



THE ROLE OF PROACTIVE MARKETING IN ENHANCING CUSTOMER LOYALTY: AN APPLIED STUDY OF THE OPINIONS OF A SAMPLE OF CUSTOMERS AT THE GREEN APPLE STORE IN BAGHDAD

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Article history:	Abstract:
Received: June 10 th 2022 Accepted: July 11 th 2022 Published: August 20 th 2022	The aim of the current study is to measure the role of proactive marketing represented in (proactive orientation toward clients, pro-active orientation of competitors, market-based innovation) in enhancing customer loyalty represented in (the intention of the spoken word, the intention of redealing, the lack of sensitivity to price, and the behavior of the complaint) of a sample of customers in the green apple store in Baghdad. The survey tool was used to measure the level of proactive marketing availability and customer loyalty in the sample studied, as 350 questionnaire forms were distributed in cooperation with store staff, and he recovered 323 forms, after tabulating data, it was found that the number of forms that are valid for analysis reaches 309, which means that the response rate is 88.3%. In addition, the study seeks to achieve the conclusions it seeks to answer by adopting a set of statistical tools such as natural distribution, alpha-chronous coefficients, arithmetic mean, standard deviation, Pearson correlation coefficient (SPSS.V.27), and regression coefficients extracted under the amos.V.27; Consequently, the study concluded that there is a relation of statistical significance between proactive marketing and client loyalty. This contributed to reaching a set of important conclusions related to the targeted store, the most prominent of which was the focus of the studied store on achieving excellence in its products through increasing its pre-emptive marketing capabilities and attracting as many customers as possible. This helps increase customer value by building positive customer relationships and ensuring customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Keywords: Proactive marketing, Customer Loyalty.

INTRODUCTION

Service organizations suffer from a lackdown in the infrastructure, which is the basis for proactive marketing that builds and develops customer loyalty, which means that proactive marketing can be invested to improve proactive behaviors in order to motivate customers to participate in their assigned functions. This will in turn improve the management of these organizations in order to give them the attention and importance needed to enhance customer loyalty.

Proactive marketing also classifies the key to market orientation to customers or competitors, and its purposes as responsive or proactive. This implies that to have accurate measurements of the proactive orientation

of markets and to give a full sense of market orientation, it is logical that both sides need to be examined in any research. Thus, the proactive attitudes of customers and competitors are seen in this study as determinants of the performance of companies.

The customer's proactive attitude indicates the company's ability to continuously study the customer's underlying needs and disclose future needs. This approach relates to a good understanding of the current needs of clients and the prediction of potential needs that may be realized sooner or later. Furthermore, forecasting the potential for future needs based on trends of environmental dynamism is seen as equally important and deserves serious attention. In order to create value for their target



markets, companies must collect knowledge about current and future customers and then use that knowledge to develop their marketing strategies. Strong customer-oriented firms have a competitive advantage because they consider creating and maintaining customer value as a top priority. This implies that a pro-competitive approach has to do with the firm's ability to anticipate competitive threats and analyze the competitor's actions so that it is ready for competitors' future business and reactions. Thus, market preemption is not an option but a means of survival for companies in the current dynamic market.

PART ONE: METHODOLOGY OF STUDY

First: The problem of study

Most organizations suffer losses from time to time because they miss the opportunity to meet the new customer requirements, fail to pay due attention and time horizons to proactively identify these requirements by understanding the varying needs of customers and providing appropriate solutions to them. This means that organizations' recognition of the importance of building value to customers through proactive marketing leads to their loyalty and building outstanding performance for the organization, and the study problem can therefore be formulated in an important question (how can the dimensions of proactive marketing be applied to enhance customer loyalty?)

Several important sub-questions arise from this question:

1. What is the level of proactive marketing at the Green Apple store in Baghdad?
2. What is the level of loyalty of the customers to the green apple store in Baghdad?
3. What impact does the proactive attitude have on the customer's loyalty?
4. How do the dimensions of proactive marketing (pro-client orientation, pro-active competitors, market-based innovation) affect customer loyalty?

Second: The importance of the study

The study is of theoretical importance as it discusses subjects of great importance to organizations in the world represented in the study of proactive marketing related to enhancing the customer's loyalty at the green apple store in Baghdad, as it has a positive effect on developing the store and attracting as many customers as possible. In addition to the importance of scientific study in providing important information to the studied store and developing the store's vision toward the importance of investing in proactive marketing in reaching customers, directing their interests and influencing them.

Third: Objectives of the study

The overall objective of the study is to measure the impact of proactive marketing on enhancing customer loyalty, and in line with this objective the objective of the study has been addressed through a set of sub-

objectives:

1. Measure how proactive attitude toward customers affects customer loyalty.
2. Examine how the pro-active attitude of competitors affects customer loyalty.
3. Assess how market-based innovation affects customer loyalty.

Fourth: The hypothesis scheme of the study

In the light of the study methodology and its objectives, the study hypothesis scheme has been prepared, see Figure 1, to express the relationship between study variables.

1) **The independent variable:** Proactive marketing, which can be measured in three dimensions (proactive customer orientation, pro-competitors, market-based innovation).

2) **The dependent variable:** It is centered on customer loyalty, which can be measured in four dimensions (the intention of the spoken word, the intention of redealing, the lack of price sensitivity, and the behavior of the complaint).

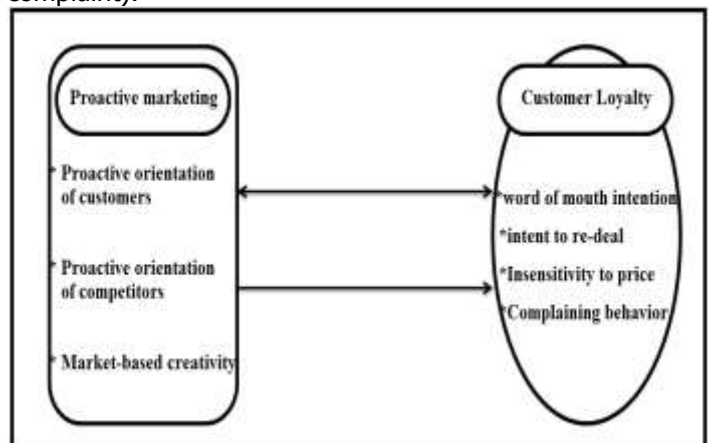


Figure 1. Structure of the study

Fifth: Study hypotheses

The first main hypothesis is that there is a moral correlation between proactive marketing and customer loyalty, and this hypothesis follows:

1. There is a moral correlation between the pro-active attitude toward the customer and the customer's loyalty to its dimensions (the intention of the spoken word, the intention of re-dealing, the insensitivity to price, and the behavior of the complaint).
2. There is a moral correlation between the pro-active attitude of competitors and the customer's loyalty to its dimensions (the intention of the spoken word, the intention of re-dealing, the insensitivity to price, and the behavior of the complaint).
3. There is a moral correlation between market-based innovation and the customer's loyalty to its dimensions (the intention of the spoken word, the intention of re-dealing, the insensitivity to price, and the behavior of the complaint).

The second key hypothesis is that making a better



proactive marketing contributes to increased customer loyalty and emanates from this hypothesis:

1. An improvement in the pro-active approach to the customer leads to increased customer loyalty in its dimensions (the intention of the spoken word, the intention to re-deal, the lack of sensitivity to price, and the behavior of the complaint).
2. An improvement in the pro-active approach of competitors leads to increased customer loyalty in its dimensions (the intention of the spoken word, the intention of redealing, the lack of price sensitivity, and the behavior of the complaint).
3. Market-based innovation improves customer loyalty further (spoken word intent, intent to re-deal, price insensitivity, and complaint behavior).

Sixth: The study measurement tool

The study relied on the questionnaire tool to collect the data needed to analyze and interpret study variables, in fact two variables representing the independent variable in (proactive marketing), the dependent variable (customer loyalty), and table 1 illustrates the study variables.

Table (1) Study variables

	Dimensions	NO.	Cod	
Proactive marketing (PM)	Pro-active attitude toward customers	6	PCW	Durie&Beshir,2018 ; Ngatno, 2015
	The proactive attitude of competitors	7	PCV	
	Market-based innovation	8	PMR	
Customer Loyalty (CL)	Intention of the spoken word	3	CWO	Abdul Wahid & Mohamed, 2018
	Intent to re-deal	3	CIR	
	No price sensitivity	3	CPR	
	Conduct of the complaint	3	CBH	

The study sample is described

The study community is represented in the green apple store in Baghdad, while the study sample included a random sample of customers who came to this store, as 350 questionnaire forms were distributed in cooperation with the store staff and recovered 323 forms. This means that the response rate is valued at 88.3%.

PART TWO: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

First: Proactive marketing

1. The concept of proactive marketing

The concept of proactive marketing emerged 70 years ago, when physiologists and behavioral researchers studied the behavior of active individuals, as behavioral researchers noticed that the actions of individuals are an ongoing process that adapts to the behavior of an individual and how responsive it is to the tasks entrusted to him. Thus, behavioral scientists have proposed a new

concept that has emerged as proactive marketing (Zakaria et al.,2018:2), one of the key elements of organizational behavior as it focuses on the future, self-initiative, and efforts to improve how we get the business done to maximize performance (Brosi et al., 2018:357).

At the beginning of the 1990s, proactive marketing was interpreted in a modern theoretical perspective to replace the traditional classical theory of behavior, with proactive marketing demonstrating the role of personal disposition in creating precautionary solutions to measure the Organization's unruly behavior and study the best opportunities, initiatives and actions through which change can occur in the Organization (Rusyda et al., 2020:617). For Otto et al. 2019:3-4, proactive marketing is a proactive, self-sustaining process in which workers develop their skills and take care of their own environment in order to reduce worker fatigue.

Proactive marketing is also defined as taking the lead in bringing change and improving the state of the organization (Keskindily-Kara& Zafer-Gunes,2017:79), and is also known as actions by learners to enhance their knowledge, skills or professional abilities in their intended career. That is, these activities must be voluntary and initiated by the learner themselves (OpSATA,2020:17). (Alves& da Silva, 2017:146) pointed out that proactive marketing points to an organization's strategy for creating a sustainable competitive advantage through supply chains. On the basis of the foregoing, it can be said that proactive marketing represents the extent to which the Organization can mobilize its mechanisms, efforts, funds and time to predict and satisfy the requirements of customers as much as possible.

2. The importance of proactive marketing

Proactive marketing is important in enhancing the ability of employees to engage in change and identify desired behaviors, and the importance of proactive marketing can be summarized in the following points:

- a) It is a self-directed and future-oriented action aimed at changing and improving a situation or self (Cha et al.,2017:474).
- b) Improving the Organization's current conditions and creating new conditions that fit its environment (Lebel & PATIL, 2018:724)
- c) Achieve personal and career goals at work
- d) Enhance stakeholder benefits and maintain high-level business relationships
- e) Improved corrective actions to address the problems faced by staff within the organization (Zhang& Parker, 2019:126).

3. Proactive marketing dimensions

Proactive marketing can be measured in three important dimensions (Durie&Beshir, 2018:96):

1. **Proactive attitude toward customers:** Proactive attitude toward the customer is an input to human resources in carrying out demanding tasks and assessing



the sustainable performance of employees (GUO et al., 2019:2); In addition, less attention has been devoted to the role of proactive guidance for clients through the identification of market requirements and the commitment of management to internal resources that can affect the export performance of the organization (Munawar et al., 2019:1712).

2. Pro-competitive orientation: To understand how companies achieve competitive advantage, organizational capabilities are determined in market-oriented firms. The author defines the difference between resources and capabilities on the assumption that the capabilities cannot be given monetary value, that they are an integral part of the organization's procedures and practices, and cannot be negotiated or imitated. Furthermore, the author portrays organizational capabilities as complex "packages" of skills and knowledge accumulated in organizational processes that allow firms to use their resources and coordinate their activities. Resources and organizational processes are closely intertwined, as it is the ability of a company to allow activities to be carried out in the organizational process (Cantaleano et al., 2018:8).

3. Market-based innovation: Market-based innovation depends on individuals by enhancing the ability to develop new ideas within teams and to take advantage of their performance and efforts within the organization, as well as individual creativity to develop individuals' awareness of the organization's external forecasting (Standing et al., 2016:52).

Second: Customer loyalty

1. The concept of Customer Loyalty

The word "loyalty" means compliance with the laws established by the organization (Hajdin, 2005:259). The satisfaction of the service provider thus positively affects the satisfaction of clients with the Organization and its products. Satisfied customers also positively influence the feelings of service providers toward their organization, and thus obtaining satisfied customers is likely to lead to high satisfaction for the service provider and improved performance and long-term maintenance. Accordingly, customer loyalty comes through service provider loyalty and therefore customer loyalty must be a marketing priority (Suedan, 2013:231). He argued (Quach et al., 2016:105) that customer loyalty represents a range of multiple aspects, which are repurchase structure, product preferences, and brand attitudes. (Al-Shibawi, Kazem, 2015:60) the customer's loyalty is a strategy that aims at increasing customer loyalty and increasing their purchasing and belonging to the same organization only by offering more responsive and demand-driven products to each customer. (Yoo&Bai, 2013:167) is interested in customer loyalty because it refers to frequent visits or purchases including emotional commitment or positive attitude toward the service provider, which leads to the statement that loyal

customers will pay a higher cost than their peers (Prentice, 2013:49), On the basis of the foregoing, it can be said that the loyalty of the customer refers to the amount of sacrifices made by the Organization to preserve and gain satisfaction, which in turn strengthens their loyalty to the Organization.

2. The importance of Customer Loyalty

The importance of Customer Loyalty in motivating customers to experience the products and services of the organization that they are loyal to is highlighted because they have confidence in these products as they meet their different desires, and the importance of Customer Loyalty in Heryanto, 2011:67; Yoo&Bai 2013:167 ; Bilgihan, 2016:105 ; Nyadzayo&Khajehzadeh, 2016:263):

- a) Promote regular product repurchase
- b) Purchase of product or service line
- c) Attract new customers
- d) The Customer Loyalty process enhances the organization's immunity against competitors.
- e) Increase the organization's profitability, and increase the number of loyal customers.
- f) To strengthen the customer's intention to purchase FAO products.
- g) Developing the relationship between the organization and the client.

3. The Dimensions of Customer Loyalty

Customer loyalty can be measured by focusing on four important dimensions (Abdelwahed and Mohamed, 2018):

1. Spoken word intent: Recommending the product or organization to others, and this dimension indicates that positive oral communication contributes to greater customer retention, reducing marketing costs for gaining new customers (Al-Mosawi, 2017:86).
2. Intent to re-deal: The degree of frequent interaction with the Organization, as the intent to re-purchase means that the customer wants to return and buy back the same product (JIONGLIN, 2017:10; Li, 2018:14 ; Riyadi, 2019:104)
3. Price insensitivity: A customer's willingness to pay high prices for the organization's products, price insensitivity can effectively influence others' decisions (Delimi, 2014:227),
4. Complaint behavior: The extent to which the customer is able to bear the consequences of the problems that can be encountered when dealing with the organization, customers are the foundation of the organization's consumption of its products and services (Lee&cude, 2012:91).

PART THREE: PRACTICAL SIDE

First: Test the reasonableness of data

Before we begin the analysis process, we must submit the data to a series of tests to determine whether the results obtained can be disseminated to the community, so it is done with the help of the Kolmogorov-smirnov test. Table 2 shows tests of normal distribution



Table (2) Natural distribution tests

Variable	min	max	Kol-Smi	P-value
PCW	1	5	0.184	> 0.05
PCV	1	5	0.269	> 0.05
PMR	1	5	0.253	> 0.05
PM	1	5	0.208	> 0.05
CWO	1	5	0.233	> 0.05
CIR	1	5	0.180	> 0.05
CPR	1	5	0.140	> 0.05
CBH	1	5	0.297	> 0.05
CL	1	5	0.115	> 0.05

The results in Table 3 show that the data follows the normal distribution, as the significance of the Kolmogorov-smirnov test is higher than (0.05) and is acceptable (Park, 2008:8). It can therefore be said that the results of these tests pave the way for the use of educational statistical tools for testing the validity of the hypotheses established and for verifying the reliability and stability of the measurement tools used in the study.

Second: Measuring instrument stability test

This test is a statistical analysis of the level of reliability of data obtained by the investigator by distributing the survey to a sample of (309) researchers, as well as to reach a consistent result used in (Cronbach's Alpha). A method of testing stability, because the test itself provides stability conditions. In accuracy data, when its value is greater than (70%), the table (3) shows the coefficient of alpha-kronbach.

Table (3) Cronbach's Alpha of study variables

	Dimensions	NO.	Cronbach's Alpha	
Proactive marketing	Pro-active attitude toward customers	6	0.874	0.867
	The proactive attitude of competitors	7	0.873	
	Market-based innovation	8	0.869	
Customer Loyalty	Intention of the spoken word	3	0.875	0.879
	Intent to re-deal	3	0.887	
	No price sensitivity	3	0.888	
	Conduct of the complaint	3	0.947	

The results in the table (3) show that the study measurement tools are relatively stable, with academic and administrative study particularly needing to measure the suitability of the measurement tools for developed phenomena, showing the stability of the proactive marketing paragraphs by 0.867 and the customer's loyalty by 0.879.

Third: Statistical description of the study

variables

This paragraph deals with the determination of the mathematical milieu, standard deviations and relative importance of each dimension used in the study.

❖ **Proactive marketing**

We note from the results in Table 4 that the highest computational mean was achieved after the market based innovation (PMR) and its value (4.07), with a standard deviation of 0.738 and with a relative interest of 81%, which means that the studied sample realized the importance of relying on innovation in marketing its products to customers. The results also showed that after the pro-active orientation of competitors (PCV) came last with an arithmetic mean of (3.84) and with a standard deviation of (0.848), i.e. a relative interest of (77%).

❖ **Customer Loyalty**

The results in table 4 show that the highest calculation mean was achieved after CIR (4.07), with a standard deviation of 0.615 and a relative interest of 81%, which means that the studied sample recognizes the importance of encouraging customers to repeat the purchase process by building positive relationships and giving them competitive discounts and prices. The results also showed that after price insensitivity (CPR) came last with an arithmetic mean of (3.99) and a standard deviation of (0.829), i.e. with a relative interest of (73%).

Table (4) Computational media, standard deviations, and relative importance of study variables

NO.	mean	S.D	%	NO.	mean	S.D	%
PCW1	3.49	1.355	70%	PMR7	3.99	1.026	80%
PCW2	3.34	1.227	67%	PMR8	3.66	0.917	73%
PCW3	3.41	1.103	68%	PMR	4.07	0.738	81%
PCW4	4.67	0.83	93%	PM	3.96	0.731	79%
PCW5	4.56	0.883	91%	CWO1	3.68	1.019	74%
PCW6	4.35	0.857	87%	CWO2	3.51	1.141	70%
PCW	3.97	0.738	79%	CWO3	4.4	0.933	88%
PCV1	4.03	0.613	81%	CWO	3.86	0.748	77%
PCV2	4.17	1.156	83%	CI1	4.37	0.837	87%
PCV3	3.99	1.026	80%	CI2	3.99	0.73	80%
PCV4	3.66	0.917	73%	CIR3	3.86	1.25	77%
PCV5	3.68	1.019	74%	CIR	4.07	0.615	81%
PCV6	3.51	1.141	70%	CPR1	3.78	1.147	76%
PCV7	3.8	1.266	76%	CPR2	3.43	1	69%
PCV	3.84	0.848	77%	CPR3	3.76	1.192	75%
PMR1	3.52	1.13	70%	CPR	3.66	0.813	73%
PMR2	3.66	1.04	73%	CBH1	3.62	1.14	72%
PMR3	4.67	0.83	93%	CBH2	3.63	1.053	73%
PMR4	4.56	0.883	91%	CBH3	4.72	0.756	94%
PMR5	4.35	0.857	87%	CBH	3.99	0.829	80%
PMR6	4.17	1.156	83%	CL	3.9	0.481	78%

Fourth: Test hypotheses

1. **Correlation hypotheses:** To test the correlation between proactive marketing and customer loyalty, the researcher used the simple correlation coefficient (Pearson), as shown in Table 5



Table (5) correlation matrix between study variables

	Intention of the spoken word	Intent to re-deal	No price sensitivity	Conduct of the complaint	Customer Loyalty
Pro-active attitude toward customers	.686**	.629**	.570**	.820**	.674**
proactive attitude of competitors	.914**	.543**	.535**	.296**	.628**
Market-based innovation	.879**	.633**	.517**	.226**	.665**
Proactive marketing	.880**	.634**	.573**	.228**	.694**

****.** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
Sig. (2-tailed)=0.000 **N=309**

The relationship between proactive marketing and client loyalty has gained a value of 0.694 showing the consistency of responses to the phenomenon in question, and the results show that there is a moral correlation between proactive marketing and the dimensions of customer loyalty by 0.880, 0.634, 0.573, 228 respectively, due to the intention of the spoken word, the intention of re-dealing, the insensitivity to the price, and the behavior of the complaint. This indicates that the companies concerned are aware of the importance of proactive marketing in order to enhance customer loyalty.

Based on the foregoing, the first claim, which provides for a meaningful correlation between proactive marketing and customer loyalty, can be accepted.

2. **Impact hypotheses:** To test the impact relationship between proactive marketing and customer loyalty, the researcher used modeling the structural equation as follows:

The results show that there is an effect of proactive marketing on the customer's loyalty, which means that the analytical indicators in Figure 2 and Table 6 show that the phenomenon in question recognizes the importance of proactive marketing. This means that one improvement of standard deviation achieves

customer loyalty by (0.694), by a standard error (0.027), and by a critical value of (16.889), i.e. below a moral level of less than (0.001).

Proactive marketing also explained the difference in customer loyalty (0.481) and the remaining value is not within the limits of the study.

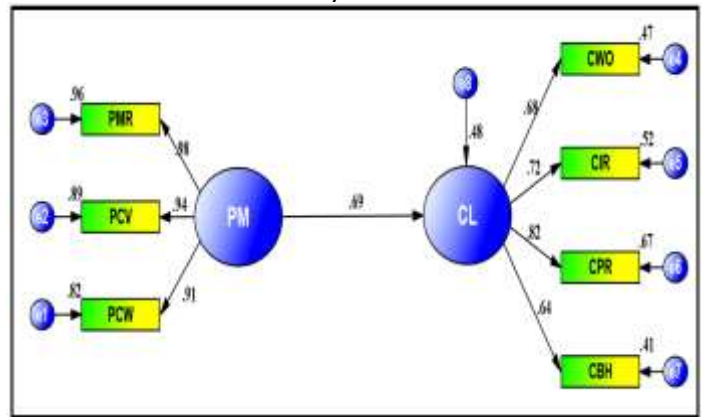


Figure (2) structural model of the impact of proactive marketing on customer loyalty

Table (6) Summary of the results of the impact analysis for proactive marketing in customer loyalty

Path	Estimates	Standard error	Critical value	R ²	P
Proactive marketing → Customer Loyalty	0.694	0.027	16.889	0.481	0.001

Based on the foregoing, the second claim, which provides for a meaningful influence relationship of proactive marketing in the customer's loyalty, can be accepted.

PART FOUR: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

First: Conclusions

1. The results showed that the store's advertisements and written postings have a positive impact on customer loyalty in terms of measures and proactive approaches to handling customer complaints.
2. There is less than ambitious interest in investing social media to introduce the services and products of the studied store.
3. The well-considered store has improved the skills of our suppliers to be ready to help each other in the face of crises and complex tasks and to develop their ability to meet deadlines, thereby enhancing customer loyalty.
4. The results show that the considered store has given clear attention to avoiding customer dissatisfaction and being informed about containing and handling customer complaints as quickly as possible.
5. There is a clear commitment by service providers in the Code Store to implement proactive marketing mechanisms and take possible measures in order to gain customer loyalty.



6. The results of the study showed that the exchange of information between the service provider and customers contributed to an increase in the level of cooperative behavior between them and a noticeable increase in the degree of participation in marketing decisions.

Second: Recommendations

- 1) The experienced store must build a database that can be referenced to address issues in its internal and external operations, which will develop the store's potential to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, develop and address vulnerabilities, confront threats, and invest opportunities and strengths.
- 2) The informed store should motivate service providers to generate as much ideas as possible and broaden their scope for issues that can limit the ability and ability of the store to gain customer satisfaction. This requires them to encourage service providers to participate in decision-making by allocating the necessary financial, material and human resources.
- 3) The informed store should be careful to reduce the price sensitivity of in-store customers by making periodic changes in their price structure.
- 4) The well-considered store should develop positive relationships with customers to encourage them to participate in designing services offered and to identify the products they want
- 5) A well-considered store should be interested in providing new and innovative alternatives and options for store growth and development, and gaining acceptance and educational quality, requiring them to build high-tech teams to ensure that decisions made and accepted by all parties are applied.

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