

THE MZANSI BANK ACCOUNT : DETERMINING ITS SUCCESS AND THE WAY FORWARD

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BSc. ENG. (CHEMICAL)
BCom. (MANAGEMENT)

Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

MASTER IN BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

at the

Potchefstroom Business School

Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education

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POTCHEFSTROOM

2005

Hierdie dissertasie en die twee voorlopende jare van studie word opgedra tot die nagedagtenis van my oorlede pa, Hurrinanan Ramsamooje Orie. Sy wysheid, voorsorg en oneindige opofferinge om my geleenthede te gun, ongelukkig nie vir homself beskore nie, sal altyd die basis van my inspirasie bly.

Dankbetuigings

Verskeie mense het met hul retrospektiewe bydraes tot die vollediging van die dissertasie bygedra. Dit sou egter nalatig wees om nie die volgende mense te noem nie:

- (i) Professor Tommy du Plessis van die Potchefstroom Besigheidsskool by PU vir CHE vir sy bystand, raad, leiding en, bo alles, geduld, gedurende die navorsing en vollediging van die dissertasie.
- (ii) My vrou, Michelle Moonsamy, vir al die opofferinge wat sy gedurende die duur van die graad moes ontbeer, nie minste daarvan nie die laaste paar maande.
- (iii) My moeder en familie vir hul liefde en ondersteuning deur die jare.
- (iv) My kollegas en vriende, Ashwin Lakhan en Winston Pitse, vir hul insig, vele debatte oor bankering in Suid Afrika, en bystand in onderhoude en vertaling in Engels en onderhoude met kliente in plaaslike swart tale.
- (v) Die werknemers by elkeen van die takke en afsetplekke waar kliente mee onderhoud gevoer word.

Opsomming

Die Mzansi bankrekening, einde Oktober 2004 op die been gebring, het uit die finansiële dienste grondwet ontstaan, en is gemik op lae inkomste, voorheen ongebankte individue en huishoudings. Sedert die aanvang daarvan is dit deur die volgende finansiële institusies ondersteun: Verenigde Banke van Suid Afrika (ABSA), Standaard Bank van Suid Afrika (SBSA), Eerste Nasionale Bank (FNB), Nedbank (hoofsaaklik die vier mees vername kleinhandelsbanke in Suid Afrika) en die Posbank ('n filiaal van die Poskantoor). Hierdie studie ondersoek die prestasie van die Mzansi rekening van beide die klient en ondersteunende finansiële institusie se perspektief.

Die primêre objektiewe van hierdie navorsing fokus daarop om vas te stel hoe toeganklikheid van finansiële dienste (en tot die rekening self) vir die klient bewys mag word, vas te stel wat Mzansi kliënte nodig het, en hoe die rekening uitgebrei of verbeter kan word om aan hierdie behoeftes te voldoen. Die sekondêre objektiewe konsentreer op probleme wat die finansiële institusie in die oë staan: verbetering van toeganklikheid vir kliënte (sonder 'n kostelike belegging in ondersteunende infrastruktuur), onderskeiding van die produk en diens van ander kompeterende institusies, beperking van produk kannibalisme (waar die Mzansi rekening gekies word oor hoër orde kleinhandel bank produkte) en die beperking van algemene koste van die rekening om profitabiliteit te verseker.

Die navorsingsmetode is saamgestel uit 'n literatuur studie en proefondervindelike navorsing wat administratiewe opname-vraagstukke aan huidige Mzansi kliënte omvat. Die literatuur studie fokus op beide nasionale en internasionale probeerslae om die ongebank te bank, suiwer gemene kennis van hierdie probeerslae en uiteindelik verduideliking van beste praktyke met spesifieke verwysing na die verbetering van toeganklikheid tot finansiële dienste en die pasklaar maak van finansiële dienste opsies om die mees noodsaaklike behoeftes van die ongebankte mark te ontmoet. Die literatuur studie het ook

gevind dat 'n besliste besigheidsaak vir finansiële institusies wat gewillig is om die mark na te jaag, bestaan, as die kern waarde posisie doelmatig aangepas is.

Die proefondervindelike navorsing vat die ontwikkeling van 'n opname vraagstuk, gemik daarop om die vyf kern navorsing areas te verstaan, saam: die Mzansi kliënt profiel (vir 'n monster van een honderd sewe en veertig huidige kliënte en sakedoenendes by Gauteng takke en afsetpunte en eweredig versprei oor elkeen van die ondersteunende finansiële institusies), om te peil hoe goed kliënte hul rekeninge verstaan, bepalend van die diens wat die kliënte ontvang het, om kliënte transaksies en die waarde wat hul aan die transaksies heg te verstaan, en uiteindelik om die kliënte die geleentheid te gun om maniere voor te stel hoe die rekening verbeter kan word. Die vraagstuk het uit beide ope- en toesluitende vrae bestaan (die laasgenoemde het 'n vyf-punt Likert-tipe skaal gebruik om punte te bepaal).

Die resultate, behalwe dat dit die algemene demografiese profiel van die kliënt gewys het, het ook gewys dat noemenswaardige werk steeds deur die finansiële institusies uitgevoer moet word om te verseker dat kliënte hul rekeninge en die onderskeidelike transaksies en kanale beskikbaar aan kliënte, verstaan. ATM transaksies, byvoorbeeld, het probleme by kliënte veroorsaak tot so 'n mate dat hulle bereid was om amper dubbel soveer vir tak transaksies te betaal. Die dienste deur kliënte ontvang is ook bewys om gemiddeld te wees, met veel meer kliënt georiënteerde demonstrasies, en 'n groter hoeveelheid tyd gedurende die oopmaak van die rekening prosedure bestee, gesien as waardevolle wyses om dienste wat oor die algemeen ontvang is te verbeter.

Kliënte heg grootste waarde aan kontant onttrekkings transaksies, met die takkanaal as gunsteling aangewys. Kliënte se behoeftes is geïdentifiseer as primêr op krediet gebaseer; met verskillende krediet fasiliteite wat benodig word. Kliënt gemotiveerde verbeteringe is ook uitgebrei tot 'n groter reeks gratis transaksies

op die rekening, verbetering van rentekoerse op kredietbalanse en 'n vorm van lojaliteit-gebaseerde afslag op sekere transaksies.

Praktiese wyses om die toeganklikheid tot die rekening te verbeter sluit in proliferasie tegnieke (waar derde partye die opening van Mzansi rekeninge namens die kliënte onderneem) en die gebruik van mobiele bank fasiliteite. Dit is ook voorgestel dat die produk werking uitgebrei word deur beperkte getalle debiet- en stoporders vir kleinhandel banke te offer, terwyl 'n sterk fokus geplaas is op naderings om die kliënt se finansiële geletterdheid te verbeter deur middel van opvoedingsprogramme wat gemeenskapsgebaseer is. Die latere aspekte was ook gesien om sterk beginpunte te wees wat die finansiële institusies kan gebruik om tot 'n groter mate hul dienste en produkte te differensieër.

Die objektiewe van die navorsingstuk word gesien as nagekom, ondanks die geografiese vooroordele, kliënte wat moontlik 'n wanindruk gee van hul inkomste en moontlike transaksie vooroordeel.

This dissertation and the two preceding years of study are dedicated to the memory of my late father, Hurrinanan Ramsamooje Orié. His wisdom, foresight and endless sacrifices in providing me with the opportunities, unfortunately not available to himself, will always serve as the basis for my inspiration.

Acknowledgements

A number of people helped immensely in their respective contributions to the completion of this dissertation. It would, however, be remiss to not mention in particular :

- (i) Professor Tommy du Plessis of the Potchefstroom Business School at PU for CHE for his assistance, guidance, advice and most of all, patience, during the research and completion of this dissertation.
- (ii) My wife, Michellene Moonsamy, for all the sacrifices that she has endured during the tenure of the degree; least of all the past few months.
- (iii) My mother and family for their love and support throughout the years.
- (iv) My colleagues and friends, Ashwin Lakhan and Winston Pitse, for their insight, numerous debates about banking in South Africa, and assistance in interviewing and translating into English, interviews with customers in local, black languages.
- (v) The staff at each of the branches and outlets where customers were interviewed, and the customers themselves.

Abstract

The Mzansi bank account, launched in the latter part of October 2004, arose out of the financial services charter and is aimed at low income, previously unbanked individuals and households. Since its inception, it has been supported by the following financial institutions: Amalgamated banks of South Africa (ABSA), Standard Bank of South Africa (SBSA), First National Bank (FNB), Nedbank (essentially the four major retail banks in South Africa) and the Postbank (a subsidiary of the Post Office). This study investigates the performance of the Mzansi account from both the customer and supporting financial institutions' perspective

The investigation's primary objectives focused on determining how accessibility to financial services (and to the account itself) may be improved for customers, determining what Mzansi customers needs are, and how the account may be expanded or enhanced to meet these needs. The secondary objectives concentrated on problems the supporting financial institutions faced: improving accessibility for customers (without too costly an investment in supporting infrastructure), differentiating the product and service significantly from other competing institutions, limiting product cannibalisation (where the Mzansi account is chosen over higher order retail bank products) and limiting overall costs of the account to ensure profitability.

The research methodology consisted of a literature study and empirical research that in turn encompassed administering survey questionnaires to current Mzansi customers. The literature study focused on both national and international attempts at banking the unbanked, distilled common learnings from these attempts and ultimately described best practices with particular reference to improving accessibility to financial services and tailoring financial services options to meet the most critical needs of the unbanked market. The literature study also found that a definite business case exists for financial institutions

willing to pursue this market, provided that the core value proposition was adequately adapted. Previous findings on how to avoid product cannibalisation, as well as how to differentiate products and services to entrench greater customer appeal completed the literature study.

The empirical research encompassed the development of a survey questionnaire aimed at understanding five core research areas: the Mzansi customer profile (for a sample of one hundred and forty seven existing customers and transacting at Gauteng branches and outlets and evenly distributed across each of the supporting financial institutions), gauging how well customers understood their accounts, determining the service customers had received, understanding customer transaction and the value they attach to these transactions, and finally affording customers the opportunity to suggest ways in which the account may be improved. The questionnaire comprised both open and closed ended question (the latter questions used a five point Likert-type scale to determine scoring).

The results, apart from compiling an overall demographic profile of the customer, showed that significant work still needs to be accomplished by the financial institutions to ensure customers understand their accounts and the various transactions and channels available to customers. ATM transaction for instance caused customers problems; to the extent that customers were willing to pay almost twice as much for branch transactions instead. The service received by customers also proved to be average, with more customer orientated demonstrations and a greater amount of time spent during the account opening procedure being seen as valuable ways to improve the overall service received.

Customers valued cash withdrawal transactions the most, favouring the use of the branch channel. Customer needs were identified to be primarily credit based; with different credit facilities being required. Customer motivated improvements also extended to a greater range of free transactions on the account, improved

interest rates on credit balances and some form of loyalty based discount on certain transactions.

Practical ways suggested to improve access to the account included account proliferation techniques (where third parties may initiate the opening of an Mzansi account on behalf of a customer) and the use of mobile banking facilities. The product functionality was also recommended to be expanded to include limited numbers of debit and stop orders for the retail banks' offering, while a strong emphasis was placed on approaches to improving customer financial literacy by way of education programs that are community based. The later aspects were also seen as strong departure points that the supporting financial institutions could leverage to significantly differentiate their service and product offering.

The objectives of the study were deemed to have been met, despite the fact that the study's geographical bias, customers possibly misrepresenting their income and possible translation bias.

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