

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Conclusion

This study explored the interaction between delivery speed and marketing strategies during Amazon's 2023 peak season at the DTM8 fulfillment center. Drawing from qualitative methods—including interviews, structured observation, and document analysis—the research examined how delivery speed strategies, seasonal discount mechanisms, and their integration contributed to customer satisfaction. However, due to the study's limited scope—focusing on a single location and a single customer perspective—the findings should be interpreted as indicative rather than representative. The analysis was grounded in the 7P Marketing Mix, Expectation-Confirmation Theory (ECT), and the Input–Process–Output (IPO) Model. The findings lead to the following conclusions:

1. Delivery speed plays a critical role in shaping customer satisfaction. Operational strategies such as hot zone reallocation, micro-fulfillment, dynamic routing algorithms, and cross-functional coordination significantly reduced delivery times—by up to 18% compared to the previous year. Customers who received their orders within 24–48 hours expressed a higher degree of trust and satisfaction, with many citing this promptness as a key reason for their loyalty. This outcome reflects the principle of positive disconfirmation in ECT, where performance exceeding expectations leads to elevated satisfaction.
2. Seasonal discounts are a major driver of purchase decisions and perceived value. According to data from the Amazon Annual Report (2023), Amazon DTM8's data-driven promotional strategies—including personalized Prime-exclusive deals, cross-category bundling, and limited-time offers—were central in attracting customer interest. Discounts of 30–40% particularly influenced purchase behavior, with customers indicating that they would not have completed certain transactions without the price

incentives. These findings affirm the role of targeted promotional strategies in the 7P Marketing Mix and align with existing research on consumer discount sensitivity.

3. The integration of delivery speed and seasonal discounts produces a synergistic effect on customer satisfaction. While each strategy individually contributes to satisfaction, their integration yields a compounded effect. Customers receiving discounted products quickly were significantly more likely to provide five-star reviews and make repeat purchases. This synergy suggests that perceived value is not merely economic or functional but experiential—enhanced when expectations across multiple service dimensions are exceeded concurrently.
4. Cross-functional alignment is essential for delivering a consistent customer experience. The research identified that Amazon DTM8’s real-time collaboration between marketing and operations—through shared dashboards, weekly forecasts, and live campaign adjustments—was key to managing high-demand periods without compromising service quality. This validates the IPO model, where well-coordinated inputs and processes lead to favorable customer-centric outputs.
5. The study not only supports but extends existing literature.

It confirms prior findings regarding the roles of logistics and promotions in satisfaction, but also introduces new concepts such as expectation engineering, real-time cross-functional governance, and emotional value amplification through integrated service delivery. Furthermore, it challenges the simplistic assumption that promotional offers alone guarantee satisfaction, showing instead that performance reliability is equally crucial.

While secondary sources such as Amazon’s annual reports suggest figures such as an 18% improvement in delivery time or a 12% increase in repeat purchases, these quantitative outcomes were not independently measured by this study. Therefore, any reference to such figures in this conclusion serves an illustrative purpose and should not be treated as primary

findings. Furthermore, the theoretical implications regarding e-commerce logistics and customer satisfaction must be seen in light of the study's context-specific nature. In addition to answering the research questions, this study offers several important contributions to both theory and practice.

Theoretically, this research integrates two critical constructs—delivery speed and seasonal discounts—within the framework of the 7P Marketing Mix and Expectation-Confirmation Theory. While previous studies often examined these variables separately, this research identifies how their strategic integration creates a compounded effect on customer satisfaction. The proposed synergy model helps fill a gap in literature by emphasizing the importance of cross-functional alignment in peak season operations.

Practically, the study provides grounded insights based on field observation at Amazon DTM8. Operational tactics such as dynamic routing, workforce flexibility, and discount-driven inventory staging are shown to enhance fulfillment responsiveness and promotional effectiveness. These insights may serve as applicable strategies for other e-commerce firms facing similar challenges.

As such, this research contributes to a deeper understanding of how marketing and logistics can be harmonized to deliver superior customer experience—particularly during time-sensitive, high-volume periods like the holiday season.

In conclusion, Amazon DTM8's success during the peak season lies not in isolated tactics but in the intentional, strategic integration of delivery and promotional functions, underpinned by operational agility and customer-centric design. Satisfaction in this context is not incidental—it is engineered through system-wide alignment of promises and performance.

6.2 Recommendations

Based on the findings and field reflections, the following recommendations are provided for Amazon, practitioners, researchers, and academics:

1. Recommendations for Amazon DTM8

- a. **Strengthen Coordination Between Operations and Marketing:** Amazon DTM8 should create a more structured system to coordinate delivery capacity with promotional campaigns. This can prevent mismatches between demand and warehouse capability during peak seasons.
- b. **Improve Training for Seasonal Workers:** Seasonal workers are essential during peak periods, but many face challenges due to limited training. It is recommended that Amazon implements earlier and more intensive onboarding programs to increase worker readiness and efficiency.
- c. **Match Promotions with Inventory Availability:** Promotional items should be aligned with available inventory and warehouse layout. This helps avoid internal congestion and improves picking speed for high-demand products.
- d. **Monitor Delivery Partner (DSP) Performance More Closely:** Since last-mile delivery affects customer satisfaction directly, Amazon should monitor delivery service providers using clear performance indicators and reassign parcels if delays are predicted.
- e. **Engage Customers After Delivery:** To build loyalty, Amazon could send personalized messages or feedback requests after the delivery is completed. This simple step can improve customer trust and overall brand perception.

2. For E-Commerce Companies

- a. **Implement Manual Fast-Pick Zones:** Companies should set up dedicated picking areas for high-turnover promotional items during peak seasons. These zones should be located close to loading docks to minimize walking distance and expedite order fulfillment.
- b. **Cross-Train Temporary Staff for Role Flexibility:** Given the heavy reliance on seasonal workers, short-term cross-training programs enabling them to switch between workstations (e.g., picking, packing, staging) can improve workforce agility and reduce bottlenecks during high-volume periods.
- c. **Use Real-Time Dashboards to Align Promotions and Fulfillment Capacity:** Marketing campaigns must be synchronized with warehouse capacity in real-time. A shared live dashboard between marketing and logistics teams can prevent overloads and delivery delays by allowing adaptive campaign adjustments.
- d. **Improve Package Tracking Transparency:** Responding to customer concerns over tracking inaccuracies, companies—especially those using manual fulfillment processes—should enhance their tracking systems to provide more accurate and timely status updates to customers.
- e. **Form Temporary Cross-Functional Taskforces During Peak Seasons:** Rather than restructuring permanently, fulfillment centers like DTM8 may benefit from setting up temporary peak-season taskforces comprising representatives from operations, marketing, and customer service. This setup can improve responsiveness to operational challenges and customer issues as they arise in real-time.

3. For Future Researchers

- a. Conduct Comparative Multi-Site StudiesExplore similar practices across other Amazon fulfillment centers or e-commerce companies to identify broader trends and variations.
- b. Incorporate Quantitative Customer FeedbackSupplement qualitative insights with large-scale surveys to assess satisfaction and behavioral changes more comprehensively.
- c. Examine Long-Term Loyalty ImpactsInvestigate how peak-season experiences influence customer retention, brand perception, and lifetime value.

4. For Academics and Educators

- a. Use This Research as a Teaching Case StudyApply the findings in classroom settings to demonstrate how business theories are implemented in real operational contexts.
- b. Encourage Field-Based LearningPromote internship and experiential learning opportunities that expose students to integrated business environments and practical decision-making.

6.3 Limitations of the Study

This study has several limitations that should be considered when interpreting the findings:

1. Focus on One Location: The research was conducted only at Amazon DTM8 in Krefeld, Germany. While this location is important for the company's operations during the peak season, the results may not fully represent other Amazon facilities or e-commerce centers with different systems and environments.
2. Limited Number of Informants: Data were collected from three main informants representing operations, marketing, and customer perspectives. Although they provided valuable insights, having more participants—especially from other departments or more diverse customer profiles—could have enriched the findings.

3. **Short Data Collection Period:** The study was conducted during a three-month internship in the 2023 peak season. As a result, the analysis does not include off-season activities or long-term operational trends that might affect customer satisfaction differently.
4. **No Quantitative Analysis:** This research used a qualitative method only. While the data were analyzed carefully using thematic coding, no statistical testing was done. Therefore, the proposed model (IPSM) should be viewed as a conceptual framework that can be tested in future studies.

6.4 Final Reflection

This research journey—beginning with field immersion at Amazon DTM8 and extending through critical analysis—underscored the value of seeing business operations in action. The experience of observing live dashboard monitoring, participating in campaign meetings, and interviewing frontline staff revealed the depth of coordination required to achieve Amazon’s promise of “fast, reliable service.” More importantly, it emphasized that customer satisfaction is not the product of isolated functions, but of a deeply integrated system.

As the e-commerce industry continues to evolve, the lessons from this study offer valuable guidance on how operational excellence and customer-centric marketing can work hand-in-hand to deliver value at scale.