

**“MARKET PROTENTIAL OF BILLING AND INVENTORY MANAGEMENT  
SOFTWARES TOWARDS RETAIL SHOPS”, REFERENCE TO SIFY  
COMMUNICATIONS Ltd”**

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**Abstract**

To understand the customer specific needs and wants it is necessary into the minds of the customer, this can be done through a well defined research on the identified problem. The usage of information technology has increased manifold all fields of human activity are touched by it and one such field happens to be the retail field.

The way stocks are managed and the way the inventory is controlled would result in faster turn around for the retailers. In the conventional method he has to depend on his memory to ascertain the inventory position and to find out his profits or losses which is not a scientific method to do so.

However with the application of information technology and software packages the relevant information required by the retailer is available at his doorstep by the press of a single button. Thus it is necessary to understand there changing trends in the market, it is necessary to study. These changes and suggest appropriate measures to overcome them.

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**Keywords:** Specific Needs, well defined research, information technology, manifold, conventional method, inventory.

## **Introduction**

In today's hi-tech world application of technology for various purposes is becoming imperative as the buzzword in today's business is how to increase productivity at all levels as increase in productivity would result in increase in profitability of the business organizations.

Though application of information technology would result in increase in costs in the initial stages but on a long term basis the profits would compensate more than the costs. Thus the usage of software packages in various walks of life is increasing manifold as it is able to reduce costs and optimize efficiencies.

In Marketing creating customer value and retention of the customer is more important, thus a satisfied customer is worth more than nine prospects, it is important to create satisfied customers in all fields of marketing.

The ever changing market is creating many avenues for growth there by leading to better lifestyles, and increase in customer satisfaction, all these are facilitated due to the rapid advancements made in the field of information technology and their adoption by the businesses at large, to reduce their costs and increase their efficiencies and effectiveness in the competitive landscape.

In view of the changing market forces it becomes necessary to inculcate all these changes in our daily transactions with others. Marketing as is dynamic in changing at a greater pace with the advent of E-Marketing, Mobile Marketing which are changing the many decade of Marketing of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

This change has touched all walks of life as well as business and one such field in distribution of channel management, till yesterday channel management, till yesterday channel management was not computerized but today many software packages are bringing about a sea change in the way we carry out our channel strategies.

With the advent of billing & inventory software it has touched the retailer at the lower of the channel management, who though is slow to adopt to changes is adopting them. This is leading to an increase in the usage of software packages in the market.

## **Objectives**

- To study the mode of recording the bills by the retailers.
- To understand as to how the retailer makes his inventory planning.
- To study how the retailers go about in calculating their profitability.
- To study the behaviour of consumers towards these software packages.
- To understand the potential that is seen for these software packages in the retailer's perception.
- To analyze the role of advertising in creating awareness and invisibility amongst the retailers regarding their software packages there by creating potential for these products.

### **Coverage**

The study has been carried out in the states of Warangal, Hanamkonda and Kazipet wherein the sample were selected from these tricities. Sample has taken randomly at the size of 100 and assured the findings apply to the universe and the survey consist of 12 questions with respect to the subject and one question of organization detail.

### **Methodology**

Primary data was collected through respondents and research experiments. Respondents represent by far the most important source of primary marketing data. Marketing decision are characterized by the fact that they always involve in one way or other. Predictions of the behaviour of the market participants- be it consumer, industrial user, market intermediately, competitor. Decision as diverse as product introduction, price or channel modification, determination of advertising budget or reallocation of sales territories would require forecasting of the behaviour of one or more of the above groups. The study of respondents therefore characterizes most marketing situations. The type of information's that may be collected from respondents may include data on past behavior, extent of knowledge, attitudes and opinions, socio-economic characteristics and life style data. Secondary data was collected at the websites, books, company catalogues and the information from the company personnel.

### **Profile of the Sify**

They are India's pioneer & leader in Internet, Networking and e-commerce service. And the first Indian internet company to be listed on the NASDAQ National Market in the US. We provide integrated end-to-end solutions for both corporates & consumers, with a range of products and services delivered over a common Internet backbone infrastructure.

Everything that Sify has gone or achieved since we began commercial operations in April 1998 stems from our purpose and vision. A key aspect is Sify being an enabler and catalyst of the Internet for positive change in India- a responsibility that we continue to carry.

Sify began by developing India's first TCP/IP network and offering multiple services on a common backbone infrastructure for an integrated Internet, networking and e-commerce business model. This was the first such business model in the world, and appropriate for catalyzing the growth of the Internet and networking in an infrastructure starved market. It also enabled a virtuous cycle, where each business supported the other, while catalyzing the market to growth.

Fortune magazine, in their December 2000 issue. Selected Sify (then Satyam Info-way) as one of the world's ten hot technology companies to watch out for based on this innovative business model. From the start of commercial operations in April 1998, Sify has become the market leader in most lines of business, winning global recognition

for its expertise. Performance, customer focus and standards along the way. In doing this, Sify pioneered services and set standards for the industry in diverse areas.

Sify is a leader in every line of business and has won national and international recognition for both market leadership and the quality of our services. We are unmatched in Internet and network services expertise and technology. With the best tools, software and processes in the business.

#### **Corporate networking service**

Sify pioneered corporate networking services in the country and helped revolutionize business computing in India, with interconnectivity between multi-location offices, flexibility of platform, application software and smooth transfer of data for corporates.

Sify is India's only ISO 9001:2000 certified service provider for network operations, data center operations and customer support and has been certified ISO 901:2000 for provisioning of VPNs, Internet bandwidth, VOIP solutions and integrated security solutions.

Recently, sify was awarded the prestigious frost & Sullivan market leadership Award for IP VPN markets for the year 2003.

#### **Broadband Connectivity for Consumers**

After successfully launching broadband connectivity services for corporate services, sify launched broadband services for the residential segment using fixed wireless broadband technology- the first ISP in India to make available such a service to its consumers. Sify, is now a leading provider of broadband service in India, both directly and through cable operator, and currently has over 62,000 home users for the service.

#### **Making the internet available to the masses: Cyber Cafes**

In keeping with its purpose of empowering Indians with the internet, sify launched the away chain of cyber cafes across many cities in India. This initiative is helping bridge the digital divided with an ever-increasing number of Indians accessing the internet for information, communications and entertainment in a cost-effective manner.

Thousand of users from over 2000 I-way cyber cafes across 69 cities in the country use this service, with more planned as the demand for them increases ways have redefined the standard for branded cyber café chains, with standardized, air-conditioned, well-designed interiors, with broadband connectivity and promoted as a branded service.

**Table-1**

**Mode of Billing System:**

<b>S.No</b>	<b>Particulars</b>	<b>Respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
1	Oral Bill	18	18%
2	Hand Written Paper Bill	68	68%
3	Computerized Bill	12	12%
4	Any Other (Oral& Hand Written)	02	02%
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table- 2**

**Recording the price of the products on the bill**

S.No	Particulars	Respondents	Percentage
1	Memory	31	31%
2	By seeing MRP of the products.	66	66%
3	Any other	03	03%
<b>TOTAL</b>		100	100%

**Table-3**  
**Inventory Management of Stocks (or) Replenishment of stocks utilized:**

S.No	Particulars	Respondents	Percentage
1	By Manual Checking	36	36%
2	By Shortage List	26	26%
3	Depending upon the Demand	04	04%
4	When Distributor Salesmen comes	34	34%
<b>TOTAL</b>		100	100%

**Table-4**  
**Analysis of sales to check Profitability:**

S.No	Particulars	Respondents	Percentage
1	Maintaining Records	20	20%
2	Do not maintain records		
3	Maintaining records to some extent	28	28%
4	Can't Say	50	50%
		02	02%
<b>TOTAL</b>		100	100%

**Table-5**  
**Awareness about Billing and Inventory Management Software:**

S.No	Particulars	Respondents	Percentage
1	Having idea about Billing & Inventory Mgt Software	72	72%
2	Not Having idea about Billing & Inventory Mgt Software	28	28%
<b>TOTAL</b>		100	100%



**Table-6**  
**Customers Perception regarding Different Brands of Billing Software:**

<b>S.No</b>	<b>Particulars</b>	<b>Respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
1	Forum	04	04%
2	Focus	08	08%
3	Wings	05	05%
4	Tally	50	50%
5	Others	05	05%
6	Not Having any idea of this	28	28%
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table-7**  
**Using Software at present**

S.No	Particulars	Respondents	Percentage
1	Software Users	72	72%
2	Software Non-Users	28	28%
<b>TOTAL</b>		100	100%

**Table-8**  
**BRAND OF SOFTWARE USAGE:**

S.No	Particulars	Respondents	Percentage
1	Forum	04	05%
2	Focus	08	12%
3	Wings	10	13%
4	Tally	42	58%
5	Others	05	12%
<b>TOTAL</b>		72	100%

From the table-1, the survey it has been seen that hand written paper bill is the choicest mode of billing system of the customers- 68% of the respondents use and written Paper Bill -- 18% of the respondents use only oral bill- 12% of the respondents use computer based bill,- 02% of the respondents use both oral & hand written paper bill.

From the table-2, research study it has been seen that the respondents are using M.R.P. of the products purchased by customers to record the prices on the bills,- 66% of the respondents record the prices by seeing M.R.P. of the products,- 31% of the respondents record by their memory,- 03% of the respondents

From the table-3, above research study it has been seen that manual checking of stock is mostly used to check the quantum of stocks available and to record the short list, -36% of the respondents use manual checking to check the quantum of available stock, - 26% of the respondents check the quantum of the stock by the shortage list, - 04% of the respondents record the stocks depending upon the demand, - 34% of the respondents check the stock of goods when distributor sales men comes, record the prices either by memory or by seeing M.R.P. rates.

From the table-4, survey of respondents it has been seen that maintenance of sales records to some extent is used by more respondents to check the profitability of their business, - 50% of the respondents are maintaining records of sales to some extent and are analyzing it to check their profitability, - 20% of the respondents are maintaining records of sales, - 28% of the respondents are not maintaining any records, - 2% of the respondents couldn't say whether they are maintaining or not.

From the table-5, above analysis it is seen that most of the respondents are having an idea about Billing and Inventory Management Software, 72% of the respondents are having an idea about Billing & Inventory Management Software, as they have seen from their friends shops and are also using it, 28% of the respondents are not having any idea about Billing & Inventory management Software and as such have not used it.

From the table-6, above analysis it has been seen that Tally has more visibility and a higher brand recall by most of the respondents i.e. 50% of the respondents know and have an idea about "Tally" Software.

From the table-7, above survey it has been noticed that majority of respondents are using billing softwares, -72% of respondents are using softwares, 28% of respondents are not using any softwares.

From the table-8, above analysis it is seen that majority of the respondents are using "Tally" software package than the other software packages, 58% of the respondents are using "Tally" Software, 13% of the respondents are using "Wings" Software, 12% of the respondents are using "Focus" Software, 12% of the respondents are using "Other" Software i.e. custom made, And 05% of the respondents are using "Forum" Software.

## **Conclusion**

It is seen that hand written bill is the most common method of billing that is adopted by the retailers, The retailers record the price of their product by seeing the MRP and by their memory, The retailer check the availability of the stock by manual checking and

during routine meet by distribution sales men, The retailers maintain records and more over they do oral calculation to record their profitability though it is not the scientific way to do so, In the competitive business scenario adoption of technology is becoming inevitable as majority of the respondents are having a fair idea about the billing and inventory software, Amongst the billing software tally is having higher brand recall and visibility in the market place followed at a distance by focus and forum and wings brand, Most of the respondents are satisfied with the features built in their software however some of the respondents are desirous of having more complex features, Brand loyalty is very high since a significant majority is not interested in changing their brand of software this could be attributed to the incremental cost that the respondents have to incur in case of change, The reason given for a switch over of one software with other is lack of adequate customer care & support followed by no customer education regarding the features that are available in the software and also lack of after sales service support.

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