



MARKETING STRATEGIES IN THE ON-LINE BUSINESS ERA

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Abstract *The paper is meant to found out those motivations and trends of demand, be it for products-no matter the category they belong to- be it for various activities- irrespective of the domain-which are the subject of a new marketing strategy, adapted to answer the present and future technological progress. It is interesting to notice the way in which, in time, marketing developed parallel to demand and supply, by choosing the specific necessary instruments to answer, at each stage, the consumers' preferences, the latter having met changes during their existence, both as an individual and as a collectivity. The digital era has already imposed an interesting target for the marketing activity field, due to some multidisciplinary research work. Time will certainly show that an absolutely different marketing strategy will be implemented and it will require a radically different approach both in theory and practice.*

Key words:

Marketing, strategy, digital era, demand, specific instruments

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1. Introduction

At present, at a world level, the market is overfilled with a multitude and a great variety of goods, a result of the development of the technological process and of the access of a lot of national and international goods producing companies. Lately, the competition has become very harsh, while the surviving and advantageous position in the companies value hierarchy chances are ever less, needing standards that are ever hard to reach. Similarly, and in an even greater measure, *marketing strategies have reached a more rapid development and diversification steps, having become a point of reference for the consumers, for the image of success of a service company and for its performance.*

2. Contents

Harmonizing demand and supply, under the conditions in which demand meets many and genuine changes determined by the consumers' behavior changes, needs an attenuation of fluctuations, from both the perspective of demand which should meet supply as well as from the perspective of supply which should be oriented towards demand diversification. It has become a notorious marketing matter the fact that at present there is a surplus of production in most of the world economy sectors, which is to generate a higher competition as well as a difference among the clients who are ever less while the products and services supply id ever diversified. On this item, the national, international and multinational companies will be certainly concerned with analyzing the market structure with all the subsequent consequences on the market strategy.

The consumer's profile meets a permanent change, determined by the evolution and diversification of the services, by the supply multitude, price strategies, new competitors, liberalization politics, globalization, privatization, parallel to the very rapid rhythm of informatics and communication means development, the emergence of new distribution channels, the development of the wireless commerce, the educational level, the life standard, the consumption habits according to the dynamic needs of the present moment, the changes that appeared on consumers' security plan, climate changes, the ever deeper social inequity etc. Thus, the product demand meets qualitative and quantitative changes determined by the economic, social and political worldwide, continental and national environment.

The consumer's behavior which is a multidimensional concept becomes the fundamental factor in defining his decisional process for buying products and services. In the traditional marketing, the consumer is hunted by the company, while in the internet environmental era the consumer has the liberty and delivery means, accepting or not accepting the company rights to make use of his identification data and of sending advertisements and information. At present, marketing should pay attention to keeping strong relations with the clients, to building a portfolio of clients less than a portfolio of products.

Being an extremely necessary refresh to the development of economy and to the staff occupational status, marketing and its specific strategies have been and still are the domain of fundamental and practical

research for many economists, for the academic world in-land and abroad, economists and associations in the field of economics.

Research in the marketing strategy area need attention and concern, permanent targets for the management of each company at local, national and multinational level, to ensure the rank and stability in the business competition environment. In the digital era, marketing is an essential factor in the decision taking strategy of the company which has to create a personal and original conception.

Generally, a company has a three-target matter to achieve: an ever higher profit, a maximization of capacity and competence, and a many consumers.¹ Fulfilling such targets mean that the companies should consider the holistic marketing concept, which involves four elements: the market supply, the marketing activities, the business architecture and the operational systems. While the market supply and the business architecture are income generators, the marketing activities and the operational systems are costs generators.

Regardless of the domain, insuring service quality, the way it is carried out, parallel to its evaluation, to setting quality standards represents reference points to achieving a harmony between the company supply in ratio to the consumers' wishes and needs. What each company should be concerned with when aspiring to performance and to a comfortable rank on the competition market is to create a successful image, and on the issue of creating its service policy background, the consumers' credibility is an important dimension; the consumers would appreciate the service quality only after carrying it out. In these terms, to create models for consumption behavior could be beneficial and could facilitate the working out of the marketing strategies in services, their selling being a human performance.

The consumer will be sensitive with regard to a new product or service, to diversifying the ones already used, to their quality.

This is the process motivating and making the company work out its way towards performance, towards a successful position on the competition market, towards personality and uniqueness of its characteristics through a macro and micro analysis of the company environment, of its culture and through formulating its strategy alternatives. On such perspectives, it is a must to determine not only the service characteristics according to the consumers' preferences, but also to find out the weaker points of the competitors as well as the growing possibilities of the company potentiality, on a short, medium and long term. The human resource, the direct representative of a company in relation to the client is an element of great responsibility for the marketing strategy of the company which has to pay the

utmost importance to the degree of preparing, qualifying and motivating staff; the latter's way of thinking is necessary to be adjusted to the consumers' requirements which cannot be anticipated. Thus, in the marketing of services the staff stands right for the service, being a "human institution"², while the company image is the seller himself. The staff of a service company could ensure the consumers' constancy, a higher degree of their satisfaction, the permanent sales success or could simply lose the company rank on the competition market.

Obviously, a service company success on the competition market mostly depends on the promotional policy, a fundamental communication component of the marketing mix. It is the element which can create and stay in touch with the consumers, the effort being necessary to achieving a positive feed-back on their side.

Similarly, the relational marketing whose role in the managerial strategy of the company is major, has advantages in the organization (a high sales volume, reduced costs, advantages in the promotion and advertising actions, a lower mobility of the staff) as well as with the clients, due to various benefits, by raising their degree of satisfaction and constancy.

If the relation with the clients can be easier evaluated by a direct contact of the consumer with the respective product or service, in "on-line" business there are other evaluation criteria, with advantages and disadvantages of distribution, as follows:

a) advantages:

- a larger area of distribution and access of the consumers to products and services;
- consumers benefit from low prices;
- consumers decide themselves much faster on buying products or services;
- services and products are provided in a standard system.

b) disadvantages:

- there is no communication with the consumers on supply issues;
- transaction confidentiality cannot be controlled;
- consumers should change their behavior in terms of buying products and services;
- the communication environment cannot be held under control.

"The internet is not only just another channel of selling. It is not just an advertising means. It is an instrument which changes fundamentally the way in which a company makes business, takes clients' orders and provides them value", said Esther Dyson, President of the EDventure Holdings Inc., during an interview, foreseeing the effect the internet will have upon the companies behavior and upon the market of the future. Here are other forms of the technological progress with

impact on markets and companies: Biotechnology, new materials, new medical treatments, communication progress, intelligent devices etc.

All these achievements of the digital revolution, altogether with the era of informatics, have generated changes of mentality, massive investments in the technology of informatics, and in the creation of some connections among the networks to building a new place on the market, actually a virtual market. Thus, there emerge major mutations in the marketing business and concepts, such as:

- *local economy turns into global economy*- in the new economy, efforts to create very big dimensions of the sale market are not necessary, and even small companies can show their products or services to some clients on different areas on the planet;

- *the mass market becomes a one-businessman market*- companies should no longer look for clients to sell them products, on the contrary they will look for individual products for clients, striving to individualize products and services for them;

- *there is a change from the information asymmetry to its democratization*- sellers have better information than consumers, but, in the digital technology, consumers can find more cheaper information about a larger number of products or services, and the companies can compare prices and can reduce supply costs;

- *elite goods become goods for everybody*- consumers have access to products and services adjusted to the personal needs, the digital technology leading to slackening fabrication costs and to "goods democratization"³;

- *concepts like "produce and sell" become "find out and answer"*- companies do no longer plan production and do no longer establish services based

on demand estimation, they invite potential consumers to define needs, to choose goods and services features, and pay orders much faster on the on-line system, thus becoming more profitable;

- *there is a trend to pass from goods possession to network access* - at present, companies prefer to have access to some assets, not to own them, based on subscriptions, thus becoming members of some groups by signing leasing contracts etc.

3. Conclusions

Given the digital revolution, the marketing concept has got a new dimension, that is the holistic dynamic marketing concept, a result of the electronic connection capacity and the interaction of the company with its clients and collaborators. According to this concept, the starting point is represented by the personal requirements of the client, the certainty of that product supply and the services proper to each client. From this perspective, the marketing experts will have to be oriented towards the relational capital of the company, which is formed of consumers, collaborators, employees, communities, etc. Thus, the management concept of customer relations should be considered a management of all relations.

The holistic marketing requires all interested parties to get involved in the value creating process, while in the digital economics, the companies, the clients, collaborators and communities can be responsible partners in this process.

We witness all these changes which take place nowadays and which require a rapid adjustment to the technological realities of the digital era in the on-line business era of the demands and behavior of each of us.

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