 Billion. More than 2500 species of ornamental fishes are traded and some 30-35 species of fresh water dominate the market. The trade with an annual growth rate of 8 percent offers a lot of scope for development. India's share in global ornamental fish trade is negligible and at present the ornamental fish export from India is dominated by the wild caught species. The top exporting country is Singapore, followed by Hong Kong, Malaysia, Thailand, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Taiwan, Indonesia and India. The largest importer of ornamental fish is USA. Europe and Japan, China and South Africa are the emerging markets of ornamental fish trade.

Ornamental fishes market in the world for public aquaria is less than 1% at present and over 99% of the market for ornamental fish is still confined to hobbyist. The brilliant, flamboyant colour and exotic appearance of the fish appeal to one and all children and aged alike. As the day passed, ornamental fish keeping become an interesting activity for many, in the process, generating income for the unemployed youth and farmers. The concept of entrepreneurship development, through ornamental fish farming is gaining popularity day-by-day. Many numbers of people are entering into this business of culturing, breeding and farming. In India, out of total export of ornamental fish, 95% is based on wild collection. Majority of the indigenous ornamental fish trade is from the North Eastern states and Southern states in India. The capture of ornamental fish is based on development of the fish culture. Fish species grown for their importance, can be successfully bred in India. The ornamental fish trade depends upon supply and demand, which is possible only by mass breeding.

Ornamental fish market linkage exists between buyers and sellers as well as domestic and international market. In order to strengthen Indian position in international ornamental fish trade,

MPEDA has implemented several strategies to adopt in terms of technology, infrastructure in order of to develop export demand based production for major importers in EU, USA and Japan. The distribution and marketing channel for the ornamental fish and plants in India is developing. The exporter (or) wholesaler plays an important role in promoting breeders and consumers. Wholesaler usually sells the fishes to local retailers and in turn, retailers directly sales to local customers, hobbyists etc.

(i). Marketing strategy for aquarium business service

The term “strategy” comes from the Greek word “Strategic” and it means “generalship”. The strategy focuses on long-term company objectives and planning, marketing programs, visions as well as goals. Marketing strategies generally include price reduction for market share growth, product differentiation, and market segmentation, as well as numerous specific strategies for specific areas of marketing. Strategy can be formulated by individuals, groups and organizations. The strategic thinking focuses on competitive advantage, consumer needs and wants, creativity, and flexibility. It is grouped as (i) customer oriented marketing strategy, (ii) competitors oriented marketing strategy. Customer oriented marketing strategy help to establish long term relationship between customers and business where as Competitor oriented marketing strategy focuses on outdoing competitors by product, prices, place, and promotion. The specific marketing strategy is planned for the following situations as pioneer strategy, follower strategy, fortress strategy, flankers strategy, market expansion strategy, withdrawal strategy, frontal attack strategy, leapfrog attack strategy, encirclement strategy, guerrilla attack strategy, divestment strategy, global strategy, national strategy, exporting strategy, pricing strategy, channels strategy, and promotion strategy.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

S.No	Authors name	year	Concepts
1	Martin Thoene	1999	Ornamental fish export trade, Availability of ornamental fish.
2	Andrew Palfreman	1999	Business concepts, Strategic planning and the business plan.
3	Mark Whittington	2000	Ornamental fish trade, biological and socio economic impacts.
4	Robert Fenner	2001	Employment for more economic growth,
5	Robert Fenner	2001	Self employment, knowledge, skills, methods, and attitudes of being a good pet keeper are vital to successful retailing the business.
6	Jason Shaw	2001	Directly related to stress, water quality parameters.
7	Sudhi K.S.	2002	Marine products export development authority supported financial aid for the analysis of ornamental fishes in Kerala as market development in India and abroad. The marketing of aquarium systems is also emerging in the state as a booming business, which mainly targets posh hotels, corporate offices and other business establishments.
8	Duane Clark	2002	Aquarium maintenance service
9	Jay shaw	2002	Aquarium business service is creation of advertising.
10	Kevin Thurston	2002	Developing water change and repacking techniques.
11	Mandal Subhasis, et al.	2006	Ornamental fish is providing marketing opportunities, agribusiness opportunities, and employment opportunities.
12	Rajeev Raghavan et al	2007	Fish species belong to 27 families and 50 general were collected from various sampling sites along the Chalakudy river in Kerala, South India.
13	Adrian Lawler	2007	Aquarium management requirements.
14	Paul Lajicek et al.	2009	Potential economic cost value and environmental effects.
15	Liffy Thomas	2010	Vaastu fish, fish health consultants, Flower horn and arowana is major customers.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

(i). STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

In the event of economic growth all over the world, stress has become evident among all people. In order to get relieved from stress, every one has cultivated the habit of hobby as part and parcel of their way of life. There are different growing businesses related to hobby in maintaining aquarium in the institutional offices and also at the household. The supply of ornamental fish is providing way for eco-friendly breeding and rearing activities. In line with aquarium business service to support the hobby, promotion is done through various schemes at the initiatives of governments and non government agencies. It is understood that the hobby of mainly aquarium has been in practices in developed countries very well. However, this has been adopted in developing countries in the initial stage. In this context, it is imperative to see a problem in setting up business support as well as develop the market with suitable marketing strategies. It is true that there are problems reported in the maintenance of health of fish as well as reacting customers with modern equipments.

(ii). NEED FOR THE STUDY

The present study intends to specify marketing strategies for ornamental fish aquarium business service in an introductory phase. Also it tries to identify the marketing strategy for aquarium sellers. The previous research work has focused on breeding, rearing and maintenance of aquarium business service. But in this work successful ornamental fish aquarium business people support and provide in existing marketing strategy. In this process, aquarium shop owners and users are coming up with new and innovative ideas to improve the sales volume on aquarium business service. It is aimed at specifying strategies to increase sales that satisfy the aquarium users based on consumer.

(iii). OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The following five objectives have been proposed for the purpose of studying customers' preference for aquarium keeping.

1. To identify the aquarium sellers for ornamental fish and profile of customer
2. To find out the varieties of fishes and ornamental fish aquarium business service (ABS).
3. To study the existing marketing strategies adopted by ornamental fish aquarium business service providers.
4. To design strategies for promoting ornamental fish aquarium business service.

(iv). DATA COLLECTION

The primary data have been collected through survey among aquarium sellers. The sales data have been extracted from aquarium seller's records on the basis of weekly sales for a period from January to August 2011. In order to collect data, filed survey was conducted from May to August 2011. The statistical tools such as percentage analysis, T- test.

(v). SAMPLING

The simple random sampling methods have been adopted to select sample respondents. The sample size is 7 individual respondents of aquarium seller's. The study area is Cuddalore district and sample unit are business enterprises (including aquarium shops).

(vi). STATISTICAL TOOLS

The researcher has adopted relevant statistical tools such as percentage analysis and T- test for analyzing data that that are describing strategies for aquarium seller's in their premise.

(vii). PROPOSITIONS

In order to evaluate for aquarium business service and marketing strategies, two propositions have been formulated to test the association of overall marketing strategies aquarium sellers and each dimensions with gender, age, weekly turnover, price range on the level of consumer preference and variation in marketing strategies adopted by sellers.

PI: The level of consumer preference for aquarium hobby is associated with gender, Age, price range.

P2: Marketing strategies adopted by aquarium business service providers to promote Business varies with aquarist's experience and weekly turnover of the shop.

IV. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

I. PROFILE OF AQUARIUM SHOP OWNERS AND THEIR MARKETING STRATEGIES.

The study encompasses eleven different features of aquarium shop owners and their marketing strategies: i) gender; ii) age; iii) weekly turnover of the shop; iv) experience; v) share of regular customers; vi) no. of aquarium varieties available in shop; vii) sales of aquarium in nos. per week; viii) sales movement of aquarium in various price range; ix) fish varieties available in the shop; x) sales of ornamental fish in nos. per week; xi) sales movement of ornamental fish varieties in various price range.

In the study the share of male are more than 86% and female are 14%. It is described that there are two categories of age involved in the study as below 30 years and above 30 years. In the study, the share of aquarium shop owners who are below 30yrs. of age are more than 29% and those who are above 30years of age are 71%. The frequency description of weekly turnover is into three categories of weekly turnover below Rs.5000, Rs.5000-Rs.10000 and above Rs.10000. In the study, the share of above Rs.10000 are more than 57% and below Rs.5000are 29% and Rs.5000-Rs.10000 are 14%. It is certain that the above Rs.10000 are the mainly concentrated with aquarium services. It is certain that aquarium shop owners have below 10 years of experience and above 10 years of experience equally poised in aquarium business services. The share of regular customers to a shop in terms of proportion have been grouped as <50% and <50% of customers who regularly visit the shop. It is found that the about 86% of shops are having more than 50% of customers as regular visitors to the shop and only 14% of shops are having less than 50% of customers who visit the shop regularly. In the study, the share of 4 varieties are more than 57% and < 5 varieties are 29% and <3 varieties are 14%. In the study, the shares of above 5 nos. of aquarium are more than 86% and below 5 nos. of aquarium are 14%.

II. SALES MOVEMENT OF DIFFERENT AQUARIUM

In order to study the sales movement of aquarium models, it has been grouped into three different categories as fast moving, slow moving and non-moving. The unit price range of fast moving aquarium is identified as <Rs1500 and slow moving aquarium is Rs.1500- Rs.5000. Finally, the unit price range of non-moving aquarium is in the price range of <Rs5000.

Further, the sales movement of fast moving category (<Rs.1500) alone have been studied by forming two categories as <Rs1000 and Rs1000-Rs1500. It is found that the sale of about 57 percent of the aquarium in falls in the category of <Rs1000 and about 43 percent of aquarium is in the category of Rs1000-Rs1500.

Similarly, the sales of slow moving category (Rs.1500-Rs.5000) of aquarium have been grouped into two sub group as Rs1500-Rs3000 and Rs3000-Rs5000. the results have indicate that about 71% of sales of aquarium falls in the category of Rs3000-Rs5000 and remaining 29% of sales related is in the category of Rs1500-Rs3000.

Finally, the sales of non-moving category of aquarium (>Rs.5000) have been grouped into two sales group as of Rs5000-Rs10000 and <Rs10000. The results have indicated that about 57% of sales of aquarium fall in the category of <Rs10000 and remaining 43% of sales related is in the category of <Rs5000-Rs10000.

III. FISH VARIETIES AVAILABLE IN SHOP

It is described that there are two levels of ornamental fish varieties available in the study such as below 25 nos. and above 25 nos. In the study, the shares of above 25 nos. are more than 57% and below 25 nos. are 43%. It is certain that the above 25 nos. are the mainly related with aquarium services.

It is described that there are two levels of ornamental fish sales volume group involved in the study such as below Rs1000 and above Rs1000. In the study, the share of above Rs1000 are more than 57% and below Rs1000 are 43%. It is certain that the above Rs1000 are the mainly related with aquarium services.

IV. SALES MOVEMENTS OF ORNAMENTAL FISH VARIETIES

In order to study the sales movement of ornamental fish, it has been grouped into three different categories as fast moving, slow moving and non-moving. The price range of fast moving ornamental fish is identified as Rs15 and slow moving aquarium is in the range of Rs100. Finally, the price range of non-moving aquarium is in the price range of Rs500.

Further, the sales movement of fast moving category alone have been studied by forming two categories as <Rs15 and >Rs15. It is found that the sales of about 71 percent of the ornamental fish category falls under >Rs15 and about 29 percent of ornamental fish under in the category of <Rs15. Similarly, the sales of slow moving category of ornamental fish have been grouped into two sub group as <Rs100 and >Rs100. The results have indicated that about 57% of sales of ornamental fish falls in the category of <Rs100 and remaining 43% of sales related is in the category of >Rs100.

Finally, the sales of non-moving category of ornamental fish have been grouped into two sales group as <Rs500 and >Rs500. The results have indicated that about 57% of sales of ornamental fish fall in the category of <Rs500 and remaining 43% of sales related is in the category of >Rs500.

V. MARKETING STRATEGIES OF AQUARIUM SHOP OWNERS

The study encompasses three different features of aquarium keeping hobby in relation to the marketing strategies of aquarium shop owners as follows: i) target customers; ii) promotional schemes iii) sales promotional offers.

It is described that there are two types of target customers group involved in the study, as businessperson and household person. In the study, the shares of household persons are more than 71% and business persons are 29%. It is described that there are three different strategies of market promotion schemes involved in the study, as TV advertisements, newspapers and others. In the study, the shares of visiting cards have been used by more than 42% of shop owners and advertisement and newspaper have been used by 28% only. It is described that there are four categories of promotional offers identified as discount, door delivery, price-off and free maintenance services. In the study, the share of price-off, discount, and door delivery are offered by more than 28%, of shop owners and free maintenance services offered by are 14% of shop owners.

V FINDINGS AND SUGGESTIONS

Finding of the study is presented in line with objectives that are proposed. The suggestions are given under marketing strategy in various sections as prescription.

FINDINGS

Based on the outcome of data analysis and interpretation the following findings are presented in line with objectives proposed in the study: (i) Profile of aquarium seller's, aquarium business service providers to promote business varies with aquarist's experience and weekly turnover of the shop

The study encompasses three different features of aquarium keeping hobby in relation to the marketing strategies of aquarium business service as follows: i) customers queries: ii) aquarium shop owners responses; iii) marketing strategies of aquarium shop owners.

i. Customer's Queries Related To Aquarium Business Service

In order to identify the focus of aquarium users and their immediate requirements relating to aquarium hobby, three sets of queries recorded at the aquarium shop owners have been verified. Based on the records obtained from shop owners, all the query about aquarium range from one to three numbers of sets. It is found that most of the queries are related to fish care, tank cleaning and maintenance. In addition, information related to dry foods and medicine for newly identified diseases are their immediate requirements. The first set of enquiry has been recorded in the descending order as. (i) fish care (28%); (ii) death reason (57%); (iii) deceases (14%). Similarly, the second set of enquiry are in the descending order as; (i) fish care (28%); (ii) death reason (28%); (iii) food control (14%); (iv) tank cleaning (14%); (v) water quality (14%). The last sets of aquarium recorded are listed in the descending order as; (i) death reason (29%); (ii) food control (28%); (iii) tank cleaning (43%).

ii. AQUARIUM SHOP OWNER'S RESPONSES TO USERS

In order to identify the focus of aquarium users and their immediate requirements relating to aquarium hobby, three sets of responses recorded by the aquarium shop owners and the same have been verified. Based on the records obtained from shop owners, all the responses of shop owners about aquarium service range from one to three numbers of sets. It is there that most of the responses are related to health maintenance, medicine, water change, dry food. In addition, information related to dry foods and medicine for newly identified diseases are their immediate requirements. The first set of responses has been recorded in the descending order as. (i) Health maintenance (28%); (ii) medicine (14%); (iii) water change (28%); (iv) Dry food (28%). Similarly the second set of responses are in the descending order as; (i) medicine (14%); (ii) water change (42%); (iii) dry food (14%); (iv) food maintenance (14%). The last set of aquarium recorded are listed in the descending order as; (i) medicine (42%); (ii) water change (14%); (iii) dry food (14%); (iv) fish movements (28%).

iii. DISTRIBUTION OF MARKETING STRATEGIES OF SHOP OWNERS

There are three pairs of responses have been formulated to study the effect of marketing strategies weekly sales and experience of shop owners at the aquarium shop (Table-2). The distribution tested hypothetically using proportion of responses by applying correlation and t-test statistic. The first pair of responses is between target customer and market promotional schemes. The second set of pair in formulated between shop's weekly turnover and years of experience of shop owners. The third set is formulated between availability of aquarium and shop's weekly sales.

The first pair is indicated for correlation test and the results are given in table no. 53. The correlation co-efficient "r" value is 0.868 and p value is <0.01, there is a positive relationship exist between the marketing strategies and turnover shops at 99% level of confidence.

Similarly, the second and third sets of pairs have been indicated for t-test and the results are tested in table. 53. A value is 3.286 and p value is 0.017, there is association between weekly turnover and years of experience in the case of second pair. Similarly, as the t value 6.358, and p value is 0.001. There is association between availability of aquarium and weekly turnover of the shop at 99% level of confidence.

VI SUGGESTIONS

The suggestions are given for marketing strategy in various sections as prescription based on the aquarium sellers for promoting Aquarium Business Service (ABS).

DESIGN OF MARKETING STRATEGY AND ITS IMPLEMENTATION

Based on the outcome of field level study of Aquarium marketers, the power of existing aquarium shop owners is found to be doing ornamental fish aquarium business service as their main business process with two significant aspects such as professional knowledge and back-end support for fish hatchery and farming. In addition, shop owners have established business linkage with two important sellers market and one major buyers market. The shop owner in the district level have the support of getting new arrivals in the aquarium models through Chennai which is the traders market and the buyer's market is considered to be Bangalore, India.

It is suggested to marketers in order to cater to the need for aquarium among household persons by keeping features of aquarium.

- (i). For hobbyists' need for aquarium has to be met with offering quality of Aquarium business Service.
- (ii). Business enterprises' need for aquarium has to be offered based on value-for-money while offering aquarium business service.
- (iii). Aquarium Business Service need to be offered by way of penetrating into the customers interest in hobby as they show little interest in attending training. The hobby is developed by acquiring experience in a phased manner.
- (iv). Aquarium sellers have to be focused with difference in size, varieties, depending on their requirements.
- (v). It is suggested that when weekly turnover become need of aquarium sellers, have to be added in availability are positively related.
- (vi). It is desirable to focus on male customers than female customers have to be given importance while making marketing offers for Aquarium Business Service.

CONCLUSION

Aquarium business service is an emerging field of business in India. The target market for aquarium business service is household persons, hobbyists, business enterprises and institution. The demand for fish variety's range from 5 to 25 and for aquarium models from three to five. It is considered to be the most preferred hobby. The future of promotion of aquarium business service depends on the experience proposition and Feature of Aquarium as a whole.

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Annexure-1

Table-1

I. PROFILE OF AQUARIUM SHOP OWNERS

S.NO	DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES	CLASSES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
1	Gender	Male	6	85.7
		Female	1	14.3
		Total	7	100.0
2	Age	Below 30	2	28.6
		Above 30	5	71.4
		Total	7	100.0
3	Weekly turn over	Below 5000	2	28.6
		5000-10000	1	14.3
		Above 10000	4	57.1
		Total		100.0
4	Year of experience	Below10	4	57.1
		Above10	3	42.9
		Total	7	100.0
5	Share of regular customers	Below50%	1	14.3
		Above50%	6	85.7
		Total		100.0
6	OFA varieties available	<3	1	14.3
		4	4	57.1
		>5	2	28.6
		Total		100.0
7	Sales of aquarium in nos. per weekly	Below5	1	14.3
		Above5	6	85.7
		Total	7	100.0
8	Fast Moving aquarium	Rs.1000	4	57.1
		Rs.1000-Rs.1500	3	42.9
		Total		100.0
9	Slow Moving aquarium	Rs.1500-Rs.3000	2	28.6
		Rs.3000-Rs.5000	5	71.4
		Total		100.0
10	Non-moving aquarium	Rs.5000Rs.10000	3	42.9
		Above Rs.10000	4	57.1
		Total	7	100.0
12	OF available in shop	Below25	3	42.9
		Above 25	4	57.1
		Total	7	100.0
13	Sales volume	Below Rs1000	3	42.9
		Above Rs.1000	4	57.1
		Total	7	100.0
14	Fast moving fish	Below Rs.15	2	28.6
		above Rs.15	5	71.4
		total	7	100.0
15	Slow moving fish	Below Rs.100	3	42.9
		Above Rs.100	4	57.1
		Total	7	100.0
16	Non moving fish	Below Rs.500	3	42.9
		Above Rs.500	4	57.1
		Total	7	100.0
17	Target customers of OFA	Business persons	2	28.6
		Household persons	5	71.4
		Total	7	100.0
18	Market promotion schemes	TV Advertisement	2	28.6
		News paper ads.	2	28.6
		Visiting cards	3	42.9
		Total	7	100.0
19	Promotional Offers	Discount	2	28.6
		Door delivery	2	28.6
		Price off	2	28.6
		Free maintenance	1	14.3

		services		
		Total	7	100.0
20	Customer's Query-A	Fish care	2	28.6
		Death reason	4	57.1
		Deceases	1	14.3
		Total	7	100.0
21	Customer's Query-B	Fish care	2	28.6
		Death reason	2	28.6
		Food control	1	14.3
		Tank cleaning	1	14.3
		Water quality	1	14.3
		Total	7	100.0
22	Customer's Query-C	Death reason	2	28.6
		Food control	2	28.6
		Tank cleaning	3	42.9
		Total	7	100.0
23	Seller's Response-A	Health maintenance	2	28.6
		Medicine	1	14.3
		Water change	2	28.6
		Dry form food	2	28.6
		Total	7	100.0
24	Seller's Response-B	Medicine	1	14.3
		Water change	3	42.9
		Dry form food	1	14.3
		Food maintenance	2	28.6
		Total	7	100.0
25	Seller's Response-C	Medicine	3	42.9
		Water change	1	14.3
		Dry form food	1	14.3
		Supervise the fish movements	2	28.6
		Total	7	100.0

II. DISTRIBUTION OF MARKETING STRATEGIES OF SHOP OWNERS

T-Test

Table 2: PAIRED STATISTIC

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Target customers	1.71	7	.488	.184
	Sales Promotion	2.14	7	.900	.340
Pair 2	Weekly Turnover of the Shop	2.29	7	.951	.360
	Year of Experience in OFA	1.43	7	.535	.202
Pair 3	Available OFA	4.14	7	.690	.261
	Sales Weekly	1.86	7	.378	.143

Table 3: PAIRED CORRELATION

		N	Correlation	Significance
Pair 1	Target customers and sales promotion	7	.868	.011

Table 4: PAIRED SAMPLES TEST

s.no	Paired Differences					t	Mean	df	Sig (2-tailed)
	Factors	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference					
				Lower	Upper				
Pair 1	Weekly turnover of the shop and year of experience in OFA	.86	.690	.261	.22	1.50	3.286	6	.017
Pair 2	Available OFA and sales weekly	2.29	.951	.360	1.41	3.17	6.358	6	.001