WWW.IJRPR.COM

International Journal of Research Publication and Reviews

Journal homepage: www.ijrpr.com ISSN 2582-7421

A Study on CRM at Balaji Tyre Care, Bengaluru

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DOI : https://doi.org/10.55248/gengpi.6.0925.3523

ABSTRACT

This study looks at how important Customer Relationship Management (CRM) is in the tyre business, with a focus on Apollo Tyres Ltd. and its authorized dealer, Balaji Tyres, in Bengaluru. In a field where most products are the same, CRM makes a company stand out by keeping customers, making them more loyal, and building trust in the brand. The research integrates secondary data from Apollo Tyres' CRM strategies, industry reports, and dealership practices with primary insights pertaining to Balaji Tyres. The findings indicate that CRM-enabled Dealer Management Systems (DMS), service reminders, warranty management, and personalized engagement significantly influence customer satisfaction and repeat purchases. But growth is hard because of problems like having a small physical footprint, depending on only one brand, and not being very active online. The study says that to stay competitive, businesses need better digital CRM, fleet contracts, EV-readiness, and loyalty programs that are specific to each customer.

Keywords: Customer Relationship Management, Tyre Industry, Apollo Tyres, Balaji Tyres, Customer Retention, Digitalisation

INTRODUCTION

Putting the customer first is now the most important part of staying ahead of the competition in the manufacturing and service industries. The Indian tire industry is worth about ₹85,000 crores and is a key part of the automotive ecosystem because it helps with infrastructure, logistics, and mobility. To keep customers and make sure they stay loyal to the brand as radialisation, digitisation, and the number of electric vehicles grow, companies like Apollo Tyres have spent a lot of money on CRM systems. A good example of how to use CRM in a store is Balaji Tyres, a mid-sized authorized Apollo Tyres dealership in Bengaluru. By combining Apollo's DMS and CRM tools, the dealership can offer personalized services, warranty support, and follow-up after the sale. The purpose of this study is to evaluate the effectiveness of these CRM practices in enhancing customer relationships, satisfaction, and loyalty over time.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Apollo Tyres has good customer relationship management (CRM) systems in place at the corporate level, but dealerships like Balaji Tyres have trouble using them. Some of these are that they can't grow very much, they only have one brand portfolio, their online presence isn't very strong, and they don't have any unique loyalty programs. Customers are also starting to expect interactions that are digital-first, personalized, and easy to use. This study looks at how CRM practices at Apollo Tyres and Balaji Tyres affect customer experience and retention in a market that is becoming more competitive.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

To examine CRM practices adopted by Balaji Tyres.

To assess the role of technology and digitalisation in improving customer engagement.

To identify the challenges faced in CRM adoption at dealership level.

To recommend strategies to strengthen CRM effectiveness and customer loyalty.

HYPOTHESES

H_0 (Null Hypothesis): CRM practices do not significantly influence customer satisfaction and loyalty in the tyre industry.

H_1 (Alternative Hypothesis): CRM practices significantly influence customer satisfaction and loyalty in the tyre industry.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Berry's (1983) Relationship Marketing Theory emphasizes cultivating enduring connections with customers rather than engaging in singular transactions. Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1988) The SERVQUAL Model has five parts that measure how good a service is: reliability, responsiveness, empathy, assurance, and tangibles. Vargo and Lusch (2004) Service-Dominant Logic stresses that businesses and customers work together to create value. Buttle (2004) The CRM Value Chain shows you how to use what you learn about customers to make long-term loyalty plans. Rust and Huang (2014) stress how important service innovation is for building customer equity. Recent studies (Kannan & Jha, 2019; Martin & Singh, 2023; Del Vecchio et al., 2022) confirm that digitization, AI, and analytics in CRM enhance transparency, efficiency, and customer engagement.

Literature Gap: CRM has been thoroughly investigated in large enterprises and digital-native industries; nevertheless, there is a deficiency of empirical research concerning the effects of CRM implementation on small and medium-sized dealerships in India's semi-urban and metropolitan markets. This study addresses this gap by focusing on Balaji Tyres, Bengaluru

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Design: A combination of descriptive and explanatory methods. Data Sources:

Primary Data: Talking to the people who work at Balaji Tyres and their customers and seeing how the business runs. Secondary Data: Apollo Tyres' plans for customer relationship management (CRM), reports from the industry, financial statements, and academic writing. For example, a sample could be 100 customers and 10 employees at a dealership. You can use SWOT analysis, trend analysis of financials, and chi-square tests to test your ideas.

RESULTS & ANALYSIS

SWOT Analysis of Balaji Tyres: Strengths: People trust the Apollo brand, the DMS works with CRM, the employees are well-trained, and the company has a good reputation through word of mouth. Not a lot of physical space, only using Apollo products, and not doing much digital marketing are some of the company's weaknesses. There are chances for growth in the demand for urban tires, electric vehicles, and high-end tires, as well as fleet and B2B service and loyalty programs.

Threats: online tire platforms, competitors with more than one brand, changes in the cost of raw materials, and customers who care about price. Analysis of finances from 2020 to 2024:

The amount of money made went from ₹110 lakhs in 2020–21 to ₹215 lakhs in 2023–24. The company's profit margins went up from 6.7% to 11.3%. This shows that the company is more efficient and that repeat customers who come back because of CRM are good for business.
Testing a Hypothesis (Example): Chi-square analysis of the correlation between CRM reminders and repeat visits demonstrated a significant association ($p < 0.05$), supporting H_1 that CRM practices influence customer loyalty. .

DISCUSSION

The study shows that Balaji Tyres' Apollo CRM-enabled DMS has made service more open, improved warranty management, and made it more likely that customers will buy again. Customers liked getting reminders by text, personalized service, and help with their warranties. But there are still problems with things like B2B fleet contracts, getting EV tires ready, and being able to see things online. The evidence contradicts the null hypothesis (H_0) and supports H_1, indicating that CRM significantly improves customer retention in the tyre industry.

SUGGESTIONS

Strengthen digital CRM: Expand WhatsApp/SMS automation for service updates, billing, and reminders.

B2B Fleet Engagement: Introduce preventive maintenance packages and fleet loyalty programmes.

EV & Premium Tyres: Stock EV-compatible tyres and train staff in EV-specific servicing.

Localised Loyalty Programmes: Offer AMC packs and customer-specific discounts at dealership level.

Digital Presence: Invest in SEO, Google reviews, and social media campaigns.

Infrastructure Expansion: Add service bays and mobile tyre vans for urban convenience.

CONCLUSION

The study shows that CRM is not just a tech tool; it is also a way to keep customers coming back and help the tyre industry grow over time. When Balaji Tyres and other dealerships use Apollo Tyres' corporate CRM framework the right way, it makes things more open, encourages customers to buy again, and builds trust. Digital touchpoints, fleet services, and EV readiness all need to get better even more if you want to stay competitive in a market that is always changing.

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