The Effect of Airline Relationship Immersion on Brand Attachment and Relationship Persistence Intention in Korea – Focused on the Frequent Flyer Programs

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Abstract

The core of marketing strategies in the service industry is to increase customer retention rates as much as possible by increasing customer loyalty. In particular, due to the own nature of the aviation industry which is sensitive to external factors of the rapidly changing world, one of the important strategic goals to occupy a firm competitive advantage is securing regular customers such as "Loyal Customer." The purpose of this study is to find out not only the price competitiveness of airlines but also the influence among relationship commitment, brand attachment, and relationship persistence intention in order to survive the fierce competition in the airline industry. Based on that, it is intended to develop strategies that can be used to maintain existing customers and attract new customers to find ways to be more competitive for each airline. The questionnaire consisted of four factors: Frequent flyer programs, relationship immersion, brand attachment, and relationship persistence intention and the survey subjects were passengers using airlines. Statistical processing of the collected data was analyzed using the SPSS v. 25.0 statistical package program. It was found that the relationship immersion according to the frequent flyer programs affected both the love dimension and the solidarity dimension factors of brand attachment. In addition, it was found that both emotional immersion and computational immersion, which are sub-factors of relationship immersion, had a significant effect on relationship persistence intention. The detailed factors of the frequent flyer programs to improve the relationship immersion of airlines were identified and the factors affecting the relationship persistence intention were identified. Also, it was confirmed that relationship immersion was an essential factor to increase brand attachment and relationship persistence intention of customers to the airlines. Through this, this study would contribute to play a big role in developing strategies that can be used to maintain existing customers and attract new customers, and presenting a framework for utilizing existing customer relationship marketing.

Key Words: Relationship immersion, relationship commitment, Brand attachment, relationship persistence intention, frequent flyer programs, emotional immersion, computational immersion