

A CASE STUDY ON BIG BAZAAR FAILURE

Abstract

This case study does the exploration about the failure of Big Bazaar, which is an important Indian retail chain. It examines the factors which leads towards its failure, including the company's inability to adapt towards altering customer's preferences, ineffective pricing strategies, intense competition, poor consumer experience, issues in operations, and management failures. The analysis showcases the implications of these factors on economic performance of Big Bazaar and investor sentiment. Lessons learned from this failure puts focus over the necessity of adaptation, customer-centricity, effective pricing, innovation, and strategic foresight for getting succeeded in the retail industry. By having an insight into and applying these insights, retailers can reduce dangers and increase their chances of long-term success.

Keywords: Big Bazaar, Failure, Retail industry, Adaptation, Consumer preferences.

Author

Ashima Thakur

Assistant Professor
Department of Commerce
Government PG College
Naraingarh, Ambala, Haryana, India.
amr.academy@uninx.com

I. INTRODUCTION

Big Bazaar, an important Indian retail chain under the Future Group, has come across certain challenges leading towards its failure. This case study has objective to do analysis of the factors contributing to Big Bazaar's downfall and discuss the lessons that can be learned from its experience. With an insight into the competitive retail industry in India, there will be examination about the company's failure to adapt towards altering choices of customers, intense market competition, inefficient pricing model, poor customer experience, issues in operations, and management failures (Sama et. al., 2021) [8]. Having an insight into the reasons behind Big Bazaar's failure can give great understanding about the retail industry and give direction to future strategic decision-making.

II. MARKET ANALYSIS

The retail industry in India has come across growth and transformation in recent years. With a huge and varied consumer base, the market showcases both chances and challenges. Big Bazaar was functional in the hypermarket segment, giving a great range of products at one place.

The competitive scenario involves other hypermarket chains like Walmart-owned Best Price, Reliance Retail, and regional players (Haralayya, 2022) [3]. Online retailers like Amazon and Flipkart have also increased the competition. Big Bazaar's market positioning has focus towards grabbing value-conscious consumers looking for cheap products. However, choices of consumers have been evolving rapidly, with a great demand for ease, online shopping, and customized experiences. Big Bazaar's failure to adapt to these altering choices and invest in e-commerce and digital channels has been a result of its decline.

Having an insight into the market dynamics and competitive scenario is necessary in analyzing the failure of Big Bazaar and doing identification of the strategic shortcomings that led to its downfall (Masud and Rakesh, 2018) [6].

Table 1: General Mercantile category shrinkage

Category	Value (Lakh Rs.)	Cumulative Percentage (%)
Household	2.15	69
Luggage	0.58	88
Toys	0.32	98
Sports Goods	0.04	99
Gh-Stationary	0.02	100



Figure 1: Pareto chart of General Mercantile category shrinkage data
(Source: www.sdmimd.ac.in, 2023) [10]

III. FACTORS LEADING TO FAILURE

- 1. Lack of Adaptation towards altering Customer Preferences:** One of the key factors resulting in decline of Big Bazaar was its inability to adapt to the altering choices of customers. The rapid growth of e-commerce and digital shopping domains disrupted the old retail landscape.
- 2. Intense Competition and Market Saturation:** The retail industry in India is greatly competitive, with number of businesses looking for market share. Big Bazaar came across harsh competition from both domestic and international retailers, which involves legacy hypermarket chains and e-commerce giants (Raja and Antony, 2015) [7].
- 3. Ineffective Model of Pricing and Promotional Strategies:** Pricing and promotional strategies of Big Bazaar failed to align with customers. While the brand had its positioning in terms of being a value-for-money retailer, competitors gave same kind of products at more competitive prices.
- 4. Poor Consumer Experience and Quality of Service:** Customer experience and service quality have a critical part in retail success. Big Bazaar came across criticism for long queues, poor staff training, and unreliable standards of service. These issues have bad influence over customer satisfaction, resulting in a loss of loyalty of consumers and repeat business.

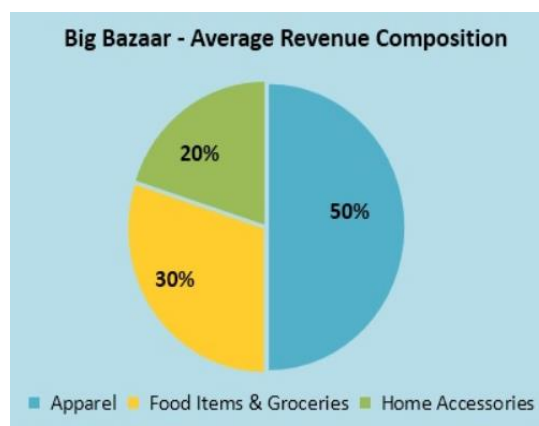


Figure 2: Big Bazaar- Average Revenue Composition
(Source: www.franchisealpha.com, 2023) [2]

IV. FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

Big Bazaar's financial performance plays a crucial part in its failure. The company suffered a decline in sales and revenue over the years, showing the issues it came across in the highly competitive retail market. The incapability to adapt to altering customer preferences and intensifying competition have implication over Big Bazaar's top-line growth (Samim and Nijaguna, 2019) [9]. Profitability and product margins were also an issue as Big Bazaar struggled to keep pricing power and came across pressure from competitor's contribution discounts and great deals. Operating costs, which involves expenses of employees and rent, weighed heavily on the profitability of company.

The stock performance of Big Bazaar displayed its economic struggles. Investor emotions wavered, with declining sales and profits leading towards a loss of confidence (Jamil and Raizada, 2010) [4]. The company's failure to give regular economic results and showcase a feasible growth strategy subsidized to the destruction of shareholder value. The issues in economic performance were further worsened by the company's debt burden and economic mismanagement.

V. CASE STUDIES AND EXAMPLES

To obtain a great insight into failure of Big Bazaar, it is profitable to do examination of other retail failures and extract lessons from their experiences. Various crucial case studies highlight the issues which retail companies suffered and offer valuable insights.

One of them is the failure of Sears' case study, which was once a retail giant in the United States. Sears had issues in adapting to changing customer choices and the rise of e-commerce. The company suffered from failure while investing in its stores, having an outcome as a downfall in customer experience and ultimately going towards bankruptcy.

Another case is about the failure of Blockbuster, a video rental chain. Blockbuster's capability to adapt to the digital revolution was very weak and online streaming services like Netflix were result of its downfall. The company failed in noting the changing consumer behaviour towards digital content and the ease it had shown.

In the scenario of Big Bazaar, there are specific examples of bad strategic steps. For example, the company's attempt towards growing into smaller towns and village areas without adapting its product offerings to go in line with the local demographics and purchasing power had an outcome as poor performance and financial losses.

VI. LESSONS LEARNED

The failure of Big Bazaar teaches great lessons for the retail industry and companies coming across related challenges:

- 1. Adaptation is Key:** The retail scenario is regularly evolving, and companies must go in line with altering consumer preferences and dynamics of market. Big Bazaar's failure in investing in e-commerce and online platforms showcases the importance of embracing technology and providing easy shopping experiences to remain competitive (Bakhtiyari, 2015) [1].

2. **Customer-Centricity is Vital:** Giving priority to customer experience and service quality is necessary for long-term success. Big Bazaar's bad consumer experience and service standards have an outcome as loss of customer loyalty. Retailers must regular give exceptional experiences to develop harsh customer relationships.
3. **Continuous Innovation and Variation:** Getting differentiated in a crowded market demands for regular innovation and differentiation. Big Bazaar's loss in terms of differentiating its offerings and respond to growing trends contributed to its downfall. Retailers must actively do identification of new opportunities, differentiate their offerings, and experiment with innovative concepts to meet growing consumer needs (Kusuma and Nithya, 2016) [5]. By learning from the downfall of Big Bazaar and execution of these lessons, retail companies can increase their possibility of success and grow in a competitive market.

VII. CONCLUSION

The failure of Big Bazaar serves as being an indicative case of cautions for the retail industry. The company's inability to go in line with the altering consumer preferences, operational challenges, and intense competition had contribution towards its downfall. Lessons learned from the failure have focus towards the necessity of adaptation, continuous innovation, customer-centricity, effective pricing, and strategic foresight. By utilizing these understandings, retailers can go in line with the growing market landscape and fulfil the dynamic requirements of customers. The case of Big Bazaar showcases the authoritative for retail companies to remain agile, strategically aligned, and customer-focused to stay away from same failures in an increasingly competitive industry.

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