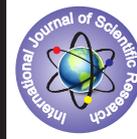


A STUDY ON PROBLEMS FACED BY THE DTH SUBSCRIBERS IN ERODE DISTRICT



Commerce

KEYWORDS:

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ABSTRACT

Now-a-days, the concept of DTH has really become very popular in India and people are looking forward to acquire such services in order to bring entertainment and knowledge into their homes. Consumer prefer DTH than Cable TV because of its clarity and easy availability. But DTH subscribers are facing problems like high installation expenses, high tariff and delayed response to complaint etc. In this paper the problems faced by the subscribers are analyzed in detail.

Introduction

The Direct to Home (DTH) is wireless network and reaching direct to the consumer through a small dish and a set-top box. Although the government has ensured that free-to-air channels on cable are delivered to the consumer without a set-top box, DTH is really popular in rural areas. DTH offers better quality picture than cable TV. Despite digital transmission and reception, the cable transmission is still analog. DTH offers stereophonic sound effects. It can also reach remote areas where terrestrial transmission and cable TV have failed to penetrate. Apart from enhanced picture quality. DTH helps in keeping broadcasters direct touch with consumers, thus eliminating the need for cables and cable infrastructure and cable operators. This is particularly valuable in remote places and in areas which are difficult to reach and where cable and in many cases, terrestrial television services are poor or non-existent. Though people prefer DTH services, they face problems in availing the service. The researcher has attempted to analyze such problems faced by DTH subscribers in Erode district.

Statement of the Problem

The history of Indian Television dates back to the launch of Doordarshan, India's national TV network in 1959. In this period television was a luxury and the transmission was in black & white. In 1991, Indian economy was liberalized from the Licenses and the Government invited Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and deregulations of domestic business emerged. In 1992, the cable TV industry started. Later on cable TV network has literally changed the face of public television. This led to the influx of foreign channels like Star TV and domestic satellite channels like SUN TV and Zee TV. This has virtually destroyed the monopoly held by Doordarshan. DTH offers better quality picture and digital surround sound than cable TV. DTH services are available to the subscriber's with varying features like interactive TV services movie-on-demand, internet access, video conferencing and e-mail. The task of the marketers is to mould the consumer's perception so as to occupy the desired position for their brands. In practice, the subscribers face problems right from installation. Costly tariff structure, poor service support and technical snags are some of the problems faced by the subscribers. Hence the researcher carried out the research work with the following objectives.

Objectives of the Study

- To study the problems faced by the DTH customers.
- To suggest remedial measure to solve the problems.

Research Methodology

Primary Data

Primary Data was collected directly from the DTH respondents by using interview schedule. The data collected were analyzed properly by using suitable statistical tools.

Sample Design

The study has been conducted in Erode district of Tamil Nadu. Large number of households is using DTH services in this district.

Purposive-cum multistage random sampling technique has been employed to select sample households in Erode district, the universe of the study. A sample of 225 respondents was selected from 6 taluks, 14 blocks and 375 villages of Erode district. The researcher administered interview schedule to all the 225 sample and collected data.

The Problems Faced by the DTH Subscribers

The DTH subscribers are facing problems not only in the installation of DTH connections but also while availing the services. The level of frustration and dissatisfaction escalates when the subscribers encounter problems and as a result they are not in a position to watch programs. If the time taken to attend and set right such problems is longer, higher will be the level of dissatisfaction. The same will be the case if the occurrence of such problems is frequent. Based on the pilot study the researcher identified eleven problems as listed below. Using Likert's Five Point Scaling Technique, the respondents were asked to express their opinion about the problems enlisted. Based on the opinion, score values were worked out and the problems were ranked and presented below.

TABLE-1: THE PROBLEMS FACED BY THE DTH SUBSCRIBERS

Problems	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N	SC	Co-Eff	Rank
Delay in Installation	20	41	82	44	38	225	-39	-0.173	10
Incompetent Technicians	30	73	45	30	47	225	9	0.040	9
Initial Payment is high	50	54	43	24	54	225	22	0.098	8
Poor Picture Quality	63	62	84	7	9	225	163	0.724	3
Poor Sound Quality	74	62	68	8	13	225	176	0.782	2
Frequent Technical Snag	75	41	66	30	13	225	135	0.600	4
Software Problems	30	73	59	35	28	225	42	0.187	7
Costly Tariffs	36	50	25	61	53	225	-45	-0.200	11
Non Flexible Payment System	50	73	31	39	32	225	70	0.311	6
Delayed Response to complaints	42	78	56	29	20	225	93	0.413	5
Low Service Quality	72	65	67	12	9	225	179	0.796	1

Source: Primary data SC = F^*W Coeff = SC/N

From Table-1, it could be observed that "Low service quality" ranked first with a score value of 179. "Poor sound quality" ranked second with a score value of 176. "Poor picture quality" ranked third with a score value of 163. "Frequent technical snag" ranked fourth with a score value of 135. "Delayed response to complaints" ranked fifth with a score value of 93. "Non flexible payment system" ranked sixth with a

score value of 70. "Software problems" ranked seventh with a score value of 42. "Initial payment is high" ranked eighth with a score value of 22. "Incompetent technicians" ranked ninth with a score value of 9. "Delay in installation" ranked tenth with a score value of -39. "Costly tariffs" ranked eleventh with a score value of -45.

Suggestions

- DTH Service Operators should offer more Local Channels (mother tongue) with minimum tariff structure.
- DTH service operators should try to enhance Picture Clarity and Effective Sound System.
- The service providers should adopt different promotional strategies and package structures for the Rural and Urban Markets.

Conclusion

DTH being the best alternative to cable service is not free from problems due to technical snags and other operational deficiencies. But the sincere efforts taken and better attention given by the operators will improve the service quality and will ultimately improve the satisfaction of the subscribers.

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