INTRODUCTION

The success of a shopping Centre or shopping mall is largely due to a greater understanding of consumer behavior, based on the marketing strategies and the consumer decision-making process, i.e. selection of shopping Centre or shopping mall. Stakeholders, marketers and managers of shopping centers or shopping mall study consumer behavior to gain insights that will lead to more effective marketing strategies such as market segmentation, target market selection, product or service offerings, location and positioning.

The “marketing mix” is a term developed originally by Neil H. Borden to describe the appropriate combination, in a particular set of circumstances, four key elements that are the heart of a company’s marketing program. They are commonly referred to as the “four P’s, i.e. product, price, place and promotion.

The term marketing mix refers to a unique blend of product, distribution, promotion and pricing strategies designed to produce mutually satisfying exchanges with a target market (Lamb, Hair, et al. 2003.424).

Stakeholders, marketers and managers of shopping centers can control each element of the marketing mix or the extended marketing mix. The strategies of the marketing mix must be blended so that you are able to achieve optimal results such as total consumer satisfaction and customer relationship management. Also to devise marketing strategies to gain competitive advantage over one shopping Centre or shopping mall to another and to best serve the consumer’s needs and wants of a particular target market. The major role players in the shopping Centre industry can fine-tune the consumer’s offering and achieve competitive success of the shopping Centre.

In today’s competitive business environment, companies in all industries have been forced to realize the importance of customer care. This is particularly vital in the shopping Centre industry, which is often described as a “people industry”. There are two groups of people in shopping Centre marketing: the guests (consumers) and the hosts: the employers/staff who work in the shopping centers.

This definition reiterates that “people” as the fifth component of the shopping Centre marketing mix applies not only to employees, but also recognizes the role that consumers play
in service delivery. We cannot say enough about the importance of people to shopping Centre marketing.

People are an essential element in both the production and delivery of all product and service offerings. Stakeholders, marketers, managers and tenants of shopping centers have to communicate with their consumers or target market. There is usually a wide variety of information which stakeholders, marketers, managers and tenants of shopping centers or shopping malls want the consumers to know about. To attract consumers to shopping centers or shopping malls, the major role players must design effective communication programmes. This will inform consumers about location, website, product or service offerings, types of shops and special events. The communication with consumers should be effective, informative and persuasive. The process of communication should be managed in a formal and structured way. Also, fit into the other elements of the shopping Centre or shopping mall marketing mix.

With the increasing sophistication of shoppers and the proliferation of shopping centers or shopping malls, competition for consumers’ money and patronage is more intense than ever. This means that effective marketing of a shopping Centre or shopping mall is critical to its current performance and vitality in the future.

The unique challenges faced by stakeholders, marketers, managers and retailers of shopping centers or shopping malls that sell product and service offerings to consumers and developing solutions for dealing with these challenges that will help major role players in the shopping Centre industry to become effective product and service offering champions. The designing of an appropriate marketing mix strategy for shopping Centre is a difficult and a complex process, the implementation of the marketing mix itself faces a number challenges for stakeholders, marketers, managers and retailers in India.