

THE DELHI POLICE EXPERIENCE

On behalf of the Delhi Police in the mid-1989, 'Mode', a prestigious research agency, conducted research in the city of Delhi regarding the image of the Delhi Police.

The research findings were revealing. Only 25 percent of the citizens felt that the Delhi Police are honest, 28 per cent felt they are courteous, and 52 per cent felt they are not efficient, smart and cooperative. In other words, the research revealed that the perception about the Delhi Police amongst the citizens of Delhi is that they are dishonest, discourteous, inefficient, non-cooperative and lethargic. After 42 years of public service, this was the image which Delhi Police earned for themselves.

For a moment even if we forget the public image of the Delhi Police and notice the hard facts under each crime head, we realise that these hard facts only give us reasons for such a bad image. In 1989, with 11 cases of dacoity, 203 robberies, 120 rapes, 209 snatchings, 1459 burglaries, 11,807 thefts, 12,075 other punishable crimes under the IPC, it is hard to believe that Delhi Police are efficient, smart and active.

In 1989, the Delhi Police initiated the process of reforms and they called it a year with a new vision in Policing. A number of schemes were introduced not only to project the image and improve efficiency but also to motivate the police force to do their best in serving the public. "Third-Degree" was firmly and unequivocally banned in police stations and a new scheme of surprise checks of police stations was started. Under this scheme, Central Checking Team (CCT) makes surprise visits to police stations to ascertain, whether the police stations' staff are (a) reluctant to register FIRs, (b) holding anyone in illegal custody, (c) indulging in third degree methods, and (d) are generally alert, polite and helpful to the people.

Training programmes were restructured with service to the people and civility in behaviour as the principal themes. Motivational schemes like rewards for outstanding performance were introduced. These schemes included out of turn promotions, financial rewards and public citations.

The Police force was strengthened and to help improve efficiency "Police control room control cars" (PCR) were added. Women police were added to the force consciously to reduce the 'fear complex' about the police.

Some rules and procedures were amended with orientation towards service to society. Firm orders were issued that police personnel posted in hospitals would not detain, question or harass any person who brings an accident case. It was also ordered that the treatment of accident victims should start immediately without waiting for police formalities. Police stations were directed to release within 24 hours on '*Supurdari*' those vehicles involved in accidents.

A massive advertising campaign was launched in January, 1989 with the objectives to win, to inform and educate, to reach out to and seek out the citizens; to win their cooperation, to extend the hand of goodwill, friendship and service.

A number of advertisements were released in newspapers and magazines; posters and hoardings were put up on a variety of themes ranging from 'dial 100', reward schemes, anti-terrorism measures, vehicle etching, drive against harassment, property crime, basic safety precautions, servant verifications, eve teasing, FIR information, victimology, corporate image building, etc.

Almost eight years ago, in 1989, Delhi Police initiated measures with "Citizens" orientation when its credibility was low to an extent that almost everybody felt that they are dishonest, non-cooperative, discourteous, inefficient and lethargic. However, it still had a long way to go to make people believe in the claims of the advertisements and dispel the perception that a policeman of Delhi Police is corrupt to an extent he even won't spare a child in taking away every penny of his little pocket-money.

Questions for Discussion

1. Critically analyse the type of marketing effort that is needed by the Delhi Police to establish its credibility with the people. Suggest suitable changes in the 'People' element of the service wherever you think they are needed.
2. What kind of product augmentation would you suggest in the service product, to enable it to meet people's expectations?