Development of a Customer Experience-based Brand Strategy for The Lenovo Group to Explore the UK Market

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Abstract

This paper presented a development of a customer experience-based brand strategy for Lenovo Group which is one of the biggest and most powerful PC producers in the world. After acquiring the IBM’s Personal Computing division, Lenovo focus on exploring the UK market. Due to differences in culture, user behaviour, market environment and so on, Lenovo have to develop a new product development brand strategy to transfer their successful brand strategy from China to the UK. The key question in this study is how can Lenovo use customer experience design as a basis for creating an effective brand strategy to fully understand their customer and develop their share in the UK market? This research contributes to the Lenovo brand strategy project.

The design research methodology addresses user behaviour and experience analysis, and brand development analysis. The customer analyses data have been collected through questionnaire, interview and observation surveys. From the surveys we find that the UK Personal Computers (PCs) customers are not satisfied with the current PCs purchasing experience and they are looking for better service and experience. Then we adopt Mick Cope and Schmitt’s theoretical framework of customer behaviors analysis and brand development process analysis as an underlying structure. Authors conceptualize their framework more narrowly based on PCs customer experience design, allowing for more specific analysis of details of customer experience during the PCs purchasing process. The PCs purchasing process was then divided into three stages: the pre-sales thinking, the purchasing process and the after-sales service. The analysis led to the integration of the key factors related to the UK PCs market environment, customer behaviors, and brand development process. The study established a new brand strategy which has been evaluated and will be implemented in the company’s brand strategy.

Introduction

Nowadays, Personal Computers (PCs) have been infiltrated into our daily lives and are increasingly functional in meeting various aspects of our professional and personal needs. Undoubtedly, it will become a part of almost all our lives in the future and for many it has already become an indispensable item. This trend means the PCs industry is facing the question to how to sustain growth in the business environment. Research data from IDC* indicates over 10% growth registered in PCs sales globally in 2004, with no obvious signs of growth slowdown in the next few years. In China, this growth is even faster compared to the global figures and brand internationalization has become an inevitable trend for Chinese PCs producers. Lenovo is the best example of internationalization.
Lenovo is an innovative, international technology company formed as a result of the acquisition of IBM’s Personal Computing Division by the Mainland China based Lenovo Group (www.lenovo.com). After the purchase Lenovo planned to explore the European PCs market as a part of their internationalization programmes. In the UK, there are lots of strong brands in the PCs market (see figure 1). It is difficult for a new brand such as Lenovo to win the business war in a mature overseas market even though Lenovo has powerful strength in the PCs industry. Therefore, how to build a brand image and get market share in the UK becomes the first step for Lenovo when exploring the European market.

![PCs Brands Map in the UK PCs Market](image)

**Figure1: PCs brands map in the UK PCs market**

In order to build up a brand identity in the UK PCs markets, Lenovo do need a brand strategy to transfer their successful brand strategy from China to the UK based on differences in culture, user behaviour and customer experience between China and the UK. In order to measure the differences and develop a set of new brand strategy guidelines, we conducted a customer experience-based brand strategy exercise based on customer behaviour analysis (Mick Cope, 2003) and brand customer experience development analysis (Schmitt’s, 2002). In this paper, we give a literature review in section one; our methodologies are represented in section two; Findings from surveys are indicated in section three; in section four the authors present the discussion and results of this paper; we draw conclusion in the last section.

**Section One: Literature review**

In the design management arena, there are almost as many definitions of branding as there are books on the subject. Kotler Armstrong (2004) said that ‘Brand is more than just name and symbols’, Brand represents everything that the product or service means to consumers, such as consumers’ perceptions and feelings about a product and its performance. As one branding expert suggests ‘Ultimately, brands reside in the minds of consumers’ (Philip Kotler, 2003). Therefore, the real value of a strong brand is its power to capture consumer preference and loyalty (Kotler Armstrong, 2004). Gobé, M. (2001) has said that ‘Brand is brought to life for consumers first and foremost by the personality of the company behind it and that company’s
commitment to reaching people on an emotional level.”

Branding carries benefits for all parties involved in the exchange process and in theory at least makes it easier to buy or sell products. As illustrated in figure 2, Brassington (2003) concluded that branding benefits from three aspects: consumer, retailer and manufacturer (see figure 2).

![Figure 2: the benefits of branding (Brassington, F., 2003) p283](image)

We think that one of the most useful definitions of brand comes from Marty Neumeier who says ‘Brand is a person’s gut feeling about a product, service, or company.’(2003). Neumeier goes on to point out that Brand is a gut felling because customers are all emotional, intuitive beings, despite their customers’ best efforts to be rational. It’s a person’s feeling, because in the end the brand is defined by individuals, not by companies, markets, or the so-called general public. Every customer creates his or her own version of brand. While companies can not control this process, they can influence it by communicating the qualities that make the product and service different from the others. When enough individuals arrive at the same gut feeling, a company can be said to have a brand. In other words, a brand is not what company says it is. It’s what customers say it is. So brand is a bridge between customers and the company.

Customer is the most important business element for every company who wants to win in the global market. How to attract and keep customers has become a popular topic in both the industrial and academic areas. Schmitt indicated that design customer experience is the most direct and effective method to obtain customers’ eyes and hearts (2002). Customer experience brand strategy is a plan for the systematic development of a brand to enable it to meet its agreed objectives based on designing customer experience. The strategy should be rooted in the brand's vision and operate by the principles of differentiation customer experience and sustained consumer appeal. The strategy should influence the total implementation of a
business to ensure consistent brand behaviours and brand experiences.

Creating a customer experience that becomes synonymous with a band is increasingly recognized as a vital driver of corporate performance. Companies create loyal customers by delivering branded customer experiences that create value for customers beyond the products or services the companies happen to sell (Shaun Smith & Joe Wheeler, 2002). There is evidence that companies are listening. Hewlett-Packard, for example, now has two large customer enterprises: one for consumers and one for business customers. Each one has a president, and reporting directly to that president is a vice-president responsible for the total customer experience. Scott Livengood, CEO of Krispy Kreme, says: ‘Instead of a customer service department—words are important and what things are called is very important—so we developed and implemented a customer experience group.’

PC is a special product. Compared with daily necessities it is a complex and expensive product, so customer should consider it more when they want to buy it; compared with a car or a flight it has more flexibility to be operated as a customized product, so customer will have more choices to buy their favourite one. Therefore, during the PC purchasing process, customers will be more involved than with other electronic products. Consequently, customer experience design for PCs products is more important and significant than other products. Customer experience is about more than semantics. Karl Long (2004) formulated a hierarchy of customer experience which divides the process of customer loyalty development into four levels, trust, competence, autonomy and creativity/relatedness. Similarly, Schmitt’s research indicated the brand development process as random experience, predictable experience, branded experience and customer loyalty. In this research authors will analyze customer experience brand development process based on the PCs industry to create a brand strategy for Lenovo to explore the UK PCs market. The aim of this research is: to create a branding strategy centered on customer experience, which will help Lenovo to better explore and exploit the UK market in an efficient way. There is a key question: How can Lenovo use customer experience design as a basis for creating an effective brand strategy to fully understand their customer and develop their share of the UK PCs market?

Section Two: Methodologies

In order to resolve this key question we conducted our research with the following methods: First, the basic brand strategy and customer experience design principle were empirically studied through a literature review.

Then, the issues concerning the UK PCs market environment survey and the UK PCs customer survey were connected through questionnaire, interview and observation research. The UK PCs market survey is conducted in order to understand the UK market environment, so some good examples can be learned from the champions. The target questionnaire group is staff in PCs industry and PCs customers. PCs customer experience survey is to identify customers’ satisfaction, customers’ acceptance and customers’ requirements in the UK market.
Interviews were conducted in parallel to the survey. All the selected companies have operated in highly competitive marketplaces and most of them have a proven record of innovation through both product and service solutions. There were 8 interviews in 7 PCs companies, and most of the interviews lasted between 45/minutes to one hour. All interviews, where possible, were carried out in person. Where this was not possible, interviews were conducted over the telephone. Observation research was operated around different PCs shops which include mix-brands PCs shops and brand store shops. The objective of this observation research is to find customer requirements, good examples of environment design and customer service from the PCs shops.

Finally, we adopted several brand strategy and customer experience principles to create our customer experience-based design strategy model for Lenovo to better explore the UK PCs market. We conducted customer behaviour analysis (Mick Cope, 2003) to evaluate PCs customers’ behaviour during the purchasing process. Then the brand customer experience development model (Schmitt’s, 2002) was adopted to analyze how the brand development is going based on PCs customer purchasing process. Finally, we interpreted the proposed customer experience-based design strategy model from horizontal direction and vertical direction, which are customer behaviour analysis during the PCs purchasing and PCs brand development analysis.

**Section Three: Findings**

From the UK PCs market survey, the favorite PCs brand in the customers mind is Apple. From figure 3 we can see that from design, brand personality and innovation aspects Apple got the highest mark. Apple interprets the successful example of design evolution in PCs industry and enlightens success rooted in design, form human innovation. How can Apple keep its top position in the PC’s market? There must be lots of reasons; however, the result from observation research indicated customer experience design is definitely a major part of the success factors.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PCs Brand</th>
<th>Design</th>
<th>Brand Personality</th>
<th>Innovation</th>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Price</th>
<th>Attached Software</th>
<th>Total Quality</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acer</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
<td>27.5%</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
<td>8.16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apple</td>
<td>62.5%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>62.5%</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>33.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dell</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
<td>22.5%</td>
<td>32.5%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>13.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IBM</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>22.5%</td>
<td>23.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toshiba</td>
<td>7.5%</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>7.5%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SONY</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td>7.5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td>8.75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
<td>7.5%</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td>7.78%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 3: Results of the UK PCs market survey**
In the Apple shop there are different customer experience areas, where the customer can experimentally try to use the latest Apple products. Apple has created a wonderful Macintosh practice ground and brand personality to their customer. No matter whether you are buyer or just a visitor, most Apple shop customers expressed their good impression of Apple brand and said they would like to buy its products. From a purchasing process aspect, the salesman in Apple is friendly and professional in answering all questions from every customer. The indoor environment design makes customer really comfortable and relaxed. The fresher user can get free training on how to use the Macintosh system and software produced by Apple. Apple’s customer service has more counters than other PCs brand shops, so customer do not waste their time in a queue. Apple customer services have considered more details than other brands for their customers to keep the Apple brand quality. Customers can have excellent experiences in Apple shops, which not only allow the customers buy Apple product, but also build up trust and Apple loyalty. That may be expected to bring unpredictable benefits to Apple in the future.

The other key results from the UK PCs customer experience survey are shown as below:

Per-sales thinking,
- Almost half the people believe that PCs is a normal product for all people, which means there is big potential in the UK PCs market.
- 35.9% people would like to collect PCs purchase information from the Internet, but only 17.9% people will trust this information.
- Almost half the people would like to ask for professional suggestions before purchasing.
- Almost 80% of people would like to buy a PC product in a mixed brand shop.

Purchasing process,
- Lots of customers are not satisfied with their existing PCs purchasing service. They are looking for better service and a ‘fun’ purchasing experience.
- Most of customers need professional advice during the purchasing process.
- The majority of PCs customers prefer a customized purchasing style.
- Customers thought that the current PCs salesmen are not professional enough to give them advices while purchasing PCs products.

- 74.4% people would like to try some new purchasing and service methods for purchasing PCs.

And after-sales service

- Most customers want to have more efficient and more convenient after-sales service.

Because of different social classes and living habits of customers, there are three main kinds of PCs distribution in the UK market; one is the Brand PC Shop such as Apple, Sony, etc., and another is the Mixed-Brand PC Shop, such as PC World, Dixons, Micro Anvika and so on. The third way is to purchase from the Internet.

The distribution of PCs, both desktop and laptops, is evolving gradually, with the Internet currently the area of most activity. It would appear that consumers have finally gained confidence in use of this channel when making a big-ticket purchase, with Mintel estimating that a third (33%) of retail sales were made over the Internet during 2004. This is up on 26% in 2002, with every prospect that further growth can be achieved.

Much of the growth on the Internet has come from the development of retailer and manufacturer websites. They are increasingly easy and attractive to use, with the confidence of many shoppers in using the Internet also helpful. The success of direct sellers in their own right is also boosting the channel, with Dell the clear victor in this area. Other players here, such as Time Group and the large number of smaller direct sellers, should not be forgotten as they too have modernised their approach towards the Internet making it increasingly consumer-friendly.

One of the main winners in the way PCs distribution has changed is the specialist multiple chain. Although such chains are themselves seeing a shift away from in-store to Web-based sales, they remain popular on account of their broad range of products and keenness to compete on price. Major manufacturers are well placed in such stores being completed in the case of The Computer Shop (Time Group) by a strong own-brand presence.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2002</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>% point change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>2002-04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PC World</td>
<td>16.0</td>
<td>18.0</td>
<td>+2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Computer World/The Computer Shop</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>-1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturer retail showroom</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>-1.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A breakdown of retail sales for all PC in 2002 and 2004 is shown in Figure 4 which highlights the fortunes for the main areas of the market. These show that the share of the market for both specialist retailers and specialist PC retailers has fallen back between 2002 and 2004. While specialist retailers still command the largest share of sales at 41%, this is down from 44% in 2002. Specialist electrical retailers claim 14.5% of sales in 2004, which is also down, from 15.8% in 2002.

The main explanation for this decline is the rise in sales over the Internet. Such sales, which include sales made on specialist and non-specialist electrical retailers’ sites, are now credited with 33% of the market in 2004 as compared to 26% in 2002. Sales from non-specialist retailers, typified by grocery multiples and the likes of Toys ‘R’ us, are also up, with an estimated 3% of sales in 2004. Traditional direct-sales methods are the main casualty of the changing patterns of distribution within the market, down from 12.9% in 2002 to 8% of sales in 2004.

The largest and most important route for PC sales is the PC World outlet, part of Dixons

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Other computer specialist retailer</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total specialist retailers</td>
<td>44.0</td>
<td>41.0</td>
<td>-3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Currys</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>-0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dixons</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>-0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comet</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>-0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other specialists retailers</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total specialists electrical retailers</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>-1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-specialist retailers</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>-2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone, catalogue, newspaper inserts, mail order from manufacturers</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>-4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet**</td>
<td>26.0</td>
<td>33.0</td>
<td>+7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>+0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**FIGURE 4:** Estimated retailer value shares for UK total* home PC market, 2002 and 2004

Source: Mintel
Stores Group, which is believed to hold 18% of value sales in 2004, up from 16% in 2002. The other notable high street outlet is The Computer Shop, formerly The Computer World, which is owned by Time Group and is credited with 8% of sales in 2004. Other specialist retailers are also notable, with 9% of sales in 2004, although their share is down partly because of competition from the likes of PC World and partly because of the growth in their own sales via the Internet.

Specialist electrical retailers are also active in the market although there is no clear leader, with most of the major names seeing their share of the market via traditional shopping methods fall back in recent years. Currys is believed to be the largest player here followed by Dixons and Comet.

**Section Four: Discussion and Results**

This part will address the key issues posed at the outset of the research. Initially the discussion will explore the differences between theory and practice. The latter stage will access the benefits of customer experience-based brand strategy for Lenovo’s brand strategy as results.

After 20 years development, Lenovo have created great brand credits and have retained these kept the credits for many years.

- They are dedicated to the satisfaction and success of every customer.
- Innovation that matters to their customers, and their company, is created and delivered with speed and efficiency.
- They manage their business and make decisions based on carefully understood facts.
- They have trust and personal responsibility in all relationships.

For the UK market, Lenovo need to maintain their brand credits (show as above) to the UK customers, and try to add new value based on UK culture and living habits for the UK market.

Lenovo have to face lots of problems to build up the Lenovo brand in the UK PC market (see figure 5). Firstly, the UK PC market is a mature and competitive PC battlefield, lots of strong PC brands occupying of the market. Therefore, it is very difficult for Lenovo to gain a market share in the UK. Secondly, Lenovo is a Chinese brand; there are some established Chinese characteristics and styles from the Lenovo. For the UK PC market, should Lenovo modify their brand characteristics and add more British culture into their brand in order to attract UK customers- or, should they stay as they are? In this study, the authors focused on how to use customer experience design to solve Lenovo’s problems.
Figure 5: difficulties for Lenovo in the UK PC market

Customer behaviours analysis

In order to answer these questions, the authors analyzed customer behaviours to understand how customers make decisions. The customer behaviours system is complex, involving the interaction of behaviours, emotions and thoughts. There are three elements or domains (see figure 6):

- Behavioural: Having to do with activity and doing – the hand
- Affective: Having to do with feelings, emotions, values and motivation - the heart
- Cognitive: Having to do with thinking and believing – the head.

This model is the basic psychological view of humankind that goes back to Greeks and probably Egyptians. It views a human as composed of three interdependent processes. All are interdependent, and no one part can change without the other parts also changing.

Figure 6: Three interdependent processes (Mick Cope, 2003)
According to the above research, from a thinking aspect, during the British PC customer purchasing process customers would consider price, brand, functionality, product usability, quality and so on to make decisions. According to the result of surveys the most considered factor was functionality. It is not an easy factor to explain to PC customers, so customer experience design can allow customers to use the product and feel new functions of the product before he/she buys it. Customer experience design is the best way of explaining to customer to help them understand better about the product (see figure 7). From a feeling aspect, improving purchasing design and after sales service design will give customers a deeper impression. This would not decrease the feeling during first sight of a well designed product. From a behavioural aspect, 88% percent of British customers preferred a customized purchase style, thus customized sales design can be used as main method to increase customer satisfaction in the UK PC market.

**Figure 7:** Three interdependent processes analysis

**Brand development process**

For internationalization, the Lenovo group changed their original logo from ‘Legend’ to ‘Lenovo’. 

(a) The old Legend logo
For the mainland market Lenovo plan to use ‘English+Chinese’ style logo (picture b), for the overseas market they will use ‘Lenovo’ only. ‘Le’ is from the original logo ‘Legend’ continues the meaning of myth, ‘novo’ means innovation. From the PC customer survey questionnaire we can see that 16% of UK customers think that Lenovo is a brand for PCs, 10% of customers think that Lenovo is an IT brand, 9% customers think that it is a brand for cars and 7% of customer think that it is for shoes. The rest of UK customers think that Lenovo may be a brand of food, clothes or other product. Obviously, Lenovo really needs to depict the characteristics and values of its brand. It is a clear that Lenovo have much work to do to achieve even basic recognition.

Based on Schmitt’s (2002) model Customer Experience drives customer loyalty and profits. Lenovo should develop their brand from consistent to valuable (see figure 8).
Figure 8: Brand customer experience development analysis

Consistent: Lenovo should have consistent Mind Identity (MI), Behaviour Identity (BI) and Visual Identity (VI). When compared to the three interdependent processes figure, we can associate MI to the head, BI to the hand and VI to the heart. Customers will accumulate brand purchasing experience when they are influenced by the same brand identity. BI and VI are more relevant with customers in the whole brand identity system than MI. BI relates to all the behaviours in the company in order to arrive at the final business aim. As part of the customer experience brand strategy, we consider the behaviours relevant to customers. From a consistency angle, all behaviours from the staff of Lenovo to their customers should have the same standard and quality. This means that a customer should always get the same high-quality service from every Lenovo shop. As long as customers have been consistently influenced by the same quality service experience, then the experience will turn into a brand impression. If the Lenovo’s service standard keeps changing all the time, it will be difficult for customers to build up a steady and good brand impression. VI is also a very important factor for Lenovo to create a brand impression in the customers’ mind. It is an ID for people; each company will only have one VI system to promote their brand image. Consistent BI and VI can encapsulate how professional Lenovo is through a vivid brand feature.

Intentional: Intentional Brand personality, brand attribute and service can help Lenovo to support this brand characteristic and value in order to maintain brand position in customers’ minds.

Differentiation in the company can be made by unique features which should be used to distinguish Lenovo from other PC brands. Create customer experience and consistently
delivered ‘special’ customer service are the best way to distinguish Lenovo from other competing brands.
Valuable: In order to offer customers a value proposition, Lenovo should understand target the customer needs in good time.

**Three phases for the PC purchase process**

![Figure 9: PC purchasing process](image)

Here the authors divide the PC customer experience of the purchasing process into three phases: pre-sales thinking, purchasing process and after-sales service (see figure 9). We analyzed the PC purchasing process based on brand customer experience development analysis. This was indicated in the previous section in order to fully understand PC customers’ requirements. During pre-sales thinking phase, customers will collect information in different ways, such as internet searching, advertisements or ask friends etc. No matter what the customer has done before the purchasing behaviour, all of this is included in pre-sales thinking phase. After customer has got enough information about the PC products he/she want, he/she will start the purchasing behaviour. From the time customers start to purchase until they get the product this phase is defined as the purchasing process phase. This period includes re-making-decisions, in-shop purchasing experience, sales service experience, environment design experience and so on. After-sales service means all the service after the customers have bought their PC product. This period consists of after-sales deliver, after sales maintenance guarantee, hardware and software upgrades and so on.

**Lenovo customer experience brand strategy model**

Based on brand customer experience development analysis and PC purchasing process analysis, a new Lenovo customer experience brand strategy model was established as shown in figure 10. The three stages of PC purchasing process are analyzed with different criteria as there were different customer actions or behaviours in each section. **Pre-sales thinking** should be derived from personality, attitude influences, perception, search conditions and active or passive information aspects. These aspects of ‘designed’ customer experience, brand strategy will help British customers to understand Lenovo easier and better before purchasing. Lenovo needs to design the customer **purchasing process** experience based on design, brand,
price, place, product and promotion. The purchasing process also is the process by which to feel Lenovo’s brand characteristics and values. From personality, perception, socio-cultural, technological and economic aspects, design of the customer after sales service can completely satisfy their physical and mental requirements. Customers will definitely feel that they ‘got more than they pay for’ in a delightful purchasing environment (see figure 10).

**Figure10: Lenovo customer experience brand strategy model**

Through the customer experience survey and previous research, we are able to formulated further guidance on customer experience design brand strategy model for Lenovo. This will be used to implement the customer experience in the UK PC market (see figure 11).

Pre sales thinking:

- Offer customers a different information search service for different segments to customers
- Design a PC information learning centre to let customers gain more IT knowledge through Lenovo customer experience service
- Design a free PC information search area in the Lenovo store brand shop
- Design internet purchase and multimedia publicity channels
- Create more opportunities to make contact with customers and transfer faith to the Lenovo brand.

Purchasing process:

- Extend Lenovo’s brand awareness during the purchasing process
- Optimise the brand’s visual identity to make a deeper impression on the customers.
- Design a mix of store brand shops and brand counters in a mixed-brand PC environment.
- Train sales assistants to offer professional advice for customers who need help.
- Materialise Lenovo’s brand characteristics and brand values during the purchasing process.
- A customized purchase style can be used as a key method with professional sales assistants.

After-sales service:

- Develop a special ‘humanistic’ design service and surprise service.
- Offer hardware and software upgrades to keep advanced technology available to customers.
- Offer different after sales service to different target customer groups.
- Trade-in sales or discounts of relevant PC products for loyal customers.
- Organize social activities to grow Lenovo’s impression and reputation.
- Improve product design and service duly based on customer feedback.

**Figure 11:** Lenovo customer experience brand strategy recommendations model
Conclusions

The proposed customer experience-based brand strategy model has been evaluated by a variety of people, includes the design manager and designers in Lenovo, PC retailers, PC customers and so on. Interviewees who work in Lenovo confirmed that the proposed model would be useful to help them better understand the UK PC market and UK customers. Other people thought this model could help better understand their customer and improve their customers experiences design details.

Form a brand strategy process development aspect, future research can be continued. Which kind of design behaviour can be used effectively to develop and add value to Lenovo? How to design the customer experience to improve Lenovo’s brand impression? What are the best methods to influence UK customers to become loyal customers? What should be done after the customer loyalty? Should Lenovo develop sub-brands or co-brand with another company? There are other ideas should be considered in future research.

References


