

What is Marketing?

Marketing is one of the most important factors in creating a successful business. The amount of marketing that we see around us in our everyday lives demonstrates that getting the message across to potential and existing customers is a constant and never-ending task. All this marketing is trying to attract the consumer to products that satisfy their needs. Even so, nowadays satisfying customers may not be enough, most other firms are doing this as well. Much better is to delight the customer, with the adverts, the promotions the price, the product!

And it is not just the posters, the TV ads, the radio ads, the sponsorship, the logos and the brands, that make up marketing. For many businesses it is part of every employees job to 'sell' in whatever way that is appropriate to their role. So smile at your customer, provide good service, help sort out problems, or design a good product. All parts of effective marketing.

But how to define marketing, and explain what marketing is?

The purpose of marketing is to create a process that match the abilities and strengths of the firm to the needs of the market. A business aims to supply goods and services that customers want, place these goods in front of the customer and establish a need (so that the customers buys), all in a way which will generate profits for the organisation. So how is this achieved?

Firstly and most importantly marketing aims

to identify and anticipate customer needs. This is the starting point. And just to make things a little more difficult it is not always enough to just identify customer needs: the customers may not know themselves what they want. In some markets such as fashion and film, firms have to anticipate what customers will want in the future. They have to predict trends even before most customers know what these trends will be.

Secondly, marketing is a two way exchange process. The business offers the consumer goods or a service and in return receives a payment.

Also marketing can be seen as mutually beneficial because both sides should gain from the exchange. Customers should be satisfied as they are gaining utility from consuming the good or service and firms should make a profit. Both sides win.

Marketing involves:

- **Market research** - This involves gathering and analysing information on consumers, the marketplace and competition.
- **Market analysis** - This is an examination of market conditions to identify new opportunities.
- **Marketing Objectives**—setting of marketing goals linked to the firms overall objectives..
- **Marketing strategy** - This involves developing a plan detailing how the marketing objectives can be achieved..
- **The marketing mix**, the 4Ps of marketing - This covers the decisions all businesses have to make regarding selling prices, how

and where the product is sold, the image of the product and the precise nature of the product itself.

We see then that marketing involves a whole range of activities, starting with researching the market, and setting objectives, it also includes developing new products, designing packaging, establishing the right marketing mix and so on. All these activities are aimed at providing goods and services which will satisfy the customer (so he or she will buy it), and at making a profit for the firm. The better the marketing, the more desirable (or desired) the product or service which is provided for the customer and the more money the business should be able to make.

Markets.

When we examine marketing we must also be aware of the type of market a firm operates in. The strict definition of a market is 'a place where buyers and sellers meet'. This meeting does not have to be physical, it can be on the phone or over the internet. The actual market place of a firm can be small, local markets with a specific location. Other markets are national or international with no single location. For example, the world market for oil is a global market in which buyers and sellers are linked by telephones, faxes and the internet, and trading takes place in many locations. Other differences in markets are based on numbers and types of competitors and how governments regulate these markets.

Conclusion

Every type of contact a firm has with its customers or potential customers is part of marketing. Effective marketing means that

the organisation understands its customers and provides them with what they want, when they want it. At the same time it ensures the firm itself benefits from this transaction. This benefit may not be immediate profits, it may be the achievement of some other marketing objective such as building brand image or gaining market share.

Notes