

Seminar № 18.

Topic of the lesson: Analysis of the competitiveness of pharmacy organizations. The role of marketing in organizing the work of pharmacies"

Main issues to be discussed at the seminar:

1. Competition. Competitiveness of a pharmacy organization.
2. Main stages of competitive environment analysis. Give a description.
3. Types of competitors. Analysis and assessment of competitors.
4. Positioning of your own pharmacy in comparison with a competitor's pharmacy . .
5. The role of marketing in organizing the work of pharmacies.
6. Ensuring a leading position among competitors of pharmacy organizations

1. Competition among pharmacy organizations is growing every year. In modern conditions, managing assortment and pricing is becoming increasingly difficult. Currently, there are processes of “merger” of pharmacies and pharmacy chains, as well as “absorption” of smaller business representatives by large networks. Pharmacies have to look for new ways to protect themselves from competitors, using aggressive marketing, changing pricing strategies and assortment policies. Many participants in the pharmacy business face certain difficulties and try to independently find ways to solve existing problems.

How to ensure leadership among competitors, how to retain regular customers and attract new ones? To know what methods to defend yourself and in what direction to develop your company, you need to have information about who exactly the main competitors are, assess their potential capabilities, current activities, the degree of competitive threat, and predict, if possible, their further actions.

2. Analysis of the competitive environment is the starting point in the process of forming a strategic work plan for your own pharmacy organization.

There are five main stages of analyzing the competitive environment:

- identifying real competitors.
- comprehensive research of competitors according to selected parameters.
- analysis of your own pharmacy using similar indicators.
- compiling a pivot table.
- development of a positioning strategy in the pharmacy market based on identified advantages and weaknesses.

The first and important stage of monitoring is to identify a list of current and potential competitors. Not all nearby pharmacies are direct competitors. Selecting direct competitors and developing appropriate programs against them will help significantly improve the efficiency of the pharmacy and the company as a whole. The result should be a representative sample of competitors.

3. There are two main types of competitors:

- ✓ Direct (or real) competitors are companies whose actions can significantly affect your sales, selling a similar product in a similar market and working with your target audience.
- ✓ Indirect competitors are companies that sell products with different characteristics or a completely different product, but also serve your target audience.

The most dangerous are direct competitors - they are the ones who draw the flow of buyers to themselves, as they offer similar products, for example, at lower prices. A striking example of this type of competitor is the actively opening discounter chains.

After identifying real competitors, it is necessary to decide on a set of indicators by which each competitor will be analyzed and assessed. These indicators include:

1. General information.
2. Range.

3. Pricing.
4. Discount program.
5. Passability and attendance.
6. Marketing activities.
7. Merchandising and service standards.

General information is a set of data about competing pharmacies and includes the following description: name of the pharmacy, contact details, period of operation, territorial location of the competing pharmacy, staff, number of working cash registers, sales floor area, etc. This information allows you to create a portrait each of the existing competitors, which will ultimately help to objectively determine the exact typology.

Assortment and pricing.

One of the most important parameters of competitor analysis is assortment and pricing. Pricing policy in modern market conditions is becoming a key tool for business management in most pharmaceutical companies and affects not only the financial performance of the company, but also the perception of the consumer. Determining the pricing strategy and depth of a competitor's pharmacy portfolio is complicated by limited sources of information on these blocks. Typically, data collection is carried out through monitoring of specialized Internet sites or independent visits to competing pharmacies by employees of a pharmacy organization. In addition, information about prices for certain goods is additionally provided by pharmacy visitors, expressing their opinion on the pricing policy of neighboring pharmacies. It is believed that it is with the help of pharmacy clients that the main list of "marker" products is formed, according to which prices are subsequently reviewed for products in competing pharmacies.

The assortment of each pharmacy is unique. And only based on the list of "marker" products identified with the help of buyers, it is impossible to fully assess the pricing and depth of the assortment of competitors. It is important to consider that the list of "marker" products in each pharmacy will be different. Therefore, it is advisable to determine the depth and width of the assortment in competing pharmacies based on an analysis of the content of product categories using the following algorithm.

- The basis is usually taken from the assortment of your own pharmacy, which is divided into small product groups.
- Then, within each product category, "marker" products are identified to evaluate pricing in competing pharmacies and in your own pharmacy.
- The next step is to analyze the assortment across the entire set of product categories and the depth of the assortment within each selected product category, which reflects the cost of "marker" goods.

The collected information allows you to determine the pricing policy of a competitor pharmacy, analyze the width and depth of its assortment and determine prices for a group of "marker" products.

Attendance, service .

Pharmacy traffic must be monitored for a specified period. As a rule, this period is seven days; in addition, flow participants are counted at different times of the day and the time of observation is established. The following observation algorithm is recommended:

- during expected peak hours (at lunchtime, in the evening after work);
- during the hours of expected least activity (perhaps in the morning and afternoon);
- on weekends the picture may be slightly different, so you can choose other time intervals.

This approach to traffic analysis makes it possible to identify on what day of the week and at what time of day the main flow of customers is observed at a retail outlet, and also makes it possible to determine the portrait of the main customers in competing pharmacies.

After this, you need to learn in detail about the marketing programs and promotional tools that this competitor uses:

- types of promotions used to attract buyers;
- products participating in these promotions;
- ways to inform the target audience about marketing activities taking place in pharmacies, conditions and methods of issuing discount cards, etc.

The analysis of merchandising in a pharmacy is also carried out according to several parameters:

- external design of the pharmacy (signboard, entrance to the pharmacy);
- the internal atmosphere in the pharmacy (the environment in the pharmacy, lighting, smells, cleanliness, music);
- form of trade in a pharmacy (closed, open or mixed);
- compliance with basic rules and principles regarding the presentation of goods on shelves;
- types of display of pharmaceutical products, etc.

The quality standards of customer service are assessed by front desk employees based on the following parameters:

- employee's appearance: uniform, badge, etc.;
- communication by phone;
- service in the sales area;
- service at the checkout.

Customer service is the most important part of the selling process. Here the buyer solves his main problem - choosing the necessary product. How successful and enjoyable this process will be for the buyer depends on the professionalism of the pharmacist (front desk worker). The quality of service is usually assessed using a developed questionnaire, and the results of this analysis can become fundamental in the further creation of a positioning strategy.

Internal analysis of a pharmacy organization.

The next step is to analyze your own pharmacy using similar parameters and compile a summary table reflecting a comparison of your own pharmacy with a competitor's pharmacy. Typically, a review of a pharmacy and competing pharmacies occurs in parallel, but here it is necessary to take into account a very important point - objectivity on the part of the performer conducting the study. Therefore, to conduct an analysis of the competitive environment, it is recommended to use the services of specialized consulting companies that will be able to reliably and fully analyze the competitive environment and process the results obtained. The set of collected information is subjected to a detailed analysis - the strengths and weaknesses of both the competitor's pharmacy and one's own pharmacy are identified.

4. The last and final stage of work on analyzing the competitive environment is the development of **a positioning strategy for your own pharmacy** based on the conclusions drawn. Based on the results of the work carried out, a strategy is being formed to reduce the competitive gap in the following areas:

- changing or optimizing pricing strategy;
- assortment optimization;
- organizing new or improving existing marketing activities;
- optimization of loyalty programs - bonus and discount systems;
- the use of technology to create a positive consumer attitude towards the pharmacy;
- improvement of the pharmacy interior;
- formation of unique selling propositions;

- advanced training of pharmaceutical specialists, etc.

Conclusions. A competent and comprehensive analysis of competitors is a broad base of information that provides the basis for building an effective customer-oriented marketing strategy in all main areas of the pharmacy organization. Based on the data obtained, the manager can correctly plan work in the competition, identifying strengths and weaknesses both in competing pharmacies and in his own pharmacy organization.

5. The role of marketing in organizing the work of a pharmacy.

Marketing is a complex of activities in a market, a company, or a pharmacy, which is aimed at meeting the needs of consumers. It is the process by which goods and services that provide a certain standard of living are developed and made available to people. Marketing is a market concept for the systemic management of enterprise activities, focused on meeting consumer requirements.

Marketing as a management system is based on the following general principles:

1. Marketing is aimed at achieving the final sale of the product on the market;
2. Marketing presupposes the subordination of all enterprise activities to consumer requirements;
3. When carrying out marketing activities, a program-targeted and systematic approach is used;
4. Marketing is based on a policy of market research, active adaptation to the market and targeted simultaneous influence on the market;
5. The human factor of marketing activities is being activated, which involves nurturing and ensuring the activity and entrepreneurship of workers and officials of all ranks.

Marketing in pharmacy is not so much a business function as a broad view of the entire area of drug production and their sales.

The general principles of marketing are also valid for the activities of a pharmacy enterprise and are embodied in specific areas of marketing activities, which include:

1. comprehensive study and forecasting of the market, research and analysis of its main indicators, development forecast. consumer research. segmentation of the market and its individual parameters, implementation of product and pricing policies; planning the assortment of medicines);
2. development of sales policy (selection of sales channels, analysis and forecast of sales, planning of trade turnover, determination of optimal conditions for the sale of pharmaceuticals, management of marketing activities and control over its implementation.)

6. Ensuring a leading position among competitors.

A pharmacy organization has a pressing question: how to ensure leadership among competitors; how to retain regular customers and attract new ones.

Reducing product prices is not the most optimal way, because it can lead to ruin.

The following marketing technologies will help attract visitors to the pharmacy:

1. Display of goods not in their group or product category. This occurs due to the pharmacist's ignorance of pharmacotherapeutic groups, indications for the use of drugs, as well as irresponsible performance of their functional duties by pharmacy staff, which indirectly indicates a lack of effective motivation of employees. It is recommended to: conduct regular testing of the level of knowledge of personnel; review the motivation system.
2. The goods presented on retail floors are located sideways to the buyer, which, on the one hand, does not in any way facilitate the consumer's selection process, and on the other, deprives the pharmacy of additional profit. The solution is to plan and implement the display of

goods on shelves strictly facing the buyer. This allows you to increase the number of faces, which directly affects the consumer's choice of a particular product.

3. The best products are not in the best places. Priority and branded products that generate the largest sales volume should be located at eye level and arm's length (according to merchandising rules).

4. Presence of incomplete or disassembled shelves and display cases in the sales area during pharmacy operation. All display changes must be made during times when the pharmacy is not serving customers.

5. The locomotive principle is rarely used, which allows the pharmacy to promote products "needed" by placing them next to the leading drug, as well as the trailer principle, which helps push the client to make a complex purchase;

Before making a decision to open a pharmacy, it is necessary to draw up an analytical report for the area, assess the size of the target audience of the new pharmacy, and study the intensity of competition (pricing and assortment policy, availability of loyalty programs, additional services).

It is imperative to pay attention to the smallest, at first glance, details, which in the future can significantly affect the work of the pharmacy organization. The interior of a pharmacy is the basis of corporate style, the creation of which is primarily aimed at distinguishing the brand from the general mass of the market for similar services and goods, as well as creating a stable, memorable and recognizable bright image both in the minds of the consumer and in the market.

The main elements of corporate style are the brand - a business development tool that symbolizes comprehensive information about the company. For example, lightboxes and LED crosses that are attached to the facade of the building perpendicular to automobile traffic, the presence of a logo and facade advertising, spatial signs (road signs).

For example, within the main flow of a given area, announcing flyers are distributed, which are an integral part of the company's corporate style, on the opening day the pharmacy is decorated with balloons, qualified staff greets the first client with a smile, and customers receive gifts on that day.

The assortment of pharmacies, formed taking into account the characteristics of the local consumer audience, includes both the latest foreign medicines and proven domestic drugs.

For external marketing, outdoor advertising, literature for doctors and patients, radio broadcasts, and presentations are used.

Outdoor advertising should display the following components: - a specific and understandable offer; time limit within the promotion; call to active action.

Thanks to a sign – a simple "Open" sign – pharmacy traffic can increase by 25%.

The simple design of the sales area increases the potential buyer's confidence in the pharmacy. It is very important to make the entrance to the pharmacy as visible as possible, because in more than 50% of cases it is not clear where it is.

A powerful mechanism for attracting new customers is also affiliate sales (cooperation with medical representatives, doctors of medical organizations), creating a pharmacy website with a simple navigation system.

The concept of merchandising in a pharmacy implies: placement of advertising posters in the sales area of the pharmacy; placement of products with printed advertising images (boxes for receipts, coin holders); distribution of advertising products (packages, pens, notepads) with the name of the medicinal product; installation of advertising models, mannequins - heroes of advertising stories; conducting presentations and consultations in pharmacies by representatives of manufacturing companies and doctors; distribution of trial samples of pharmaceutical products (in the sales area).

Conclusions. The content of marketing is identified with sales and its promotion and advertising. In fact, sales is one of the marketing functions and often not the most essential.

If a pharmacy organization has worked well on such areas of marketing as identifying consumer needs, developing suitable products and setting appropriate prices for them, and has developed a distribution and effective promotion system, the products will no longer have sales problems.

You can increase your sales volume in the following ways: increase the number of customers; get customers to buy more; encourage them to buy more often.

The following marketing technologies will help attract visitors to the pharmacy:

1. The introduction of a savings program allows you to: create a database of loyal customers; increase the average check by 10-20%; increase the number of new visitors and retain regular customers; increase brand awareness of the pharmacy chain; collect more positive reviews about employees and the network as a whole.

2. Cooperation with a charitable foundation creates the visitor's confidence in the social orientation of the pharmacy business, and also ensures the provision of real help to those who need it.

3. Map of the trading area . This is a map of the area where the pharmacy is located. It displays the location of the pharmacy, traffic flows, competing pharmacies, "client magnets" (entrance areas of shopping centers, business centers, parking lots, advertising media and possible partner stores. The introduction of a map of the trading area makes it possible to calculate the potential of the flow, attract new visitors (using affiliate programs), determine places to place advertising media, and save advertising budget.

4. Event marketing is the provision of discounts, presentation of a new product, holding promotions dedicated to any event, conferences, exhibitions, presentations, city and professional holidays, which allows you to increase the average check at the pharmacy; increase the number of new visitors by 10-20%; retain regular customers; increase brand recognition of the chain; enhance the image of the pharmacy.