

THE IMPACT OF MARKETING MIX AND SERVICE QUALITY FACTORS ON CUSTOMER SATISFACTION OF KUAYING DIGITAL (BEIJING) TECHNOLOGY CO., LTD.

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Abstract

The aim of this study was to investigate the marketing mix and service quality factors that influence customer satisfaction with Kuaying Digital (Beijing) Technology Co, Ltd. The research targeted customers who had previously used the company's services. The data collected from a sample of 300 respondents using questionnaires were analyzed based on frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation. The hypotheses were tested using multiple regression analysis.

The study revealed the following results: 1) The marketing mix factors, consisting of product, price, place and promotion, had a significant impact on customer satisfaction and showed statistical significance at the .05 level with a predictive power of 55.6%. And 2) The factors of service quality, including reliability, assurance, responsiveness, and empathy, had a significant influence on customer satisfaction at Kuaying Digital (Beijing) Technology Co., Ltd. and showed statistical significance at the .05 level with a predictive power of 66.1%.

Keywords: Marketing Mix, Service Quality, Customer Satisfaction

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Introduction

Technology has become an integral part of people's lives and has become indispensable for business operations in both commerce and management. It plays an important role in transforming business operations in the age of digital disruption (Batra et al., 2017). In recent years, Chinese industries have increasingly relied on technology to increase efficiency, reduce costs and save time. China, which is considered the world's largest consumer market, has a digital economy worth around USD 4.1 trillion, accounting for 32.9% of the country's GDP, according to a PWC study. Remarkably, 50% of Chinese people make online purchases every week, a rate well above the global average of 22%. The critical customer base comprises around 410 million millennials, surpassing the population of North America (Dutta et al., 2022).

Kuaying Digital (Beijing) Technology Co, Ltd. is a technology company focusing on investment, construction and operation of the digital city. The company develops smart ecosystems for mobile Internet applications that provide customizable and comprehensive functions and services for every city, organization and individual. This helps governments implement their digital governance and digital citizenship policies and enables various organizations to accurately find customers and citizens to live and work peacefully and happily (Kuaying Digital (Beijing) Technology Co., Ltd., 2023).

In the highly competitive landscape of the technology business, understanding and responding to customer needs and satisfaction is critical to an organization's growth. Kuaying Digital (Beijing) Technology Co, Ltd. recognizes the importance of customer satisfaction and is committed to delivering exceptional experiences. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to examine the key factors that influence customer satisfaction at Kuaying Digital (Beijing) Technology Co., Ltd. with a focus on marketing factors and service quality.

The prevalent problem of decreased customer satisfaction at Kuaying Digital (Beijing) Technology Co., Ltd. highlights a critical challenge in maintaining a competitive advantage in the rapidly evolving technology industry. At Kuaying Digital in particular, the interplay of these factors— - from potential inconsistencies in product offerings to gaps in expected and delivered service quality— - can significantly impact customer satisfaction. Statistical data confirms this, showing that companies that struggle in these areas often experience a drop in customer satisfaction of up to 20-30%. This underscores the urgent need for Kuaying Digital to re-evaluate and refine its marketing strategies and service delivery mechanisms to improve customer satisfaction and drive sustainable growth.

Marketing mix factors, often referred to as the “4Ps” (product, price, place and promotion), are fundamental concepts in marketing management and serve as controllable variables to influence customer responses and achieve marketing objectives (İşoraité, 2016). Product presentation is critical to customer satisfaction, and Kuaying Digital (Beijing) Technology Co., Ltd. focuses on providing innovative digital technologies to meet evolving customer and business needs. Pricing strategies resulting from a thorough market analysis and understanding of customer expectations have a significant impact on satisfaction.

However, customer satisfaction depends not only on marketing mix factors, but also on service quality, which plays a crucial role in perception. Kuaying Digital (Beijing) Technology Co., Ltd. emphasizes excellent service and is aware of the impact on satisfaction, loyalty and positive word of mouth (Prakash & Mohanty, 2013). The company demonstrates its commitment by promptly responding to inquiries, sourcing reliable products, and striving to provide personalized experiences tailored to specific customer needs.

Based on the comprehensive study of marketing mix factors and service quality, the objective of this research is to gain valuable insights into the impact on customer satisfaction in the context of Kuaying Digital (Beijing) Technology Co., Ltd. These insights will help the company to refine its marketing strategies, improve service quality and ultimately increase customer satisfaction, which will lead to long-term success in the digital technology industry.

Research objectives

1. To investigate the marketing mix factors affecting customer satisfaction with Kuaying Digital (Beijing) Technology Co., Ltd.
2. To investigate the service quality factors affecting customer satisfaction with Kuaying Digital (Beijing) Technology Co., Ltd.

Research hypothesis

1. Marketing mix factors affect customer satisfaction with Kuaying Digital (Beijing) Technology Co., Ltd.
2. Service quality factors affect customer satisfaction with Kuaying Digital (Beijing) Technology Co., Ltd.

Conceptual framework

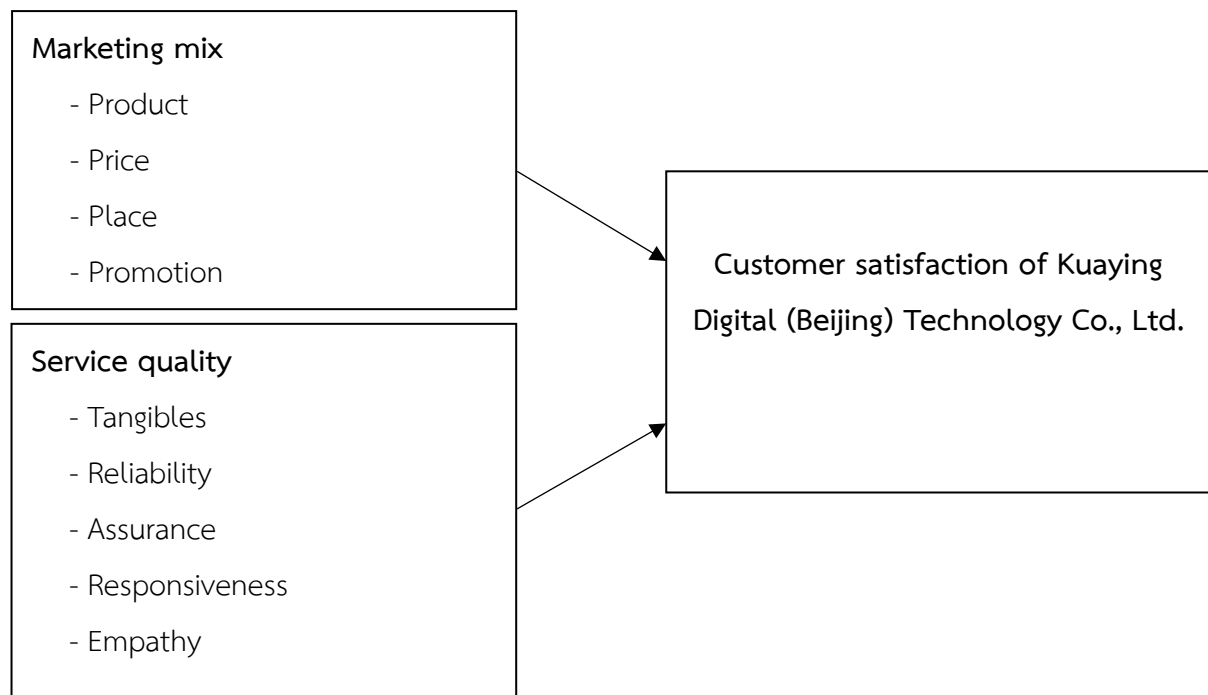


Figure 1 Conceptual framework

Literature Review

Concepts and theories related to marketing mix components

The marketing mix, commonly referred to as the 4Ps, is a set of marketing tools that companies use to satisfy customer needs and effectively increase demand (Išoraite, 2016). The 4Ps are essential components of strategic marketing decisions: (1) The product is an element that refers to what is offered on the market and includes both tangible goods and intangible services. It includes considerations of quality, design, features, branding and the value the product offers the consumer. (2) Price refers to the price consumers are willing to pay for a product and indicates the perceived value of the product. Pricing strategies are complex and take into account factors such as production costs, competitor pricing, market conditions and price elasticity. (3) Place (distribution): Distribution channels determine the route by which products move from the manufacturer to the consumer. This includes the choice of distribution channels (e.g. direct sales, retail, online sales) and logistical activities that ensure that the products are available in the right place, at the right time and in the right quantity to meet consumer demand. (4) The sales promotion component uses various communication tools and techniques to inform, persuade and remind potential buyers about the product and thus influence their purchasing decisions. Promotion includes advertising,

sales promotion, personal selling, public relations and direct marketing, all of which are incorporated into the broader framework of Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC). Through IMC, companies seek to convey a coherent message across all promotional channels, increasing the overall effectiveness of marketing efforts (Wani, 2013). These components provide a holistic framework for crafting marketing strategies that are tailored to market demands and consumer preferences. The dynamic interplay of product, price, place and promotion enables companies to closely align their offering with customer expectations, thereby increasing satisfaction and loyalty.

Concepts and theories related to service quality

Service quality is the customer's evaluation of an organization's services and reflects the ability to meet or exceed expectations by providing trustworthy, responsive, empathetic and assured services (Parasuraman et al., 1988). Parasuraman et al. (1988) identified five dimensions of service quality: (1) Tangible: Physical appearance and observable aspects of service delivery that affect overall perception and satisfaction. (2) Reliability: Consistent delivery of services as promised, accurately and reliably, including timely and error-free experiences. (3) Assurance: Knowledge, competence and professionalism demonstrated by the service provider to build and convey trust. (4) Responsiveness: Prompt and willing assistance that responds to customer inquiries, concerns and requests in an appropriate and effective manner. (5) Empathy: Understanding customers' needs, situations and emotions and responding to them with care and personalized attention so that customers feel valued.

Concepts and theories related to customer satisfaction

Customer satisfaction is the measure of customer satisfaction or dissatisfaction after using a service, which is determined by comparing the perceived performance with expectations. Dissatisfaction arises when performance falls short of expectations, while exceeding expectations leads to high satisfaction. Marketing efforts and cross-departmental collaboration according to the principles of total quality management influence perception (Hill & Alexander, 2017). Therefore, customer satisfaction is a critical business concept that focuses on meeting or exceeding customer expectations and delivering positive experiences. Influencing factors include product or service quality, service performance, perceived value and customer expectations. Measuring customer satisfaction leads to insights that enable improvements, strengthen customer relationships, increase efficiency and create a competitive advantage.

Related research

Mudie and Cottam (2013), conducted a study titled “Marketing Mix Influences on Customer Satisfaction: A Comparative Study in Restaurant Settings” using a comparative case study methodology. They found that the different elements of the marketing mix (product, price, place, promotion) have varying degrees of influence on customer satisfaction.

The research study by Liu et al. (2018) entitled “Integrating Marketing Mix Elements for Enhanced Customer Satisfaction: A Study of the Hotel Industry” found that using an integrated approach in managing marketing mix elements, including product, price, place and promotion, positively influences customer satisfaction in the hotel industry. The research findings show that maintaining consistency across all marketing mix elements and efficiently meeting customer needs at multiple touch points leads to higher customer satisfaction.

The research study by Lertwannawit et al. (2021) on “Impact of Service Quality on Customer Satisfaction and Word-of-Mouth: A Study of Online Food Delivery Services” found that the dimensions of service quality, including order accuracy, delivery speed, website user interface and customer support, significantly influence customer satisfaction and word-of-mouth. The research findings suggest that higher service quality leads to greater customer satisfaction and more positive word-of-mouth regarding online food delivery services.

The study by Sharma et al. (2021) on “The Impact of Service Quality on Customer Satisfaction in the Five-Star Hotel Industry” has highlighted several dimensions of service quality including responsiveness, reliability, tangibility, assurance and empathy. These dimensions have a significant impact on customer satisfaction. The research findings suggest that higher service quality leads to higher customer satisfaction and positive word-of-mouth.

Research Methodology

1. The population for this study comprises the 1,253 customers of Kuaying Digital (Beijing) Technology Co., Ltd. as stated in the company's annual report for 2022. The exact population number is available in the report. To determine an appropriate sample size, this study employs the formula by Yamane (1973) for sample size calculation, taking into account the known population size. With the specified values, the calculation using the Yamane formula results in a sample size of 300 individuals for this study. Additionally, the researchers utilized a convenient sampling method, which involves selecting participants who are readily available and accessible. Convenient sampling is a practical and efficient way to gather data.

2. The research instrument used in this study is a questionnaire developed on the basis of a review of the concepts and theories relevant to the research objectives. The questionnaire is structured to collect data on marketing mix factors, service quality and customer satisfaction and is divided into four sections as follows: (1) The questionnaire addresses the general information of the respondents. (2) The questionnaire focusing on marketing mix factors ($\alpha = 0.804-0.860$). (3) The questionnaire addressing service quality ($\alpha = .778-.889$), and (4) The questionnaire addressing customer satisfaction ($\alpha = .886$). The questions are closed-ended, and respondents are required to express their opinions by rating them using the Likert scale.

3. Data analysis: In this study, data were analyzed, and hypotheses were tested using computer software. The analysis steps are divided into descriptive and inferential statistics, as follows: (1) Descriptive statistics deal with summarizing, organizing, and describing raw data, including measures such as frequency, percentage, average, and standard deviation. And (2) inferential statistics involve t-test, F-test, and multiple regression analysis using the Enter method. In this study, a significance level of .05 was set for hypothesis testing.

Research Results

1. The analysis reveals that the majority of respondents were male, comprising 178 people (59.33%), aged 31 to 40 years, which accounted for 110 people (36.67%), had attained a bachelor's level of education, 187 respondents (62.33%), and 148 of them worked in the private sector (49.33%). Additionally, 145 respondents reported an income range of 3,001 to 4,000 CNY (48.33%).

Table 1 The number and percentage of general information of respondent

General information of respondent	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
- Male	178	59.33
- Female	122	40.67
Age		
- Less or equal 30 years	54	18.00
- 31 – 40 years	110	36.67
- 41 – 50 years	98	32.67
- More than 50 years	38	12.67

Table 1 The number and percentage of general information of respondent (Cont.)

General information of respondent	Frequency	Percentage
Education		
- Lower than bachelor	60	20.00
- Bachelor	187	62.33
- Higher than bachelor	53	17.67
Career		
- Government/state employee	67	22.33
- Private employee	148	49.33
- Self-employed/Business owner	52	17.33
- General contract worker	27	9.00
- Other	6	2.00
Incomes		
- Less than 3,000 CNY	12	4.00
- 3,001 – 4,000 CNY	145	48.33
- 4,001 – 5,000 CNY	91	30.33
- More than 5,001 CNY	52	17.33

2. The analysis indicates that the majority of respondents hold an overall ‘Agree’ opinion regarding the marketing mix factors ($\bar{X} = 3.68$, $SD = 0.53$), service quality ($\bar{X} = 3.69$, $SD = 0.53$), and customer satisfaction ($\bar{X} = 3.61$, $SD = 0.60$).

Table 2 Mean and standard deviation of marketing mix, service quality, and customer satisfaction

Factors	\bar{X}	SD	Level of opinion
Marketing mix	3.68	0.53	Agree
- Product	3.69	0.62	Agree
- Price	3.63	0.66	Agree
- Place	3.81	0.63	Agree
- Promotion	3.58	0.63	Agree
Service quality	3.69	0.53	Agree
- Tangibles	3.55	0.61	Agree
- Reliability	3.74	0.62	Agree
- Assurance	3.73	0.64	Agree
- Responsiveness	3.84	0.67	Agree
- Empathy	3.56	0.62	Agree
Customer satisfaction	3.61	0.60	Agree

3. Hypothesis testing results

Table 3 Summary of the results of the marketing mix hypothesis testing

Marketing mix	b	Std. Error	β	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
Constant	0.555	0.162		3.419	.001*		
- Product	0.323	0.058	0.338	5.565	.000*	0.403	2.480
- Price	0.158	0.057	0.174	2.772	.006*	0.378	2.642
- Place	0.210	0.051	0.224	4.090	.000*	0.496	2.014
- Promotion	0.137	0.045	0.146	3.038	.003*	0.645	1.551
R = 0.750, R ² = 0.562, Adjusted R ² = 0.556, SE _{EST} = 0.397, F = 94.614, Sig. = .000*							

* Statistically significant level of .05

According to Table 3, it is found that marketing mix factors, including product, price, place, and promotion, significantly affect customer satisfaction at Kuaying Digital (Beijing) Technology Co., Ltd. These factors demonstrate statistical significance at the 0.05 level, with a predictive power of 55.6 percent.

Table 4 Summary of the results of the service quality hypothesis testing

Service quality	b	Std. Error	β	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
Constant	0.367	0.141		2.602	.010*		
- Tangibles	-0.012	0.049	-0.012	-0.250	.803	0.461	2.171
- Reliability	0.182	0.056	0.189	3.263	.001*	0.337	2.971
- Assurance	0.119	0.058	0.129	2.056	.041*	0.290	3.447
- Responsiveness	0.141	0.048	0.159	2.923	.004*	0.383	2.610
- Empathy	0.455	0.046	0.472	9.922	.000*	0.500	2.001
R = 0.817, R ² = 0.667, Adjusted R ² = 0.661, SE _{EST} = 0.347, F = 117.718, Sig. = .000*							

* Statistically significant level of .05

According to Table 4, it is found that service quality factors, specifically reliability, assurance, responsiveness, and empathy, significantly affect customer satisfaction at Kuaying

Digital (Beijing) Technology Co., Ltd. These factors demonstrate statistical significance at the 0.05 level, with a predictive power of 66.1 percent.

Discussions

1. The study found that the marketing mix factors, which include product, price, place and promotion, significantly affect customer satisfaction at Kuaying Digital (Beijing) Technology Co, Ltd, with statistical significance at the .05 level. In terms of product, aligning product selection with customers' preferences and meeting their needs, especially by offering new and technologically advanced goods, is critical to increasing customer satisfaction (Kotler, 2016). Prioritizing product quality, reliability and durability also contributes to a positive reputation and higher satisfaction (Liu et al., 2014). The effectiveness and accessibility of distribution channels are critical to customer satisfaction. This highlights the importance of offering goods through multiple channels, including online platforms, physical stores and authorized retailers (Panda & Mishra, 2016). In terms of pricing, it is important to strike a balance between competitive pricing and increasing perceived value. Comprehensive market research enables Kuaying Digital to set effective pricing strategies that are aligned with customer expectations. Finally, effective promotional strategies, including advertising, sales promotion and public relations, play a critical role in influencing customer satisfaction. Communicating product benefits and value propositions through strategic advertising can increase customer satisfaction and promote positive brand perception. Utilizing customer testimonials and working with influential people are recommended approaches to build credibility and trust (Armstrong et al., 2014).

2. The results of the study show that service quality, which includes reliability, assurance, responsiveness and empathy, significantly influences customer satisfaction at Kuaying Digital (Beijing) Technology Co, Ltd. This influence is attributed to several key factors. First, empathy, which is the ability to understand and respond to individual customer needs, has a significant impact on overall customer satisfaction. A genuine interest in customers' specific needs promotes higher satisfaction and long-term relationships. Training employees to show empathy contributes to customized solutions and higher customer satisfaction (Darrat et al., 2018). Second, reliability, which is characterized by consistently meeting customer needs, is critical to meeting and exceeding customer expectations, leading to higher satisfaction. The continuous delivery of high-quality goods and services promotes customer trust and reliability, contributing to higher satisfaction (Wang & Liao, 2017). Third,

responsiveness, which is demonstrated by timely and efficient responses to customer inquiries or problems, has a positive impact on customer satisfaction. Kuaying Digital (Beijing) Technology Co, Ltd. can demonstrate that it is committed to customer satisfaction by responding promptly to their needs (Gounaris et al., 2018). Finally, assurance, which emphasizes knowledgeable, competent, and courteous interactions with customers, also plays an important role in increasing customer satisfaction. Prioritizing employee training to ensure expertise has a positive impact on customer satisfaction in the technology industry (Chen et al., 2017). However, the tangible component in evaluating service quality and customer satisfaction is largely due to the intangible nature of the services themselves. While tangible cues can enhance the service experience and influence perceptions, they often play a supporting role to the core intangible elements of service delivery. When devising marketing and operational strategies, service providers need to recognize the primacy of intangible factors in driving customer satisfaction and loyalty and focus on delivering exceptional experiences and building strong relationships with their customers.

Implications of the study

1. Managerial implications

The study underlines the crucial importance of a well-thought-out marketing mix for managers. Consideration of product, price, promotion and location is crucial as these elements have a significant impact on consumer satisfaction. Effectively balancing these factors is crucial to meeting consumer expectations and preferences. Conducting market research, for example, provides insights to develop products that meet specific customer needs. The study highlights product strategy as the most influential factor. Improving management to enhance the product offering as a smart mobile internet provider requires a holistic approach that includes continuous innovation, user-centric design, personalized services and strategic partnerships. By focusing on these areas, the company can develop a competitive and compelling product that meets the changing needs of modern consumers, driving growth and success in the digital age.

Furthermore, the study emphasizes the importance of service quality variables and urges managers to invest in training their employees to provide exceptional service. Cultivating a culture of customer service excellence throughout the organization, including responding to inquiries and complaints in a timely manner, is critical to increasing customer satisfaction.

Finally, the study highlights the need for continuous monitoring of customer satisfaction. Managers should implement strategies for systematically collecting and analyzing

customer feedback to identify opportunities for organizational improvement. Regular evaluations of customer satisfaction enable informed decision-making and the implementation of necessary measures.

2. Academic implications

This research has significant academic implications, particularly in the field of marketing. It contributes to our understanding of how the elements of the marketing mix (product, price, location, promotion) affect customer satisfaction by analyzing their influence on consumer perceptions. The findings provide valuable insights for marketers and enable the development of effective strategies to increase customer satisfaction in technology companies.

In addition, the study sheds light on the importance of service quality elements to customer satisfaction. By examining characteristics such as reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy and tangibility, the study improves our understanding of the impact of service quality on customer perception and experience. This knowledge can be used by managers and practitioners to strategically design and implement service quality improvement programs that lead to higher customer satisfaction.

The new body of Knowledge found in this study

This research has uncovered insights in the field of marketing that help broaden the scope of the study in the context of China. Although the concepts and theories of marketing mix and service quality examined in this study are foundational, they have been recontextualized in contemporary times by the emphasis on consumer satisfaction. Therefore, the study of these fundamental concepts becomes a knowledge base that helps in the development and maintenance of higher level knowledge in the future. The research shows that the marketing mix, which includes the four dimensions of product, price, place and promotion, has a significant correlation with consumer satisfaction. This correlation stems from providing consumers with products that meet their needs, at an affordable price, with convenient accessibility and effective marketing activities. Together, these factors contribute to the success of companies in their marketing efforts. In addition, the study finds that service quality factors such as reliability, assurance, responsiveness and empathy have a significant impact on customer satisfaction. Companies that offer reliable services, keep promises and respond to customers' needs with empathy and understanding show that they are committed to high-quality service. This commitment leads to maximum customer satisfaction, which drives product purchases and brand loyalty. Companies that are able to stand out in an

intensely competitive marketplace by offering consumer-friendly technologies thus gain a competitive advantage in the marketplace. This research not only enriches our understanding of marketing in the Chinese context, but also highlights the evolving dynamics and essential components for success in today's marketing landscape.

Future Research

1. Individual components of the marketing mix: Future studies could examine the specific effects of individual components of the marketing mix, such as pricing tactics, advertising campaigns, product development and distribution networks, on customer satisfaction. Isolating these elements would provide more targeted insights for optimizing marketing strategies.

2. Investigating the mediating elements: Investigating the mediating elements between the marketing mix, service quality and customer satisfaction could provide important insights. Researchers could investigate whether customer perceptions of value, trust or perceived service quality act as mediators in this relationship to improve understanding and identify areas for improvement.

3. Moderating influences of customer characteristics: Future studies should prioritize the exploration of possible moderating influences of customer attributes, including age, gender, and cultural background, on the relationship between marketing mix, service quality, and customer satisfaction. Identifying these moderators can support the development of customized marketing strategies for specific consumer categories.

4. Long-term research on lasting effects: Conducting longitudinal studies to examine the lasting effects of marketing mix and service quality on customer satisfaction would provide a comprehensive understanding. Tracking changes in customer satisfaction over time allows researchers to assess the long-term viability and consistency of observed results and helps in predicting and adapting to changing customer needs and preferences.

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