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A Study on Customer Satisfaction and Brand Perception Towards Hindustan Times

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ABSTRACT

This research study examines the customer perception towards HT Media Ltd., one of the major media companies in India, with a special focus on its flagship publication, Hindustan Times. The study was conducted between June-July 2024 in the tri-city area of Chandigarh, Mohali, and Kharar, with a sample size of 50 respondents. Through exploratory research methodology incorporating both primary and secondary data collection methods, the study investigated various aspects including brand awareness, content quality, digital platform experience, and customer service satisfaction. Key findings revealed that 70% of respondents had heard of HT Media brands, and Hindustan Times was the most interactive platform. Overall, generally positive perceptions of content quality and reliability were found, where 64% rated as "Good" or "Excellent". Digital platform engagement showed that 66% of users accessed the platforms daily or weekly. Customer service experience was rather excellent, where 90% of users who requested support were satisfied with the service. This research concludes that, although the overall perception of HT Media Ltd. remains positive among the customer base, especially about content quality and customer service, there is room for improvement in digital platform performance and technical infrastructure. These conclusions are useful for strategic improvement in service delivery and customer engagement strategies.

Introduction

HT Media Ltd. is one of India's top media houses. It operates the flagship publication, Hindustan Times, an English-language daily newspaper based in Delhi. HT Media was started in 1924 by Sunder Singh Lyallpuri, and under the Birla family, now managed by Shobhana Bhartia, it has evolved into one of India's largest media houses. The Audit Bureau of Circulations reports that Hindustan Times has a circulation of 993,645 copies as of

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November 2017, ranking it as one of the largest in India by circulation. In addition to the main newspapers, the company has diversified its portfolio to include various media platforms such as Mint (English business daily), Fever 104.0 FM (radio channel), Hindustan (Hindi Daily), and digital media platforms. HT Media operates in multiple cities with simultaneous editions from New Delhi, Mumbai, Lucknow, Patna, Ranchi, and Chandigarh, making it a leading player in the Indian media landscape.

Customer Perception towards HT Media Ltd. analyzes how the consumer perceives and interacts with one of India's major media houses. HT Media Ltd. was established through its flagship publication Hindustan Times in 1924, but has transformed into a diverse media organization that includes newspapers, digital platforms, radio stations, and other media ventures.This research focuses on understanding the complex relationship between HT Media Ltd. and its audience, analyzing various dimensions of customer perception including:

- Brand awareness and recognition of HT Media's various platforms
- Content quality and reliability assessment
- Digital platform user experience
- Customer service satisfaction
- Overall brand trustworthiness and credibility

Through systematic research methodology including surveys, customer feedback analysis, and market research, this study aims to:

1. Evaluate the current perception of HT Media Ltd. among its customer base
2. Identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement
3. Understand customer preferences and expectations
4. Assess the effectiveness of HT Media's multi-platform strategy
5. Gauge customer satisfaction across various touchpoints

Objectives

To study the perception of consumers regarding services provided by of HT Media Ltd.

Research Methodology

1. Research Design

- **Type**: Exploratory Research Design
- **Purpose**: To explore customer perceptions and awareness levels towards HT Media Ltd. and its various brands
- **Approach**: Mixed-method (Quantitative and Qualitative)

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- **Nature**: Primary research with supporting secondary data

2. Data Collection Methods

2.1 Primary Data Collection

- **Survey Method**: Structured questionnaire
- **Interview Type**: One-on-one interviews with respondents
- **Observation**: Direct observation of customer behavior and responses

2.2 Secondary Data Collection

Sources include:Company websites, Published reports, Government publications, Industry journals, Previous research studies, Internal company records

3. Sampling Framework

3.1 Sampling Method

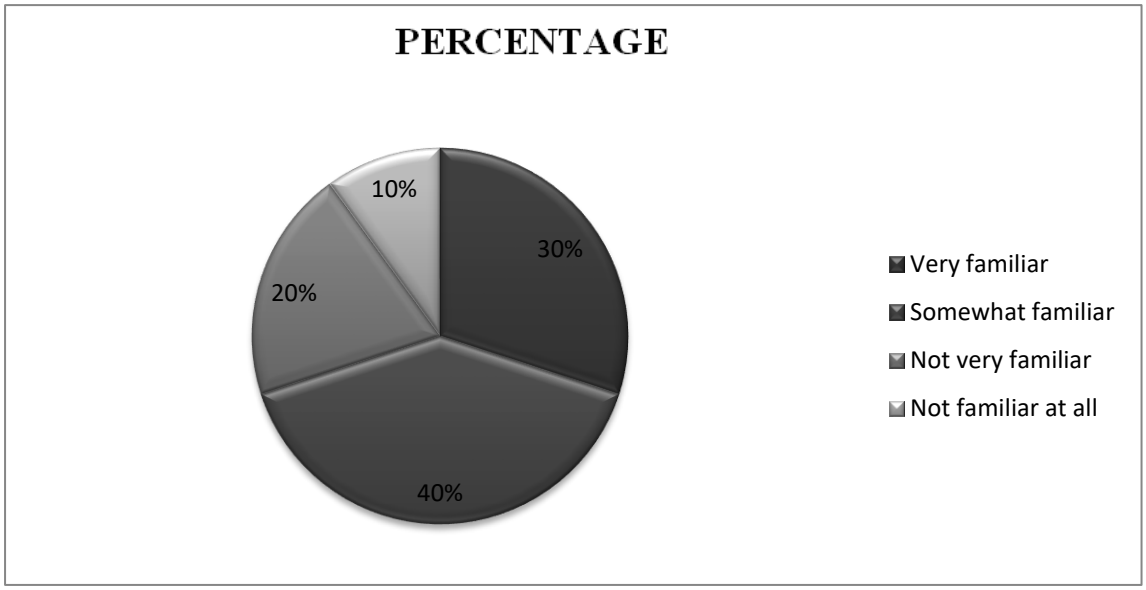
- **Technique**: Pure Random Sampling
- **Sample Size**: 50 respondents
- **Geographic Coverage**:
  - Chandigarh
  - Mohali
  - Kharar

Data analysis and interpretation

1 ; How familiar are you with HT Media Ltd. and its brands (Hindustan Times, Mint, etc.)?

	No. of respondents	Percentage
Very familiar	15	30%
Somewhat familiar	20	40%
Not very familiar	10	20%
Not familiar at all	5	10%
Total	50	100%

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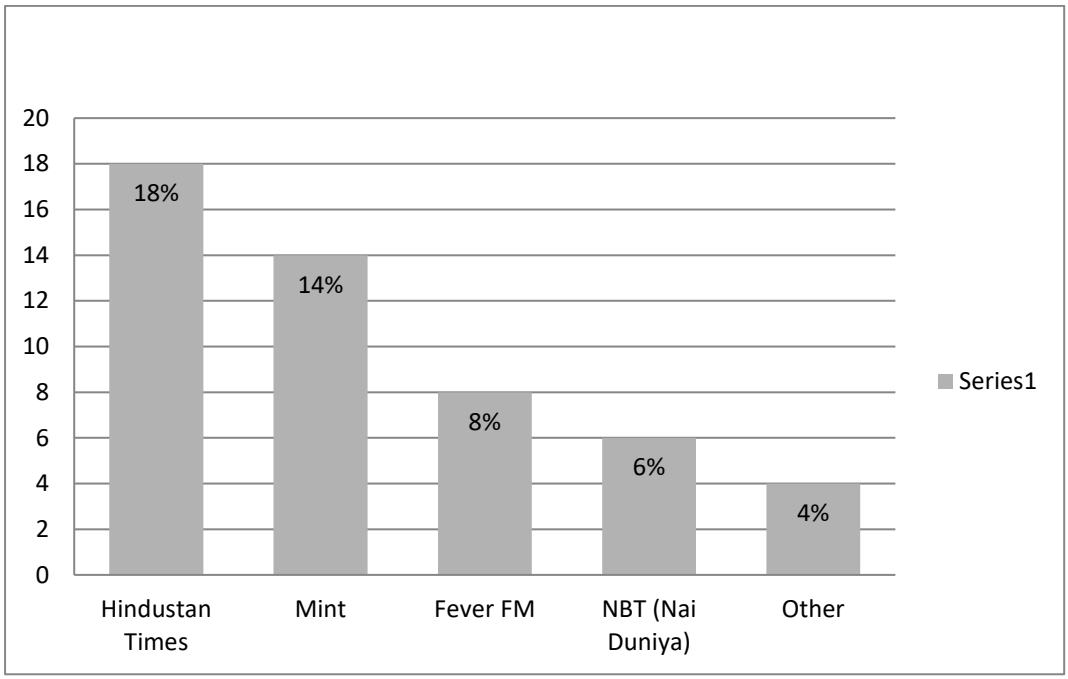
Interpretation:-

The pie chart for this question will show that the majority of respondents are either "Somewhat familiar" or "Very familiar" with HT Media Ltd. brands, indicating a relatively high level of brand awareness. A smaller portion is "Not very familiar" or "Not familiar at all," suggesting that there is still a segment of the population that is less aware of HT Media Ltd.

2 ; Which HT Media Ltd. brand do you engage with the most?

	No. of respondents	Percentage
Hindustan Time	18	36%
Mint	14	28%
Fever FM	8	16%
NBT (Nai Duniya)	6	12%
Other	4	8%
Total	50	100%

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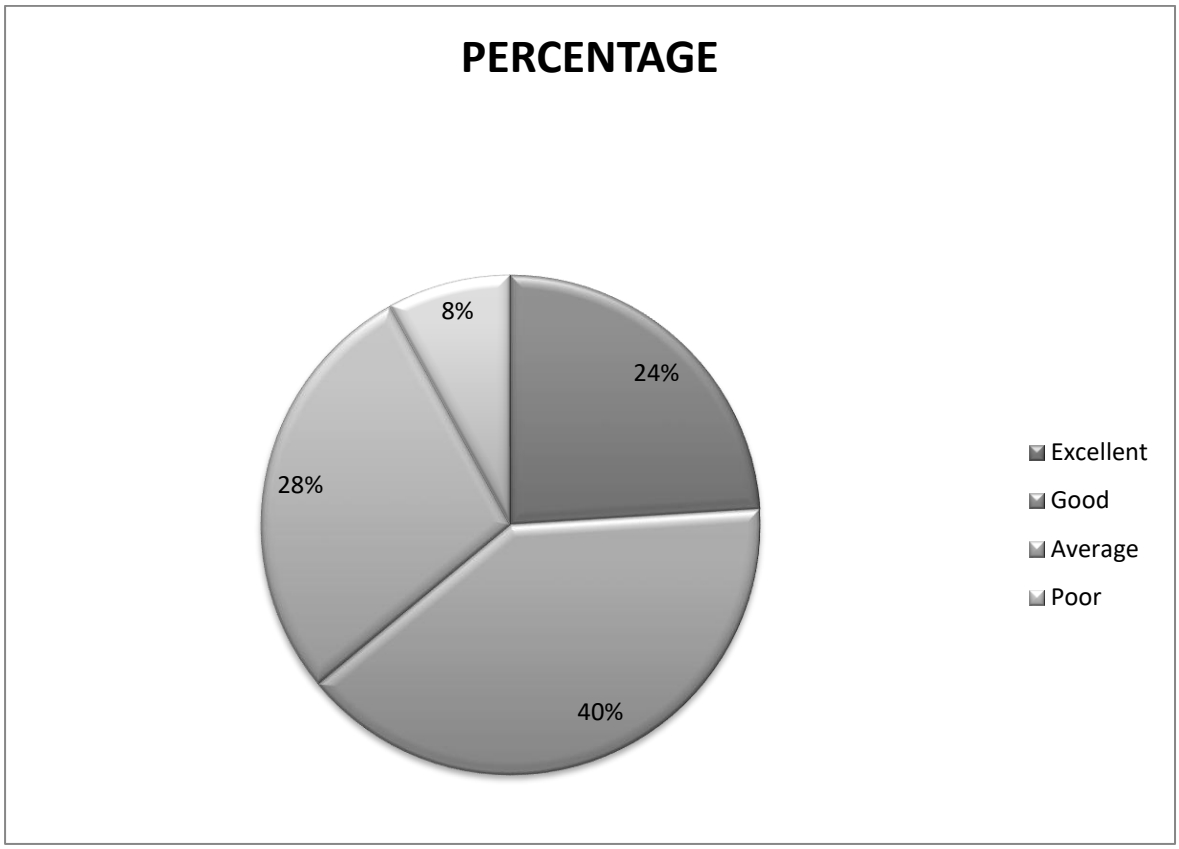
Interpretation

The pie chart will illustrate that "Hindustan Times" is the most engaged brand among respondents, followed by "Mint." "Fever FM" and "NBT (Nai Duniya)" have fewer followers, with "Other" being the least engaged. This shows a preference for print and digital news over radio.

3; How would you rate the quality of content provided by HT Media Ltd. (e.g., news articles, radio shows, etc.)?

	No. of respondents	Percentage
Excellent	12	24%
Good	20	40%
Average	14	28%
Poor	4	8%
Total	50	100%

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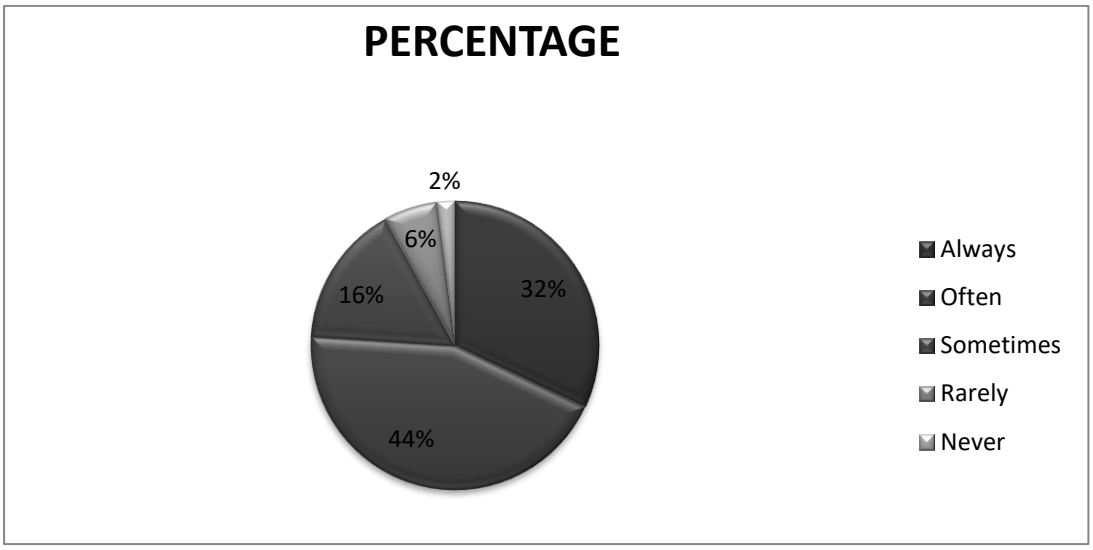
DATA ANALYSIS

The pie chart for this question will show that most respondents rate the content quality as "Good" or "Excellent," reflecting a positive perception. However, there is a noticeable proportion who finds the content to be "Average" or "Poor," suggesting areas for improvement.

4 ; Do you find the content provided by HT Media Ltd. to be relevant to your interests?

	No. of respondents	Percentage
Always	16	32%
Often	22	44%
Sometimes	8	16%
Rarely	3	6%
Never	1	2%
Total	50	100%

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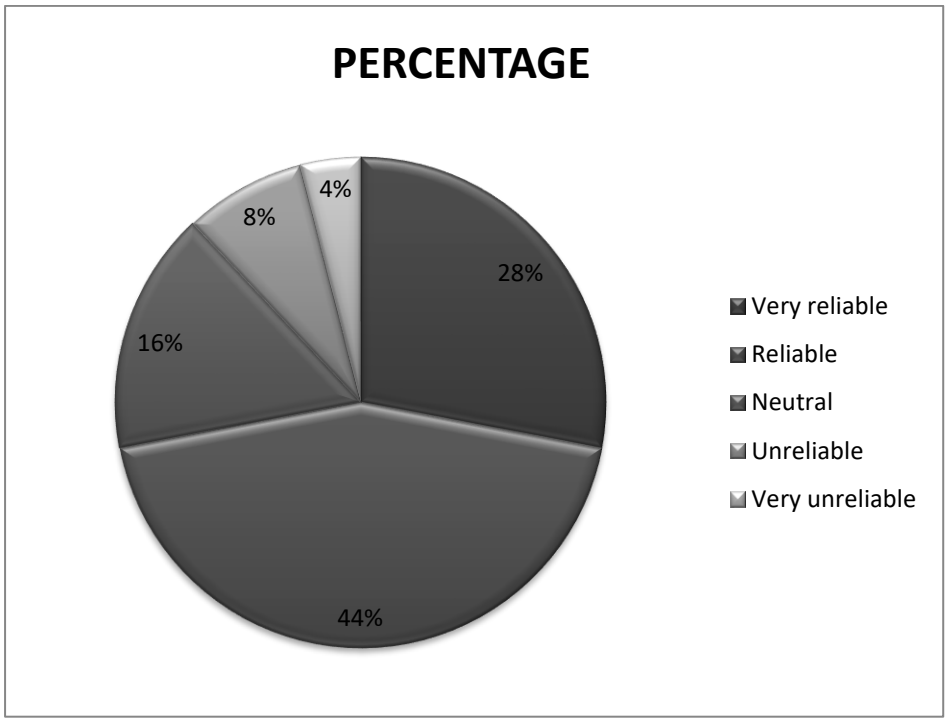
Interpretation

The pie chart will reveal that most respondents find the content to be relevant "Always" or "Often," indicating a high level of relevance. Only a small percentage find the content "Rarely" or "Never" relevant, suggesting that the majority of users have their interests well addressed.

5 ; How would you rate the reliability of the news and information provided by HT Media Ltd.?

	No. of respondents	Percentage
Very reliable	14	28%
Reliable	22	44%
Neutral	8	16%
Unreliable	4	8%
Very unreliable	2	4%
Total	50	100%

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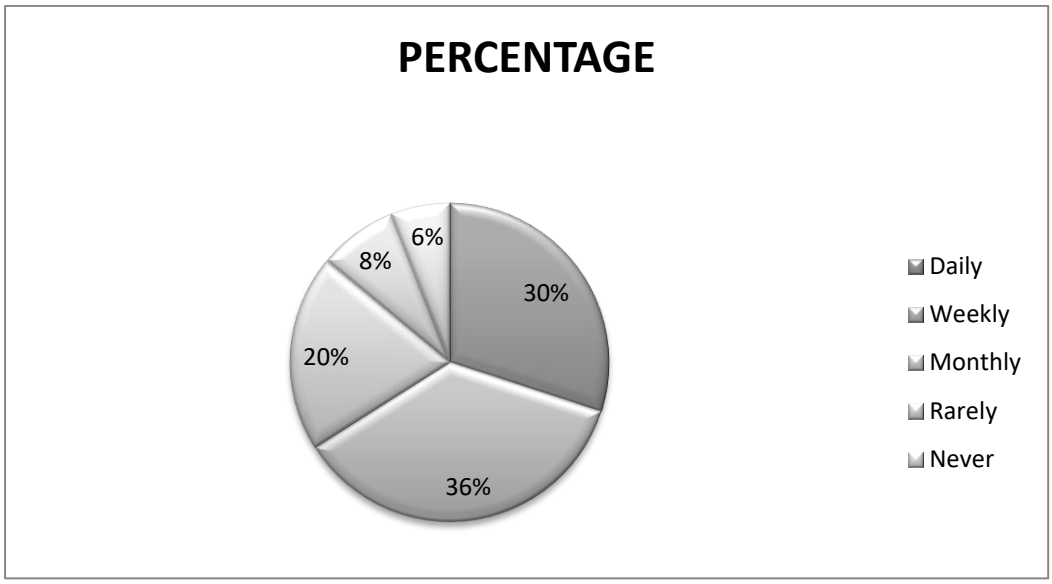
Interpretation

This pie chart will highlight that most respondents consider the news and information from HT Media Ltd. to be "Reliable" or "Very reliable," which suggests strong trust in the company's content. A small portion views it as "Unreliable" or "Very unreliable," pointing to minor concerns about trustworthiness**.**

6 ; How often do you visit the HT Media Ltd. websites or use their mobile apps?

	No. of respondents	Percentage
Daily	15	30%
Weekly	18	36%
Monthly	10	20%
Rarely	4	8%
Never	3	6%
Total	50	100%

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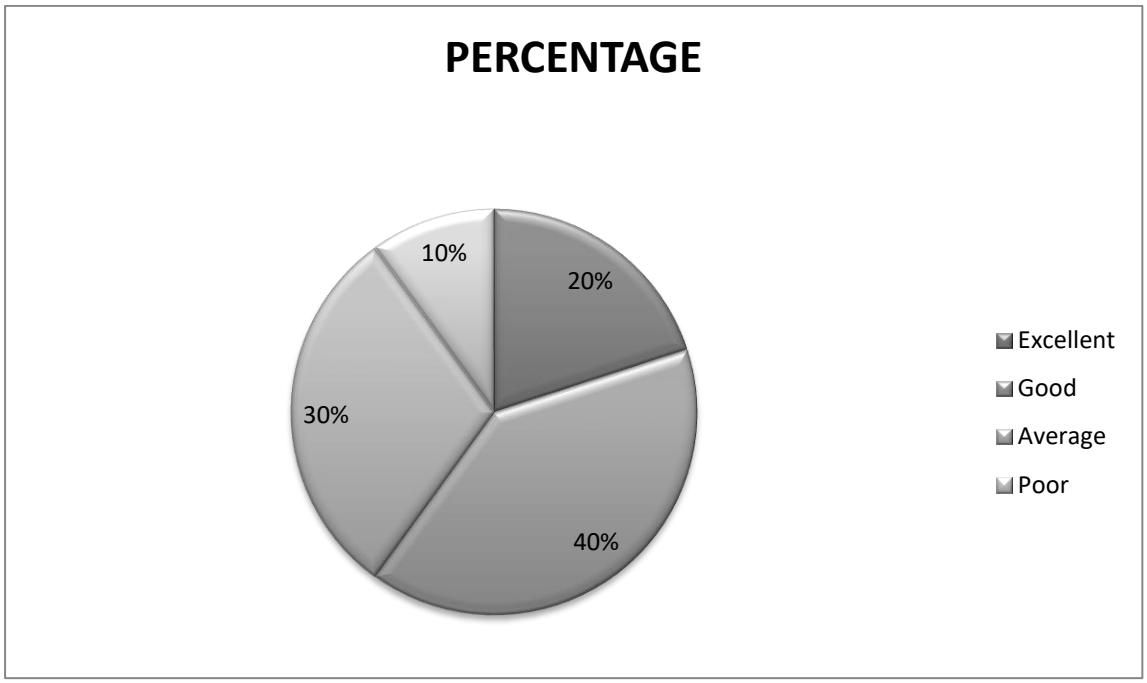
Interpretation

The pie chart will show that most respondents use HT Media Ltd.'s digital platforms on a "Daily" or "Weekly" basis, indicating regular engagement. A smaller number of users engage "Monthly" or "Rarely," with a very small group not using the platforms at all.

7 ; How would you rate your experience with HT Media Ltd.'s digital platforms (websites, mobile apps)?

	No. of respondents	Percentage
Excellent	10	10%
Good	20	40%
Average	15	30%
Poor	5	10%
Total	50	100%

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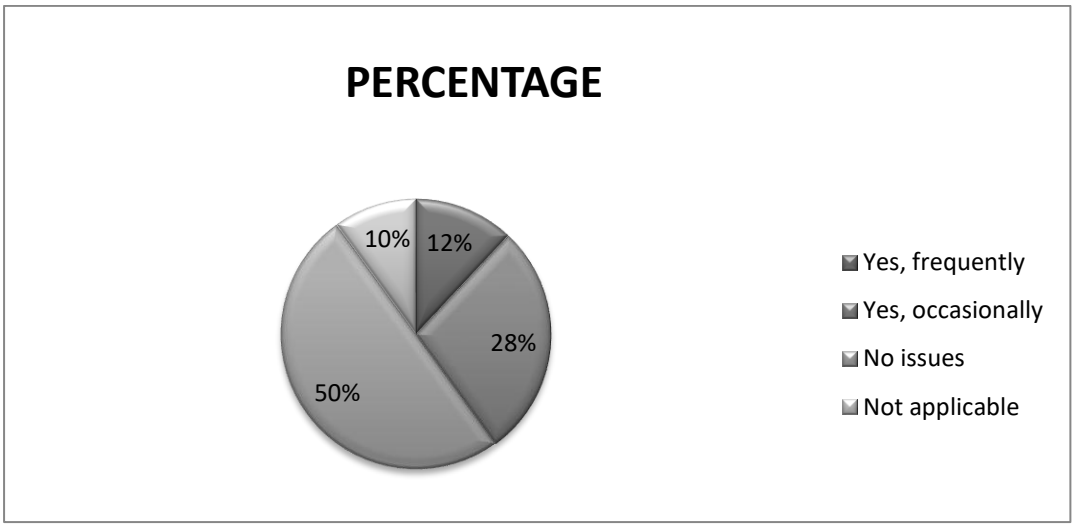
Interpretation

The pie chart will display that a majority of respondents rate their experience with digital platforms as "Good" or "Excellent," suggesting satisfaction with the platforms. A few find the experience "Average" or "Poor," which could highlight areas needing enhancement.

8 ; Have you noticed any issues with the digital platforms (e.g., loading speed, navigation, etc.)?

	No. of respondents	Percentage
Yes, frequently	6	12%
Yes, occasionally	14	28%
No issues	25	50%
Not applicable	5	10%
Total	50	100%

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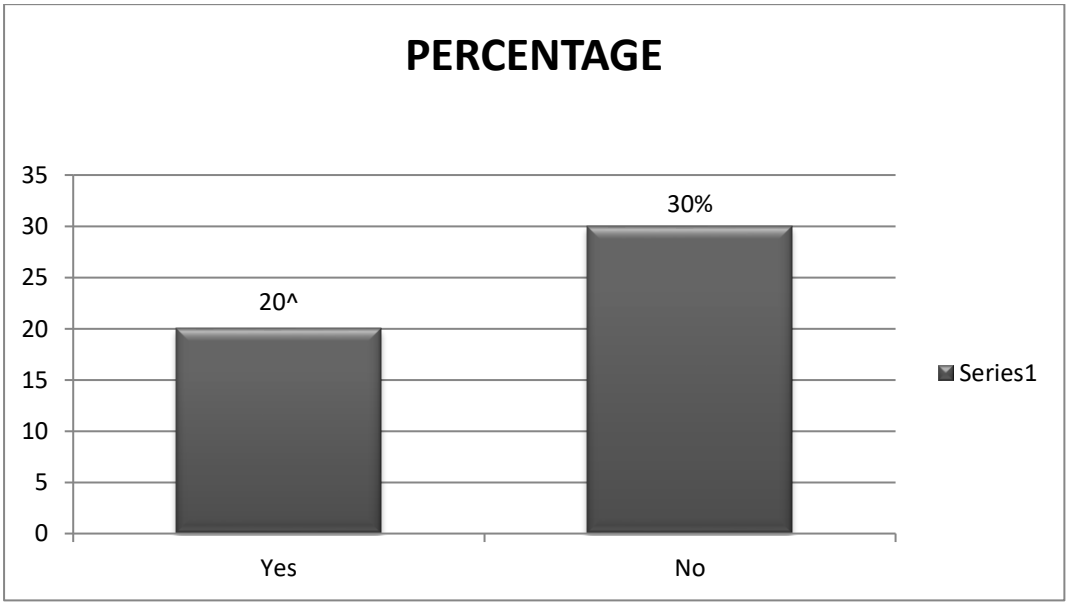


Interpretation

The pie chart will show that the majority of respondents have not encountered issues with digital platforms, while a significant minority have experienced problems "Frequently" or "Occasionally." This suggests generally positive feedback but indicates some areas for potential improvement**.**

9 ; Have you ever contacted HT Media Ltd.'s customer service?

	No. of respondents	Percentage
Yes	20	40%
No	30	60%
Total	50	100%



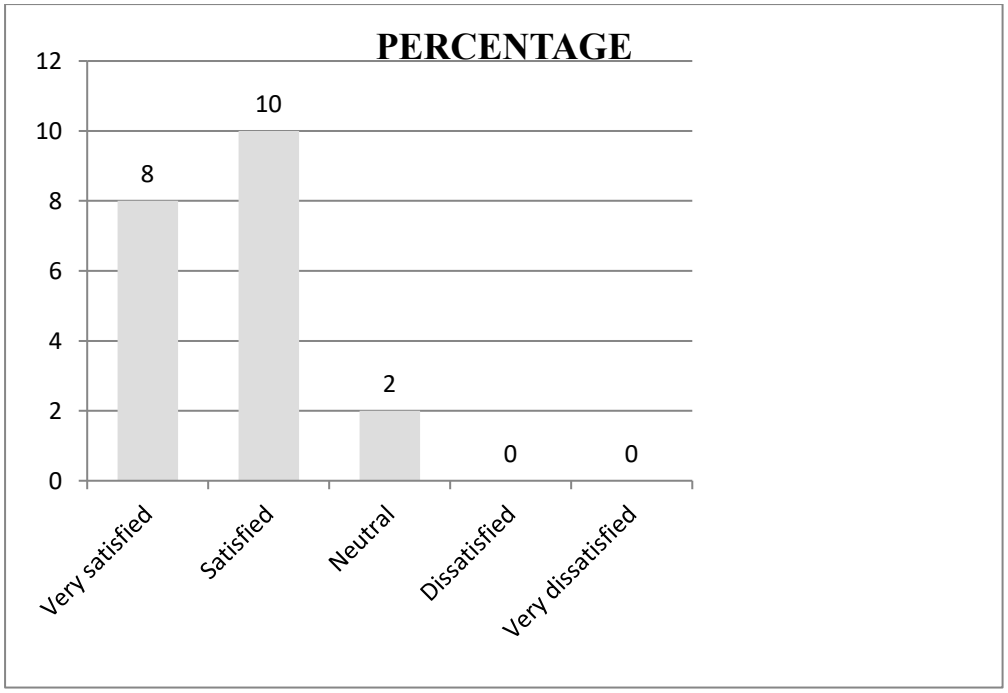
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Interpretation

The pie chart will illustrate that a majority of respondents have not contacted customer service, with 40% having done so. This could imply that customer service interactions are less frequent or that the service is effective enough that fewer customers need to reach out.

10 ; If yes, how satisfied were you with the customer service?

	No. of respondents	Percentage
Very satisfied	8	40%
Satisfied	10	50%
Neutral	2	10%
Dissatisfied	0	0%
Very dissatisfied	0	0%
Total	50	100%



Interpretation

The pie chart will show that among those who contacted customer service, most were "Satisfied" or "Very satisfied," reflecting a positive service experience. There are no respondents who were dissatisfied, indicating generally effective customer service.

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Findings and suggestions

Based on the document, here are the key findings and suggestions regarding customer perception of HT Media Ltd:

Key Findings:

1. Brand Familiarity & Engagement
- 70% of respondents are familiar with HT Media Ltd (35 out of 50 respondents)
- 40% are "somewhat familiar" and 30% are "very familiar"
- Hindustan Times is the most engaged brand (36% engagement), followed by Mint (28%)

2. Content Quality & Relevance
- 64% rate content quality as "Good" or "Excellent"
- 76% find content relevant "Always" or "Often"
- 72% consider the news/information "Reliable" or "Very reliable"

3. Digital Platform Usage
- 66% use digital platforms either "Daily" or "Weekly"
- 50% report "Good" or "Excellent" experience with digital platforms
- 50% report no issues with digital platforms, while 40% experience occasional or frequent issues

4. Customer Service
- 40% have contacted customer service
- Among those who used customer service, 90% were either "Satisfied" or "Very satisfied"
- No respondents reported being dissatisfied with customer service

Key Suggestions:

1. Brand Awareness & Recognition
- Focus on improving perceived quality of content and journalism standards
- Build trust and credibility through unbiased reporting
- Maintain editorial integrity

2. Digital Presence Enhancement
- Improve website and app usability
- Enhance navigation and loading speeds
- Strengthen social media engagement
- Address technical issues reported by users

3. Content Strategy
- Expand content diversity to meet varied interests

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- Improve localization and personalization of content
- Maintain comprehensive coverage across topics
- Tailor content to specific demographics and regions

4. Customer Service

- Continue maintaining high service standards
- Improve response times and problem resolution
- Enhance subscription and billing practices
- Streamline customer support processes

5. Market Positioning

- Monitor and respond to competition
- Focus on innovation and digital transformation
- Strengthen unique selling propositions
- Maintain competitive advantage in content quality

6. Feedback Management

- Implement regular customer surveys
- Monitor online reviews and forums
- Continuously gather and analyze customer feedback
- Use insights to improve services

7. Corporate Social Responsibility

- Enhance CSR initiatives in education and environment
- Improve community support programs
- Build stronger crisis management systems
- Maintain transparent communication with stakeholders

These findings and suggestions provide a framework for HT Media Ltd to improve its services and strengthen its market position while maintaining focus on customer satisfaction and engagement.

Conclusion

The research, which surveyed 50 respondents, revealed that HT Media Ltd. maintains a strong market presence with high brand recognition, particularly for its flagship publications Hindustan Times and Mint. The majority of respondents (70%) demonstrated familiarity with the company's brands, and the content quality was generally rated positively, with 64% rating it as "Good" or "Excellent." Digital engagement is robust, with 66% of users accessing HT

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Media's platforms either daily or weekly. Customer service experiences were notably positive, with 90% of those who contacted support reporting satisfaction. The study also highlighted areas for potential improvement, particularly in digital platform performance, where 40% of users reported occasional or frequent issues. Overall, the research indicates that HT Media Ltd. has successfully established itself as a trusted and reliable media source, with strong customer loyalty and satisfaction, though there remains room for enhancement in digital infrastructure and service delivery. The company's multi-platform approach and content relevance appear to resonate well with its target audience, suggesting a solid foundation for continued growth and market leadership in India's media landscape.

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