A STUDY ON BRAND POSITIONING OF ONE PLUS MOBILES: QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

The telecommunication industry is fastest growing sector in today’s economy. Earlier cell phone industry is primarily engaged in the manufacturing of mobile phones, including mobile phone handsets. But now industry is totally concentrated on moving forward technologically. It is growing alongside up-and-coming technologies and innovations, building upon the progress of "smartphones" and other phone feature and segments made in recent years. One Plus mobiles are among few cell phone manufacturer which is positioning its brand very high in the mind of consumers. OnePlus was launched its first mobile in 2014 and in a small duration of time it became one of the market leaders in 2017, OnePlus leads the premium phone market in India with 48 percent share in the Q4, 2017 as per IDC. They entered the market with a proper strategy that positioned them as a premium market player in the industry. Recently they launched OnePlus 6 and the mobile handset sold hand to hand in the market, it made a record sale of Rs.100 crore within first 10 minutes of its preview sale on Amazon India and its own website. The research paper outlines qualitative analysis on brand positioning of OnePlus Mobiles based on the data available on online resources.

Key words: Telecommunication Industry, Technology, Innovation, smartphones, Brand Positioning.


1. INTRODUCTION

Today’s in and tomorrow’s out is situation in cell phone industry. Creating brand positioning in this sector is tough task and penetrating market is difficult. But One plus mobiles did it.
OnePlus is a Chinese brand based in Shenzhen, is a smartphone manufacturer. It was founded by Pete Lau (CEO) and Carl Pei in December 2013. They have released numerous phones, amongst other products like headphones, Power & cables (Mobiles).

The company's aim is to design a smartphone that would give user high-end quality with a lower price than other phones in its class (Premium Segment).

Believing that users would "Never Settle" (Tagline) for the lower-quality devices produced by other brands.

2. ONE PLUS INDIA
OnePlus India launched its first mobile handset, the OnePlus One, on 23 April 2014, in India exclusively through Amazon, OnePlus also announced its plans to establish a presence through physical stores (Brick & Mortar), with plans to have 25 official walk-in service centres across India.

The recent data from IDC, a market research company, reveals that OnePlus leads the premium phone market in India with 48 percent share in the Q4, 2017.

3. TIMELINE OF PRODUCT RELEASE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Codename</th>
<th>Launch Date</th>
<th>International Launch date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OnePlus One</td>
<td>bacon</td>
<td>23 April 2014</td>
<td>6 June 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OnePlus 2</td>
<td>oneplus2</td>
<td>27 July 2015</td>
<td>11 August 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OnePlus X</td>
<td>onyx</td>
<td>29 October 2015</td>
<td>5 November 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OnePlus 3</td>
<td>oneplus3</td>
<td>14 June 2016</td>
<td>14 June 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OnePlus 3T</td>
<td>oneplus3t</td>
<td>15 November 2016</td>
<td>28 November 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OnePlus 5</td>
<td>cheeseburger</td>
<td>20 June 2017</td>
<td>27 June 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OnePlus 5T</td>
<td>dumpling</td>
<td>16 November 2017</td>
<td>21 November 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OnePlus 6</td>
<td>Enchilada</td>
<td>16 May 2018</td>
<td>22 May 2018</td>
</tr>
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</table>

3.1. Geographical Presence
The company officially serves 38 countries and regions around the world as of countries present on its website.

*The following distinctive features of OnePlus mobiles have created impact on consumers:*

**Unique Selling Proposition (USP)**

**INVITE SYSTEM**
- They made the customers curious and proved themselves.
- They triggered basic human behaviour of inquisitiveness.
- Buy by invitation only process allows the OnePlus to gradually fulfil the demand while customers are kept in a constant state of anticipation.
- Due to some controversy, this invite system was discontinued.

**LAUNCH VARIANTS**
- If calculated, then One Plus launches only two handsets in a duration of one year. And always the second version is the upgrade of first.
- Very precise and specific about their product, this makes them very up to the point players.

**PRICING STRATEGY**
- Offer competitive pricing to its rivals
They never bargain their price.
After the launch of new product, the prices of old ones are not changed.

**SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGY**
- It all started with the quirky social media adverts, in which they targeted the competitors directly.
- Influencer marketing.
- Well connected to the audience through social media.

### 4. ANALYSIS BASED ON FOLLOWING MODELS

#### 4.1. Four pillars of Brand Equity Models
OnePlus has stepped with THE FOUR PILLARS OF BRAND EQUITY model and they have worked it out well. Every pillar is well planned and executed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Differentiation</th>
<th>A brand’s distinct personality or features.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relevance</td>
<td>A brand’s awareness and fit with personal needs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Esteem</td>
<td>A brand’s degree of recognition and respect; how easily consumers can forgive the brand.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>A brand’s ability to influence the behaviour, actions, and lifestyles of its consumers.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

OnePlus has defined each pillar very precisely and thus it holds a strong structure for their product, which altogether gives a Premium positioning in the minds of the audience. Gap is identified for strengthening the four pillars.

#### 4.2. The 5 Customer Segments of Technology Adoption Models

According to consumer adoption curve, especially the customer for technology segment are the people who just buy the product at their launch and they through their review and experience promote or demote it. These customers are always looking for something new in the product, which makes them inquisitive

**Innovators (2.5%)** – Innovators are the first individuals to adopt an innovation. They are willing to take risks, youngest in age, have the highest social class, and have great financial stability, highly active on social media.

**Early Adopters (13.5%)** – Second largest category of individuals for adoption of an innovation. They have highest degree of opinion leadership among the other adopter categories.
**Early Majority (34%)** – In this category adopt an innovation after a varying degree of time. This time of adoption is significantly longer than the innovators and early adopters.

**Late Majority (34%)** – In this category will adopt an innovation after the average member of the society. These individuals approach an innovation with a high degree of skepticism and after the majority of society has adopted the innovation.

**Laggards (16%)** – Last to adopt an innovation. Unlike some of the previous categories, individuals in this category show little or no opinion leadership.

And the OnePlus is highly on the minds of Innovators & Early adopters, and yes the product is of higher degree which tends to make an impact on these two segment and then the product starts penetrating other segment.

### 4.3. Strength, Opportunity, Weakness and Threat Analysis Model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STRENGTH</th>
<th>OPPORTUNITY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Mid-range cost phones.</td>
<td>1. Global markets yet to be penetrated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Viral Campaigning.</td>
<td>3. Counting in premium mobile brands.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Exclusive partnership.</td>
<td>4. Software and Hardware innovation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Android platform OxygenOS.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEAKNESS</th>
<th>THREAT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Two variants per year.</td>
<td>1. Competition selling near similar specifications in low prices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The second variant is a better version of first.</td>
<td>2. Less innovate in terms of premium competition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Less innovate in terms of trend.</td>
<td>3. Highly competitive market.</td>
</tr>
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### 5. CONCLUSIONS

With all this information, we can conclude that the OnePlus has a strong hold on their fundamentals. Their strategy, execution and implementation are aligned with the mission, vision and values of the organization.

The process of positioning the brand in the mind of the customers is well defined.

They managed to get a space in the minds of the consumer and the brand projected out, got positioned. There is no error of under, over, double and confused positioning. They are crystal clear in what they want to be and where they want to be in the mind of customers.
REFERENCES


