

The Value Proposition of Marketing

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Element 1: Marketing Concept and Creating Value

a thorough and detailed explanation of the marketing concept and how it creates value for customers

What is Marketing?

In a desire to arrive at the destination of pinning down exactly what the “marketing concept” is and how it creates value for customers, we must first understand that there are a few competing and overlapping concepts which are grounded in the broad field of marketing. We will review these next. For now, let us address what marketing is. Purveyors’ primary goal is commonly understood to be financial gain. To meet this intention, they desire to implement strategies and tactics to better publicize their brand and sell their products or services. Thus we may assume that marketing is just a vehicle by which to accomplish this end. Yet, on further analysis, we should consider that in a product-based business, profitability comes through repeat product sales and in a service-based business, profit comes through repeat business. Deep analysis of the foregoing reveals the need to be relationship-oriented; said another way, there is this need to court the customers’ attention and repeat business. To address the concept of value, we must first agree upon a definition for marketing and establish a foundation upon which to build on. To this end, marketing can be codified in terms of strategies and tactics which are used to identify our target group of ideal customers, then create and court sustaining and substantial relationships with these customers (KnowThis, 2019). The result will be value for both the customer and the marketer; the customer will appreciate having one service or product provider upon whom they can rely to meet their needs and the purveyor will have repeat business and thus a recurring source of revenue. No matter your exact definition of marketing, your thought process must be reoriented to consider the customer and his or her wants and needs.

Understanding Diverse Concepts

There are many concepts which garner the attention of business executives worldwide. Each concept represents a different approach to marketing and has some defining characteristics as to how priorities are set, and diverse sales tactics and methods which are employed in the conduct of standard business transactions (Lumen Learning, 2021). The prevailing concept is the marketing concept, which I will elucidate on, but first, a cursory review of the other three up for discussion, to wit; product, sales, and production concepts. One who endorses the product concept believes that a technically superior and less expensive product or similar capability is what consumers are seeking and consequently this company doesn’t expend resources courting the consumer (Lumen Learning, 2021). A company ruled by the sales concept invests into an aggressive and manipulative sales force who use a variety of sales methods, promotions, and social pressure tactics to induce purchases (Lumen Learning, 2021). One who endorses the production concept strives to consistently lower the retail costs for their products, caring more about their products’ availability and less about variations in their released products or even about adding product features (Lumen Learning, 2021). Each concept previously covered is lacking in a similar fundamental way: consideration for the needs and wants of consumers. Herein lies the principle strength of the marketing concept. The marketing concept focuses on customer’s needs and also takes into consideration competitors’ successes and failures as seen from the consumers’ perspective in order to determine the direction for major business decisions

(Lumen Learning, 2021). Businesses which employ the marketing concept make a concerted effort wherein all employees share their prevailing theories on customer wants, needs, and expectations and seek to improve value in the eyes of the consumer.

Creating Value for Customers

The marketing concept creates value for customers. We have all been faced with endlessly long EULA's, that is end-user licensing agreements, wherein, buried deep within can be found terms for the collection of anonymous usage statistics, or perhaps we have been asked to choose by a program or device whether or not to grant permission for them to collect statistics about our usage. Whilst some may consider the collection of such statistics to be an immense invasion of privacy, we would be wise to consider that we are in fact the beneficiaries of companies' research (Lumen, 2021). Corporations pour countless financial and human resources into finding out exactly what products and services consumers really care about, what they consider to be cheap, as well as what they consider to be expensive. Undesirable products and services, as well as unprofitable ones, fall by the wayside and the ultimate goal is kept in view, to wit; increasing customer value. Value is much more mathematical than abstract as it can be defined as the sum valuation of a product or service's benefits less the cost to acquire it (Lumen Way Maker, 2021).

Element 2: Marketing in an Organization

a thorough and detailed description of how marketing is essential to an organization in terms of value creation and the achievement of business objectives

Marketing as a Source of Value Creation

As aforementioned, value can be computed by subtracting the retail cost of a product or service from the sum valuation of the perceived benefit received (Lumen Way Maker, 2021). Since corporations are quite easily able to control operating costs and the retail cost of their product and service offerings, the focus falls to evaluating what is necessary to maximize the consumers' perceived benefit received from their offerings. Marketing is essential to an organization in value creation. Marketing helps organizations to know what problems exist within their offerings, what product and service offerings are worth eliminating, and which are worth adding or even expanding (Lumen, 2021). Marketing can aid a company in identifying their target audience and customer base, as well as maximizing satisfaction and retaining these customers, turning first-time customers into repeat customers.

Marketing as a Means to Achieve Business Objectives

Further, marketing is essential to an organization to achieve their business objectives. Businesses want to strike that ideal balance in their contractual terms to find the middle ground and terms which are mutually beneficial and offer protections and assurances for both the company and consumer; marketing makes this possible by enabling the organization to identify their ideal customer, identify his and her needs and wants, and to satisfy those. Marketing enables corporations to build and sustain relationships with their customers. Without marketing, companies will inevitably cease to retain this connection (Lumen, 2021). Marketing accomplishes this in a few key ways, to wit: through measuring customer satisfaction, by providing a method for consumers to share their wants and needs, by monitoring competitor's actions, relevance in the market, and consumer response to same (Lumen Way Maker, 2021).

Element 3: Promoting Positive Social Change

a thorough and detailed explanation of three ways (including specific examples) that marketing can promote positive social change (including influencing habits, values, laws, etc.).

Three Ways Marketing Can Promote Positive Social Change

Through marketing and amidst a company's pursuit to engage their customer base, companies can use their platform to promote positive social change. Each individual and corporation has a sphere of influence and possesses the capacity to impact change, be it negative or positive. Positive social change is about improving individuals' sense of self-worth, and dignity, and includes improving human and social conditions, individuals, communities, organizations, and society as a whole (Valenzuela, 2010). Corporations, through their marketing, can promote positive social change in three notable ways, to wit; instilling courage to try new things, instilling desire to aspire to be better, and shaping perceptions of acceptable behavior (Tully, 2018). Nike's slogan *just do it* is a great example of a company striving to instill courage. The company has even made some grand advancements in the women's empowerment movement (Nike, 2019). The second manner in which marketing can promote positive social change as I outlined is through instilling desire to aspire to be better. DJ Khalid is an excellent example of this. He has countless motivational and encouraging books, music videos, and mantra videos which are sure to inspire anyone to be a better version of himself or herself. Lastly, I propose that marketing can shape perceptions of acceptable behavior. O'Shea Jackson, also known as Ice Cube, has used his platform as a rapper to push for an end to domestic violence and sexual assault. His marketing campaign "no more boys will be boys" is an exceptional example of marketing promoting positive social change and he possesses influence with minority groups in a strong and powerful way. He is making a difference, certainly for the betterment of society.

Element 4: Customer Wants and Needs

a thorough and detailed analysis distinguishing between customer wants and needs, explains how they are different from the perspective of a marketing manager, and provides specific visual examples of both

Customer Needs as Seen by the Marketing Manager

In a purveyor's quest to court their clients' continued interest and business, whilst they engage in a marketing campaign they are constantly assessing their top competitor's actions and their effectiveness. Successfully gaining this information can result in obtaining competitive advantage and a marketing manager can use this to seek the exclusive business of their customer and iteratively satisfy their disparate needs and wants (Boundless Marketing, 2021). Determining consumers' needs and wants is crucial and differentiating between a need and a want can be imperative and requires much market research (Gordon, 2015). A customer's need for a specific product or service can best be classified by their desire for the specific benefit which the product or service provides. This desire may be emotional or functional (Boundless Marketing, 2021). A marketer would be keen to court the consumer's emotional needs since these can be a stronger motivator (Boundless Marketing, 2021).

Customer Wants as Seen by the Marketing Manager

Contrariwise, a customer's want for products or services can best be identified by his or her desire for a product or service which is either gratuitous, superfluous, or unnecessary (Boundless Marketing, 2021). Once market research reveals the potential for a consumer's want exists, awareness must be created through marketing to make customers aware of the product and introduce the value proposition, which will be the next subject of this dissertation (Gordon, 2015). Successfully attracting the consumer's interest in a marketer's product or service requires addressing answers to several key questions, to wit; why do people want it, what will the hurdles be to making people aware of it or to enter into this market, and why is it different from products which already satisfy the consumer's want (Gordon, 2015). A marketing manager sees this as an opportunity to improve consumers' productivity, alter their quality of life for the better, help them make beneficial choices, and discover products' existence (Lumen, 2021).

Element 5: The Role of the Value Proposition

a thorough and detailed description of the role of a value proposition for a selected product or service offered by Local Goods and Services

Introduction to Value Proposition with Product Example

Understanding the value proposition is going to be key to being successful in marketing. Often, companies desire to grow their business but are not fully convinced that they need formal marketing to do so. I aim to demonstrate the value and usefulness of a successful formal marketing campaign. A great way to do this is by introducing the concept of value proposition; a term which is foreign to the average businessman but is in fact crucial to a successful marketing campaign since it is the bridge between the marketer and the consumer in an industry where one must be customer-centric to thrive. Value proposition consists of the marketer's promise of value and is followed by the consumer's belief that they will receive or experience said value (Lumen Learning, 2019). Let us begin with one of Local Goods and Services' products, the Lenovo Flex 5, 14-inch full-HD touchscreen two-in-one laptop. The Lenovo Flex 5 takes all of the benefits of having a full-featured Windows 10 powered laptop without the drawbacks of lack-of portability and lack-of mobile usability all while merging this with all of the benefits of having a snappy tablet, capable of being controlled with a stylus or touch, without the application limitations and lack-of video processing prowess. Let us get more into this.

Product's Importance and Target Consumer

Upon the conclusion of market research, if it is revealed that the product can fulfill the needs or wants of the consumer (in this case, the wants), then marketers must seek to raise awareness about the product and directly imply the product is the direct fulfillment of the consumer's wants and introduce the value proposition (Gordon, 2015). Introducing the value proposition can be done in one of two ways, by either differentiating the product from other competitors in the market or by identifying the product as being a part of a niche market (Gordon, 2015). For the Lenovo Flex 5, 14" FHD IPS Touchscreen 2-in-1 Laptop, the target consumer can be in one of a few categories, to wit; either a power-user with mobile computing needs, a computing user with a need to view or edit photos or video with mobile computing needs, a traveling businessman, or a video gaming enthusiast with mobile computer needs. To summarize, the target consumer is one who values quality, power, and mobility, in that order. The product offering by Local Goods and Services is of great importance to this kind of consumer. The Lenovo computer begins as a laptop, at 14" it is an adequate size and it is running

a full Windows 10 operating system which means that all software the end-user intends to run will function perfectly. Unlike comparable systems such as the Microsoft Surface, this Lenovo has a full keyboard that is actually hard encased and fully usable. Where the magic happens is when the Lenovo screen is bent all of the way backwards and back upon itself. In this state, the Lenovo is now a fully functional Windows 10 tablet, hence the name two-in-one. The screen is touch screen and supports a passive stylus, which means batteries are not needed. The product is made even more especially for the mobile user who demands quality visuals with the inclusion of an IPS screen which always displays a vivid quality image on the computer screen.

Product's Fulfillment of Wants and Capacity to Improve Consumers

The Lenovo Flex 5, 14" 2-in-1 Laptop fulfills customers' wants and desires for specific product features and their desire for specific enhancements to their life as pertains to recreational, entertainment, and business desires to be found fulfilled by their personal computer. Since the Lenovo fails to find its way into a needs categories such as food, water, shelter, or basic clothing, it is classified as a want. The product fulfills consumers' desires for quality and power in a mobile and compact computing platform. The product most assuredly will improve customers' lives by adding value at an incredibly respectable price point. The value of this device comes from not having to have both a separate laptop and tablet to function and fulfill computing product features and wants.

Element 6: Traditional and Digital Strategies

a thorough and detailed explanation of traditional and digital strategies to build long-term relationships with target customers

Plan to Promote the Product to the Primary Customers

If I overtook marketing for Local Goods and Services, I would plan to promote the Lenovo product to our primary consumer group using three methods, to wit; present product information to targeted consumers, increase demand among the target market, differentiate our Lenovo Flex product, and build its brand and identity (Boundless Marketing, 2021). To this end I would utilize and rely upon a combination of 30-second television promotional advertisement spots, engage in public relations campaigns across the three primary social media platforms, increase print advertising in-store listing the targeted features (quality, power, mobility) to reach our targeted consumer (recreational, entertainment, business), further employ direct marketing to this demographic, and lastly implement sales promotions (Boundless Marketing, 2021). I would then rely on market research to determine which of the above areas needs the most attention, and then rank them accordingly, as well as assign a percentage of the total advertising/promotion budget to each. A few of my goals and desired outcomes include: Raising consumer awareness of our product, who it is for, and what it specializes in, and increasing sales, building the perceived value of the Lenovo brand and of the Local Goods and Services brand. (Boundless Marketing, 2021).

How These Promotional Tactics Will Elicit Unnecessary Spending

The array of promotional tactics that will be employed are all targeted to elicit spending on what we would categorize as a want and not a need. The aforementioned marketing strategies possess the capacity to do this particularly because we are utilizing the combination of relevant market research and building upon the feedback of research and effectiveness of methods

employed by direct competitors (Lumen, 2021). The primary goal of this marketing campaign will be to engage with the primary target consumer and build relationships. In the process, we will utilize all of the tactics to raise awareness for the Lenovo product and increase demand, differentiate our product, build its brand and identity, and build the public perception of its value above and beyond the value already existent based upon its functionality already. Resulting from the execution of these promotional tactics will be consumers' inducement to spend to fulfill their desire for the Lenovo product.

How These Tactics Encourage Long-Term Customer Relationships

A successful marketing campaign will undoubtedly encourage the formation of emotional connections and a relationship between consumers and the company resultant from exceeding their expectations (BDC, 2020). In synthesizing BDC (2020), I have come to understand that research suggests that merely satisfying customers is simply not enough to earn their repeat business, therein lies the key, which is to exceed their expectations and it starts with promoting high quality and responsive customer service. Further, in synthesizing BDC (2020), I assert that there are six ways to exceed customer's expectations and encourage a long-term customer relationship, to wit; understanding what our customers' value, showing you sincerely care, providing responsive service, placing the customer's needs first, improving employee culture, and being consistent and not expecting immediate results. To summarize, cultivating long-term customer relationships is accomplished through a successful marketing campaign, but it is a long-game and starts from the top down. Executives need to model the behavior to employees that they want to see exhibited to customers and the company as a whole needs to always place the consumer first and demonstrate that they care and are willing to go the proverbial, extra mile. Something as simple as holding a door for a customer that you see walking in or offering to review contractual details again or offering a promotional price for a first time purchase or another form of promotion, which could be a loyalty reward, each go a long way toward beginning to court the consumer. Lastly, always stay sincere and stay up-front, respectful, and honest with the customer.

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