PLACE – AN INTRODUCTION

In the marketing mix, the process of moving products from the producer to the intended user is called place. In other words, it is how your product is bought and where it is bought. This movement could be through a combination of intermediaries such as distributors, wholesalers and retailers. In addition, a newer method is the internet which itself is a marketplace now.

Through the use of the right place, a company can increase sales and maintain these over a longer period of time. In turn, this would mean a greater share of the market and increased revenues and profits.

Correct placement is a vital activity that is focused on reaching the right target audience at the right time. It focuses on where the business is located, where the target market is placed, how best to connect these two, how to store goods in the interim and how to eventually transport them.

Distribution Channel

A distribution channel is a chain of businesses or intermediaries through which a good or service passes until it reaches the final buyer or the end consumer. Distribution channels can include wholesalers, retailers, distributors, and even the Internet.

Distribution channels are part of the downstream process, answering the question "How do we get our product to the consumer?" This is in contrast to the upstream process, also known as the supply chain, which answers the question "Who are our suppliers?"

According to William J. Stanton, “A channel of distribution for a product is the route taken by the title of the goods as they move from the producer to the ultimate consumer or the industrial user.”

Types of Distribution Channels

1. Direct Channels:

The producer can sell directly to his customers without the help of middlemen, such as wholesalers of retailers:

(i) By opening retails shop; (ii) Through travelling salesmen;

(iii) Through mail order business.

These channels take the shortest route to the consumer. Certain goods, like the industrial machinery, are directly sold to the consumers. Costly goods like computers and luxury automobiles, are also directly sold. Some manufacturers open their own retail shops in many localities and sell goods directly to consumers. The best example is that of the Bata Shoe Company Shops. The manufacturers also try to sell through their own mail order departments.

All these indicate that producers are now taking steps to approach the consumers directly. Though this is possible for some types of goods, the fact remains that the services of intermediaries, such as wholesalers and retailers, are often essential in the distribution of goods to consumers.

2. Indirect Channels: The indirect channels of distribution are:

(i) Producer-Consumer (industrial goods with high technical content)

(ii) Producer-Retailer-Consumer (via large department ‘ stores)

(iii) Producer—Wholesaler—Consumer (most industrial products)

(iv) Producer-Wholesaler-Retailer-Consumer (most consumer goods)

(v) Producer-Sole Agent -Wholesaler-Retailer-Consumer (usually for a prescribed geographical area).

The first channel, from the producer to the consumer, is preferable when buyers are few and the goods are costly and mostly purchased by industrial users. In this category fail such goods as complex machinery involving high technology, computers and luxury cars. In this case, buyers can be directly contacted and goods can be sold by direct personal approach.

The second channel, from the producer-retailer to the consumers, is preferable where the purchasers of goods are big retailers like department stores, chain stores, super markets or consumer co-operative stores. In these cases, the wholesalers may be by passed because the bulk of the goods are purchased by these large retail distributors to be sold to the consumers.

Need/Purpose of selection of Distribution Channels

Channels of Distribution are required for the follow reasons**:**

(i) Channels of Distribution Help in the Production Function: The producer can concentrate on the production function leaving the marketing problem to middlemen who specialize in the profession, their services best utilized for selling the product.

(ii) Marketing Demand and Supply: The chief function of intermediaries is to assemble the goods from many producers in such a manner that a customer can make effective purchases with ease.

(iii) Financing the Producer: Middlemen orders and purchases products in bulk from the producers to undertake large-scale production and in adopting better techniques of production because they have no problem for finance.

(iv) Aid to Communication: The middlemen are connecting link between the producer and the buyer. Middlemen have complete knowledge of consumer behaviour and the market and they communicate the necessary information to the producer so that they may produce according to the needs of the consumers.

(v) Stabilizing the Prices: The middlemen help to stabilize the prices. By stocking goods, constant flow of goods to the market is assured at a place where they are wanting and at a proper time. Thus middlemen create place, time, and possession utilities to the products and maintain the prices.

(vi) Promotional Activities: Middlemen also perform various promotional activities like advertising, personal selling and sales promotion. Sometimes wholesaler does it alone for the producer. Retailer also performs such activities by displaying the product in his window which attracts the customers.

(vii) Pricing: In pricing the product, the producer should invite the suggestions from the middlemen who are very close to the ultimate users and who know the consumer behavior aptly. Pricing may be different for different markets or products depending upon the channel of distribution.

Identifying Major Channel Alternatives

After a company has defined its target market and desired positioning it should identify its channel by three elements:-

1. Types of intermediaries:-

The firm has following channel alternatives-

- **Company Sales force**:- Expend the company's direct sales force. Assign to contact all prospects in the area. Or develop separate sales force for different products.
- **Manufacture's Agency**:- Hire agencies in different regions sell the equipment.
- **Industrial Distributors**:- Find distributors in the different regions who will buy and carry device. Give them exclusive distribution adequate margins and promotional support.

2. The number of intermediaries:-

Company has to decide among three strategies while choosing the middlemen at each channel level. Three strategies are available.

- **Intensive Distribution:-** Producers of convenience goods etc. typically seek intensive distribution that is stocking their product in numerous outlets. These goods must have place utility.
- **Exclusive Distribution:-** Some producers limit the number of intermediaries handling their products. Through exclusive distribution the manufacturer hopes to obtain more aggressive and knowledgeable selling and more control over intermediaries polices on prices, promotion, credit and various activities.

3. Terms and responsibilities of channel members:– The producer must determine the conditions and responsibilities of the participating channel members. The main elements in the trade relation mix are price policies, conditions of sale, territorial rights and specific service to be performed by each party.

Factors to Consider While Selecting Distribution Channels

(1) Product: Perishable goods need speedy movement and shorter route of distribution. For durable and standardized goods, longer and diversified channel may be necessary. Whereas, for custom made product, direct distribution to consumer or industrial user may be desirable. Also, for technical product requiring specialized selling and serving talent, we have the shortest channel. Products of high unit value are sold directly by travelling sales force and not through middlemen.

(2) Market: (a) For consumer market, retailer is essential whereas in business market we can eliminate retailing.

(b) For large market size, we have many channels, whereas, for small market size direct selling may be profitable.

(c) For highly concentrated market, direct selling is preferred whereas for widely scattered and diffused markets, we have many channels of distribution.

(d) Size and average frequency of customer's orders also influence the channel decision. In the sale of food products, we need both wholesaler and retailer.

Customer and dealer analysis will provide information on the number, type, location, buying habits of consumers and dealers in this case can also influence the choice of channels. For example, desire for credit, demand for personal service, amount and time and efforts a customer is willing to spend-are all important factors in channels choice.

(3) Middlemen: (a) Middlemen who can provide wanted marketing services will be given first preference.

(b) The middlemen who can offer maximum co-operation in promotional services are also preferred.

(c) The channel generating the largest sales volume at lower unit cost is given top priority.

(4) Company: (a) The company's size determines the size of the market, the size of its larger accounts and its ability to set middlemen's co-operation. A large company may have shorter channel.

(b) The company's product-mix influences the pattern of channels. The broader the product- line, the shorter will be the channel.

If the product-mix has greater specialization, the company can favor selective or exclusive dealership.

(c) A company with substantial financial resources may not rely on middlemen and can afford to reduce the levels of distribution. A financially weak company has to depend on middlemen.

(d) New companies rely heavily on middlemen due to lack of experience.

(e) A company desiring to exercise greater control over channel will prefer a shorter channel as it will facilitate better co-ordination, communication and control.

(f) Heavy advertising and sale promotion can motivate middlemen in the promotional campaign. In such cases, a longer chain of distribution is profitable.

Thus, quantity and quality of marketing services provided by the company can influence the channel choice.

(5) Marketing Environment: During recession or depression, shorter and cheaper channel is preferred. During prosperity, we have a wider choice of channel alternatives. The distribution of perishable goods even in distant markets becomes a reality due to cold storage facilities in transport and warehousing. Hence, this leads to expanded role of intermediaries in the distribution of perishable goods.

(6) Competitors: Marketers closely watch the channels used by rivals. Many a time, similar channels may be desirables to bring about distribution of a company's products. Sometimes, marketers deliberately avoid channels used by competitors. For example, company may by-pass retail store channel (used by rivals) and adopt door-to-door sales (where there is no competition).

(7) Customer Characteristics: This refers to geographical distribution, frequency of purchase, average quantity of purchase and numbers of prospective customers.

(8) Channel Compensation: This involves cost-benefit analysis. Major elements of distribution cost apart from channel compensation are transportation, warehousing, storage insurance, material handling distribution personnel's compensation and interest on inventory carried at different selling points. Distribution Cost Analysis is a fast growing and perhaps the most rewarding area in marketing cost analysis and control.

Designing Distribution Channels

Channel design refers to those decisions that involve in the development of new marketing channels or modifying the existent ones. The channel design decision can be broken down into six steps namely:

1. Recognizing the need for a channel design decision: First and foremost task for the organization is to recognize the need for a channel design. An organization would go in for a new channel design for the following reasons namely

1. When a new product or product line is developed, mainly when the existing channels are not suitable for the new line
2. When the existing product is targeted to a different target market. This is common when an organization is used to catering the B2B, plans to enter the consumer market
3. When there is a change in the marketing mix elements, when an organization reduces its prices on certain offering the channel worked out will be based on the price points, they may look in for discounters
4. When facing major environmental changes namely in economic or technological or in legal spheres.
5. Finally when the organization opens up new geographic marketing areas

The list by no means is comprehensive, but gives a picture about some of the most common conditions when channel design decisions are worked out.

2. Setting and Coordinating Distribution Objectives

Once a need for a design is recognized the next task for the channel manager is to work out to develop the channel structure, either from the scratch or by modifying the existing one. It is necessary for the channel manager to carefully evaluate the firm's distribution objectives. In order for the distribution objectives to be effective and well coordinated the channel manager need to perform three tasks namely

1. Become familiar with the objectives and strategies in other marketing mix areas and other relevant objectives and strategies of the firm. In most cases the person or the group that sets the objectives of the other marketing mix elements will also set the objectives for distribution as well.

2. Set the objectives and state them explicitly. A good objective is one, which is clear, and explicit, and has a greater role in achieving the firm's overall objectives. Some examples of a good distribution objectives are as follows.

3. Apple Computers set a distribution objective to reach more consumers with what it refers to as the 'Apple experience'. So, Apple reinvigorated and reestablished relationships with large retail chains, which it had neglected in recent years.

4. In the same way Coca-Cola seeks to broaden its penetration in schools and college markets, as a result of which it has entered into contact with many schools and colleges, whereby these institutions would sell only Coca-Cola products on their campuses.

5. Check and see if the distribution objectives set are congruent with marketing and other general objectives and strategies of the firm. This involves verifying if the distribution objectives do not conflict with the objectives in the other areas of marketing mix or even to the overall objectives of the company. In order to cross check, it is essential to examine the interrelationships and hierarchy of the objectives of the firms.

3. <u>Specifying the Distribution Tasks</u>

Once the objectives are formulated, a number of functions need to be performed in order for the distribution objectives to be met. The manager therefore has to specify the nature of the tasks that needs to be carried out in order to meet the objectives. The tasks need to be precisely stated so that it meets the specified distribution objectives.

4. <u>Developing Possible Alternative Channel Structures</u>: Once the tasks have been specified by the channel manager he should find out alternate ways of allocating these tasks. In most cases the channel manager chooses from more than one channel to reach the consumer effectively. Britannia would sell their biscuits thorough wholesale food distributor, departmental stores, convenience stores and even in pharmacies.

5. <u>Evaluating the variables affecting Channel structure</u>

Once the alternative structures have been outlined, each channel structure has to be evaluated on a number of variables. There are five basic categories namely,

Market variables - marketing management is based on the philosophy of marketing concept, which stresses on the consumers needs and wants, the managers have to take the cues from the market. The subcategories that have a greater influence on the market structure are market geography, market size, market density and market behavior

Product variables - some of the most important product variables are bulk and weight, perishability, unit value, degree of standardization, technical vs. non-technical and newness. Heavy and bulky products have a high handling and shipping costs relative to their value. The manufactures of such products have to keep in mind to ship in large lots to a fewer possible points.

6. <u>Choosing the 'Best' Channel structure</u>

In deciding the manager should choose an optimal channel structure that would offer desired level of effectiveness at the lowest possible cost. Even though there is not one set method to pick an optimal channel structure, it all depends on the orientation of the firm. If the goal of the firm were profit maximization, the channel structure would be in line with the goal. Most channel choices are still however made on the basis of managerial judgment and the data that is available.

<u>Channel Management Decisions</u>:

The success of any marketing channel lies in the foundation of right channel design decision. But channel design is just the planning part; it needs right implementation to be successful. The implementation can be taken care of, with the help of channel management decisions, it includes right from, selecting a channel member to training them to motivating them and to evaluating them on their performance. In case, the performance is not as expected, the modifications are done by the company in the channel arrangements.

1. <u>Selecting Channel Members</u>: The first priority for any company is choosing the right channel members. As the business is dependent upon the marketing channel partners, it becomes crucial for the success of any company to select the best channel partner.

2. <u>Training Channel Partners</u>: Once the channel partner is selected, they need to be trained as they are the face of the company. All the companies have intensive training programmes for its dealers to tell them about their sales and service capabilities, product knowledge, expected service quality and operational procedures to follow.

3. <u>Motivating Channel Members</u>: As the channel members are as important as your customers, a company needs to make them happy. Just like anybody, channel members are also needs to be motivated. On the one hand, the company tries to train them for their better performance and on the other hand, the company provides them incentives, higher margins, premiums, display allowances, advertising allowances and special deals.

4. <u>Evaluating Channel Members</u>: Channel members are evaluated on the basis of their sales, inventory level, service support, delivery time performance, complaint redressal, promotional program implementation and training performance. If the performance of the channel member is satisfactory, then it is rewarded for its efforts and if the performance falls below mark, it is advised to make necessary changes in the processes.

5. Modifying Channel Arrangements: With the changing times, the company needs to modify its channel arrangements. The product line can expand, the consumers buying pattern can change, the new competition can come up, a new distribution channel can emerge or the demand of the product can change by getting into the later stages of product life cycle. All these factors can lead the company to change its channel arrangement.

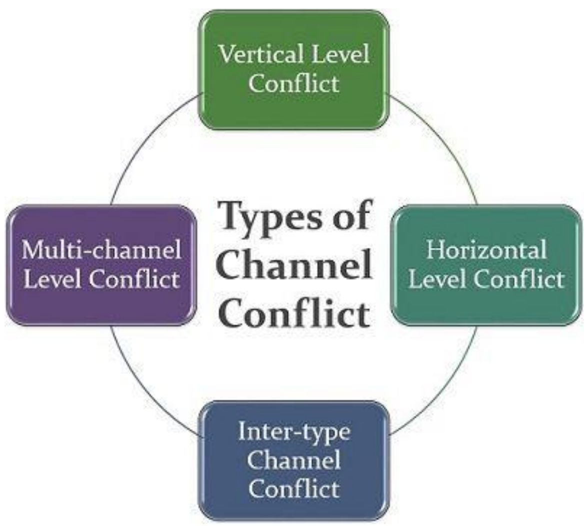
Channel Conflict

Definition: Channel conflict can be explained as any dispute, difference or discord arising between two or more channel partners, where one partner's activities or operations affect the business, sales, profitability, market share or similar goal accomplishment of the other channel partner.

As we know that every manufacturing company needs to plan its distribution and marketing channel appropriately, to ensure market captivity and customer satisfaction along with growth and profitability.

Types of Channel Conflict

The channel conflict can be classified majorly into the following four categories depending upon its flow and the parties involved:



1. Vertical Level Conflict: In the vertical level conflict, the channel partner belonging to a higher level enters into a dispute with the channel member of a lower level or vice-versa.

For instance, channel conflict between dealers and retailers or wholesalers and retailers.

2. Horizontal Level Conflict: The conflict among the channel partners belonging to the same level, i.e., issues between two or more stockists or retailers of different territories, on the grounds of pricing or manufacturer's biases, is termed as horizontal level conflict.

3. Inter-type Channel Conflict: These type of conflicts commonly arise in scrambled merchandising, where the large retailers go out of their way to enter a product line different from their usual product range, to challenge the small and concentrated retailers.

4. Multi-channel Level Conflict: When the manufacturer uses multiple channels for selling the products, it may face multi-channel level conflict where the channel partners involved in a particular distribution channel encounters an issue with the other channel.

Channel Conflict Management

It is a universal fact that the conflicts cannot be eliminated, though these can be handled smartly to reduce its negative impact on business.

Following are some of the ways to manage the channel conflicts:

1. Mediation, Arbitration and Diplomacy: To resolve a dispute, the manufacturer can adopt the strategy of intervention where a third person intervenes to create harmony. The other option is arbitration, where an arbitrator listens to the argument of the parties involved in a conflict and declares a decision. Or, the parties can resort to diplomacy where the representatives of both the parties conversate and find a solution.

2. Co-optation: The manufacturer should hire an expert who has already gained experience in managing the channel conflicts in other organizations, as a member of the grievance redressal committee or board of directors, for addressing such conflicts.

3. Dealer Councils and Trade Associations: To handle the horizontal or vertical conflicts, the manufacturer forms a dealer council where the dealers can unanimously put up their problems and grievances in front of the channel leader. To bring in unity among the channel partners or intermediaries, they can be added as members in trade association which safeguards their interest.

4. Superior Goals Establishing a supreme goal of the organization and aligning it with the individual goals or objectives of the channel partners, may reduce the channel conflicts.

5. Regular Communication: The channel leader should take regular feedback from the channel partners through formal and informal meetings to know about market trends and dynamics. Also, the channel partner's issues and conflicts can be addressed through frequent interactions.

6. Legal Procedure: When the conflict is critical and uncontrollable by the channel leader, the aggrieved party can seek legal action, by filing a lawsuit against the accused party.

7. **Avoid favoritism:** You have to avoid your favoritism mean partiality.

8. Fair Pricing: Most of the channel conflicts are a result of the price war, and therefore, these can be resolved by ensuring that products are equally priced in all the territories and a fair margin is provided to the channel partners.

Retailing

Retailing is defined as a set of activities or steps used to sell a product or a service to consumers for their personal or family use. It is responsible for matching individual demands of the consumer with supplies of all the manufacturers. Retailing has become such an intrinsic part of our everyday lives that it is often taken for granted. The nations that have enjoyed the greatest economic and social progress have been those with a strong retail sector.

Why has retailing become such a popular method of conducting business? The answer lies in the benefits that a vibrant retailing sector offers—an easy access to a variety of products, freedom of choice, and high levels of customer service.

Types of Retailers

There are different types of retailers that specialize in various sales techniques and cater to different consumer types. They each provide different experiences—sometimes offering direct purchasing from a manufacturer, or providing a wide range of merchandise. Others are based more on convenience.

1. Department Stores

Traditional department stores sell a wide range of merchandise that is arranged by category into different sections in the physical retail space. Some department store categories include shoes, clothing, beauty products, jewelry, housewares, and more.

2. Grocery Stores and Supermarkets

These retailers sell all types of food and beverage products, and sometimes also home products and consumer electronics as well.

3. Warehouse Retailers

Warehouse-type facilities such as Sam's Club stock a large variety of products packaged in large quantities and sold at prices lower than retail. They generally sell in bulk or in quantities not otherwise available in other retail outlets.

4. Specialty/Outlet Retailers

These specialize in a specific category and brand-name products. Victoria's Secret and Nike are examples of specialty retailers, generally selling only merchandise that carries their brand name or is associated with it.

5. Convenience Retailer

For on-the-go consumers, these are usually a retail location that primarily sells gasoline—they sell a limited range of grocery merchandise and auto care products at a premium "convenience" price.

6. Discount Retailer

Discounters sell a wide variety of products that are often privately labeled or generic brands at below-retail prices. Discount retailers like Family Dollar, Dollar General, and Big Lots will often source closeout and discontinued merchandise at lower-than-wholesale prices, which passes savings onto consumers.

7. Internet/Mobile Retailer

Internet shopping websites ship the purchases directly to customers at their homes or workplaces, without the expenses of traditional brick-and-mortar retailers. They usually sell merchandise for a lower-than-retail price, using warehouses for storage and developing relationships with warehouses, vendors, and sometimes manufacturers to provide goods at reduced prices.

Advertising

In order to inform, attract, and convince the valued customers, a marketer undertakes a number of promotional means. Advertising is one of the powerful means to inform about company's total offers. Advertising is a dominant element of market promotion. Many times, the entire promotional efforts are replaced by advertising alone. Major portion of promotion budget is consumed by advertising alone. Advertising is so powerful and popular that it is taken as equal to marketing!! Mass media are used intensively to advertise various products. Marketing without advertising seems to be impossible.

Philip Kotler: "Advertising is any paid form of non-personal presentation and promotion of goods, services, or ideas by an identified sponsor."

Objective of Advertising

1. To Inform Buyers: This objective includes informing customers regarding product's availability, price, features, qualities, services, and performance. Company also highlights its location, achievements, policies, and performance through advertising.

2. To Persuade or Convince Buyers: Company uses advertisement to persuade or convince the buyers about superior advantages offered by its product. Company communicates competitive advantages the product offers to induce customers buy it. Comparative advertising is used to prove the additional benefits of product at a given price.

3. To Remind Buyers: Marketer uses advertising to remind the buyers regarding existence of company, products, maintenance of quality, superior services, and chasing customer-orientation. Mostly, the existing firms aim their advertising for this objective.

4. To Face Competition: Advertising is treated as the most powerful weapon to fight with competitors effectively. It helps the firm to distinguish its total offerings from competitors.

5. To Achieve Sales Targets: Increase sales volume is one of the major advertising objectives. A company can advertise its products in various media to attract customers situated in different parts of the world. Thus, company can achieve its sales objectives by advertisement.

6. To Build and Improve Brand Image:. Advertisement attracts customers toward the brand; they try it and accept it over time. In the same way, bad image related to brand can be changed by systematic presentation of facts and scientific evidences, and removing misunderstanding.

7. To Help or Educate People: Advertising is not always used only for company's benefits. It is meant for helping customers to make the right choice of product. It educates people about availability of new products, its features and qualities, price, services, and other related aspects.

8. To Build Company Image and Reputation: A company opts for advertisement to build prestige and reputation in the market. Most of the companies, though they are satisfied with the volume of sales, go for advertising to acquire fame in the market. Many companies advertise its policies, activities, and achievements to make a permanent place in the mind of people.

9. To Assist Sales Force and Middlemen: Advertising is an aid to middlemen and salesmen. Advertising also popularizes the name of dealers. Likewise, advertising provides necessary information to the buyers. Middlemen and salesmen are not required to do the same. It eases the task of sellers. In the same way, advertising encourages sales force.

10. Other Objectives: i. To promote new products. ii. To build long-term relations. iii. To remove misunderstanding. iv. To expand of market. v. To gain confidence of buyers.

Advertising Budget

The amount set aside exclusively for advertising is known as advertising budget or appropriation. The firm may be spending the amount in order to achieve the sales goals. The question raised in this respect is how much amount can a producer or manufacturer spend on advertising? The financial manager has to tackle this problem. But it is a difficult task to be solved. Generally every year, an estimate will be made to calculate the amount for advertisement. There are different factors to be considered before making out a budget for advertising. Mainly PLC stages have to be looked upon. Here, the emphasis is given to the basis or methods available for determining the advertising budget or appropriation.

1. Affordable Method: Under this approach, a company, to determine the advertising appropriation, is to find out what the company can afford. It can spend for advertising as much as the funds permit. From the name itself it is clear that the affordable amount set apart for advertising, is known as affordable method. It means that the advertising expenses may vary from year to year.

Under this method the weakness may be:

(1) The opportunities of advertising are overlooked, (2) It is difficult to plan long-term marketing development.

2. Percentage of Sales Methods: Here the budget amount is decided for advertising as a percentage of sales, i.e., relationship between advertising expenses and sales revenue. For instance, a company may allot Rs. 5,000 which is 2% of the preceding year's past or forecast or anticipated sales i.e., Rs. 2,50,000.

Merits:

1. The method is simple in calculation. 2. A clear relationship exists between sales and advertising expenses.
3. Advertisement wars can be avoided.

3. Competitive Comparison Method: A company sets its budget solely depending upon the basis of competitor's expenditure. That is under this method, the advertising appropriation is decided on the basis of spending for advertising by the competitors. For this a company has to collect relevant data about competitors. They will do simply what others have done.

4. Objective and Task Method: This is also known as research-objective method. The amount is set aside on the basis of objectives to be achieved and tasks to be involved.

Merits:

1. Advertising objectives are achieved. 2. It is flexible. 3. A clear advertisement programme can be drawn.

5. Return on Investment Method: Here the advertising budget is considered as an investment, thereby expecting a certain return in terms of profit. A clear study is made by emphasizing the relation between advertisement and sales. Safes are measured with advertising and without advertising. That is, the profit obtained by advertising is compared with the cost of advertising.

Advertisement Copy

Advertisement Copy is the soul of an advertisement. An advertisement copy is all the written or spoken matter in an advertisement expressed in words or sentences and figures designed to convey the desired message to the target consumers. In print media, an advertisement copy is made-up of head-line, sub-headlines, body of the copy, illustration logo-type, slogan and the brand name. Strictly speaking, written content of an ad copy is the product of the collective efforts of copy-writers, artists and the layout-men.

Copy writer and artist must collaborate to provide an advertisement though copy writing precedes or succeeds the art- work and the layout.

Essentials of effective copy:

Whether a copy is effective or ineffective is a matter of personal judgment. It is really very difficult to judge as its evaluation is purely subjective and perceptive. However, a good or effective copy is one that succeeds in reaching the target consumers to create favourable attitudes towards the product and the producers, impelling an action on the part of consumer to buy.

A good advertisement copy has the following attributes:

1. It is brief: Most readers are interested in shorter advertisements. Being brief is not dropping words or chopping sentences. It is the meticulous work of eliminating and substituting the words without jeopardizing the meaning. It cuts to the core; it is to the point to cover all.

2. It is clear: A clear copy is one which is easily and quickly read and grasped by the readers. It is unambiguous and self- explaining. It is one that clicks fast. Clarity gives clue to interpretation. The manner in which a copy is interpreted is dependent on factors like local traditions habits, customs and nationality. Clarity is adjusted to these points.

3. It is apt: A copy is apt that matches to the needs and counts of the prospects. Writing an apt copy is the art of putting in the words that create strong desire to possess the product where the product features or the qualities satisfy the consumers' desire to possess. Copy writer is to place himself in the position of a customer to make it apt. He is to use the most suitable USP.

4. It is personal: A personal copy is specific where generality is dismissed to do away with ambiguity. A personalised copy is centred on the prospect. It presents something of interest to the prospect. It is an individualised appeal copy. It is written from 'prospect' to 'product' rather than 'product' to 'prospect'. The copy has 'you attitude'.

5. It is honest: Credibility or believability of an advertisement message is decided by the extent of honesty. An ad to be good must be truthful. Misleading and mis-presented facts made in the copy only damage the reputation of selling house.

One of the surest ways of winning the hearts of the consumers is to be honest. 'Honesty', here, implies 'commercial honesty' and not the 'judicial'.

6. It is conforming: Every ad copy is to conform to standards, rules and regulations acceptable to the advertising media and the laws of the land. Anywhere in the world, no copy is acceptable to any media that offends the morality, declines decency and ravages religious susceptibilities of people.

That is why; we have not come across ads on cigarettes and alcohols on radio and television. No advertiser can violate the provisions of the Act of Names and Emblems, Drugs Acts of 1940, 50, and 54.

AIDA Model in Marketing

The AIDA Model, which stands for **A**ttention, **I**nterest, **D**esire, and **A**ction model, is an advertising effect model that identifies the stages that an individual goes through during the process of purchasing a product or service. The AIDA model is commonly used in digital marketing, sales strategies, and public relations campaigns.

The AIDA Model Hierarchy

The steps involved in an AIDA model are:

- **Attention**: The first step in marketing or advertising is to consider how to attract the attention of consumers.
- **Interest:** Once the consumer is aware that the product or service exists, the business must work on increasing the potential customer's interest level.

For example, Disney boosts interest in upcoming tours by announcing stars who will be performing on the tours.

- **Desire:** After the consumer is interested in the product or service, then the goal is to make consumers desire it, moving their mindset from "I like it" to "I want it."

For example, if the Disney stars for the upcoming tour communicate to the target audience about how great the show is going to be, the audience is more likely to want to go.

- **Action:** The ultimate goal is to drive the receiver of the marketing campaign to initiate action and purchase the product or service.

Therefore, the AIDA model says that **Awareness** leads to **Interest**, which leads to **Desire**, and finally, **Action**.

Let us consider ways to use the AIDA model by looking into each part of the hierarchy.

New Developments in the AIDA Model

Many criticize the AIDA model for being too simplistic. For example, the AIDA model does not take into consideration different possible points of sale. Marketing will be very different for a customer visiting an online store than it is for a customer looking to purchase a new car at a dealership. Therefore, there are many variations of the AIDA model such as the:

- **AIDCAS** (Action, Interest, Desire, Confidence, Action, Satisfaction) model
- **REAN** (Reach, Engage, Activate, and Nurture) model
- **NAITDASE** (Need, Attention, and Interest; Trust, Design, and Action; Satisfaction and Evaluation) model

Public Relations

The Profession or practice of creating and maintaining goodwill of an organization's various publics (customers, employees, investors, suppliers, ets.), usually through publicity and other nonpaid forms of communication. These efforts may also include support of arts, charitable causes, education, sporting events, and other civic engagements. Public relations means the way a company relates with its publics, both within and without, to generate goodwill for it in pursuit of its business goals and other ideals.

Edward Barney defines the public relation to his book, 'The Engineering of Consent' as "Public relation, the attempt, by information, persuasion, and adjustment, to engineer public support for an activity, cause, movement or institution".

Objectives of Public Relations:

1. Building Product Awareness: When introducing a new product or re-launching an existing product, marketers can use a public relation element that generates consumer attention and awareness through media placements and special events.

2. Creating Interest: Whether a public relation placement is a short product article or is included with other products in "round up" article, stories in the media can help entice a targeted audience to try the product.

For example – around the holiday season, a special holiday food may be promoted with public relation through promotional releases sent to the food media or through special events that sample the product.

3. Providing Information: Public relation can be used to provide customers with more in depth information about products and services. Through articles, collateral materials, newsletters and websites, public relation delivers information to customers that can help them gain understanding of the product.

4. Stimulating Demand: A positive article in a newspaper, on TV news show or mentioned on the Internet, often results in a discernable increase in product sales.

5. Reinforcing the Brand: In many companies the public relations function is also involved with brand reinforcement by maintaining positive relationships with key audiences, and thereby aiding in building a strong image.

Today it is ever more important for companies and brands to build a good image. A strong image helps the company build its business and it can help the company in times of crises as well.

Types of Public Relations:

Business communication leads to building up of strong relationships and healthy business practice.

Thus, the PR department and the PR experts are required to consider the following types of public relations for organizational growth:

1. **Media Relations**: The PR department collects information from the press or media sources while maintaining cordial relations with them. This data is used by the company to plan its marketing strategies.
2. **Investor Relations**: Investors are essential to the organization. Hence, the PR department keeps them informed, manages their events, releases financial reports and manages queries and complaints.
3. **Government Relations**: Adherence to various government regulations like corporate social responsibility, employee welfare, consumer protection, fair trade practices, etc. builds an organization's relationship with the government.
4. **Community Relations:** Society plays a crucial role in deciding the company's as well as the product's future. An organization needs to create a positive image of the brand by supporting social practices like say no to child labour, child education, equality, environmental protection, etc.
5. **Internal Relations**: Communicating with the employees and counselling them on their responsibilities, duties and actions helps in their better performance and long-term existence in the organization.
6. **Customer Relations**: Interaction with the valued customers and potential consumers is necessary to know their feedback, suggestions, interest and priorities. This data is required to prepare further business-related strategies.
7. **Marketing Communications**: The company uses different marketing strategies like brand awareness program, product launch, marketing campaigns, product positioning, etc.

Functions of Public Relations:

The main responsibility of public relation is to communicate the policies, practices, problems and performances to the public and feedback public opinion and suggestions to the top management so that a mutual understanding can be established between the organization and its public i.e. shareholders, dealers, customers, general public, government etc.

1. Communicating to the Shareholders:

Shareholders are a part of the business public whose goodwill and support are of vital importance for the existence and the success of any concern. In changing economy of India, new classes of investors are emerging out who have been attracted to invest their funds in industries.

2. Communicating with the Dealers:

As customers cannot be contacted, except through advertising campaigns, a more effective way of dealing with them is to approach them through dealers and hence it is necessary to communicate well to the dealers.

3. Communicating with the Customers:

Apart from quality and price of the product customer relations has become an important factor in influencing the customer's behavior and attitudes and thus developing a better image of the product in their minds.

4. Communicating with the General Public:

It is necessary for the business to realize its social responsibility towards the public at large. the business must inform the public about its role as an employer as remuneration, facilities, perquisites allowed, welfare activities etc. provided or allowed to its employees and its efforts towards evolving a better and more harmonies relations.

5. Communicating with the Government and M.P's:

In the present Indian context, government is one of the segments of any business. In India, the government plays a prime role in driving the economy and the business is independent for its existence, functioning and growth on government policies and action.

Communicating with the M.P's is not less important for the parliamentary proceedings receive a wide publicity. It is in the interest of the company to keep in touch with the M.P's and communicate about its problems and performance.

Sales Promotion-

Sales promotion includes the short-term incentives offered to middlemen, salesmen, and/or consumers. Sales promotion implies a wide variety of promotional activities. In the current marketing practices, the role of sales promotion has increased tremendously. Companies spare and spend millions of rupees to arrest consumer attention toward products and to arouse purchase interest. Sales promotional efforts also improve firm's competitive position.

The popular methods used for sales promotion are demonstration, trade show, exhibition, exchange offer, seasonal discount, free service, gifts, credit facilities, contests, and so on.

Philip Kotler: "Those marketing activities other than personal selling, advertising, and publicity that stimulate consumer purchasing and dealer effectiveness, such as display, shows, demonstrations, expositions, and various other non-current selling efforts, not in ordinary routine."

Importance (Need or Objectives):

We can enlist objectives as under:

1. To introduce new products. 2. To keep consumers satisfied. 3. To attract new customers. 4. To clear stocks of products. To sell out old stocks rapidly. 5. To induce consumers to try and buy certain products

6. To induce present customers to buy more quantity and/or times. 7. To strengthen competitive position.

8. To offset price competition. 9. To speed up sales of slow moving products. 10. To induce consumers to switch from competitors' brands. 11. To maintain or increase sales during off-seasons. 12. To inspires middlemen to keep more inventories/stocks. 13. To encourage middlemen to put more efforts in attracting customers. 14. To support personal selling. To motivate salesmen to work more. 15. To increase effectiveness of advertising. 16. To reduce the degree of dissatisfaction of customers.

Kinds of Sales Promotion

1. Google My Business offer posts

Did you know that you can run promotions on your Google business listing? Your Google My Business account dashboard allows you to create four different types of social posts: Offers, Updates, Events, and Products. Using the "Add Offer" post type allows you to announce a deal or offering right on your Business Profile. This allows your promotion to reach customers who find your business on Google Maps and Search—which is often when they have the highest intent..

2. Free samples

Although many businesses temporarily suspended this promotion strategy for customers during COVID-19, it can still be referenced as one of the best sales promotion examples out there. By offering free samples to all in the store regardless of whether they purchase something. It can also be used by spas and salons—with tester lotions, perfumes, or aromatherapy products. The bottom line is that people like things they can try before buying.

3. Buy one, get one free promotions

Buy one, get one free deals are among the most popular types of sales promotions. Offering two of an in-demand product at a reduced price and for a short time creates a sense of urgency that can boost sales.

4. Cash back promotions

Many consumers would agree that it doesn't feel as bad to spend money when you get some in return. It's almost like paying less from the start and then having extra money to get other desirable products.

Plus, giving back to customers in this way usually results in more loyalty and business from them. This kind of offer is a win-win for both you and your customers.

5. Lifestyle discounts

Lifestyle discounts are those that apply to a particular profession, age group, or demographic.—usually one associated with an ID. They commonly available for: Teachers, Students ,Veterans, Seniors

While you can offer these promotions year-round, there are also months and days of the year dedicated to specific groups of people, so be sure to take advantage of that. For example, back to school discounts are great September promotions, while August is home to National Senior Citizen's Day. Keep an eye on your calendar for these monthly marketing themes so that you can plan your promos well in advance and maximize their results!

6. Flash sales and discounts

A flash sale creates a sense of urgency among your customer base to buy *now*. So especially if you have a business that does a lot of online sales, flash sales may be one of the more effective sales promotion strategies for you.

7. Vouchers and coupons

You can offer vouchers and coupons via email, your website, or print materials such as product packaging, catalogs, and so on. They are a great way to thank your current customers and to encourage them to continue doing business with you.

8. Free shipping and returns

In addition to coupons, which we discussed earlier, what's another cure for a ton of abandoned shopping carts? Four words: Free shipping. Free returns. Free shipping eliminates one of the last obstacles that could prevent people from completing their orders.

9. Loyalty program promotions

Rewards and loyalty programs—even those that don't necessarily pay off immediately—can be a powerful motivator for customers. Here are a few approaches you might consider. You could double or triple loyalty points for a limited time, which can be a great incentive to buy. You might even offer a "lump sum" of points for signing up for your loyalty program, which could move customers to buy more than they would have initially.

10. Joint promotions

Whether your company owns several brands or you partner with companies in similar or related industries, you can make use of joint sales promotions. All you have to do is bundle products or services from each brand into a package and promote it via the other brand.

11. Social media contests and giveaways

A contest or giveaway on Facebook, Instagram, or your target audience's social platform of choice is a great way to get new customers interested in your business and gain more quality followers.

12. Give branded gifts or bundles

Additional value for less can be very enticing, so you may bundle together your most popular or closely-related services for a reduced price. This is an excellent way to get people talking about your business.

Promotion Mix

Promotional Mix Elements

Every market is different, with different factors affecting your promotional mix. The biggest challenge for marketers? Finding the best possible mix of promotional elements to maximize the results of their marketing efforts.

1. Advertising. This is a non-personal promotion of products and services. Marketers use advertising as a vital tool for increasing brand awareness. Advertisers show promotions to masses of people using email, webpages, banner ads, television, radio, etc.

2. Direct selling. This is a one-to-one communication between a sales representative and a potential customer. Direct selling influences people to decide to buy certain products or services. It is one of the most effective ways of promoting your brand because the sales rep can tailor the promotion precisely to those who are most likely to make a purchase. On the other hand, this is the most expensive form of sales because companies need to pay for one person's time.

3. Sales promotion. This is a set of short-term activities that are designed to encourage immediate purchase. Sales promotions are a campaign that uses time-sensitive offers — sales, discounts, coupons, etc., to engage existing consumers and bring in a larger audience. Many companies make this a core component of their marketing efforts, though sometimes it's the most annoying type of communication for people.

4. Public relations. This type of promotional method determines the way people treat the brand. Companies using PR try to build a firm and attractive brand image by planting interesting news stories about their activities in the media. If a company adequately solves these issues, people will reward them with positive word-of-mouth consideration.

5. Personal Selling. Companies hire salespeople to reach out directly to potential customers in order to share information about products or services, answer any questions, and (hopefully) close the sale.

Personal sales tend to be extremely effective because salespeople can easily adapt their messaging to meet their prospects' needs in real time.

Sales Promotion Methods:

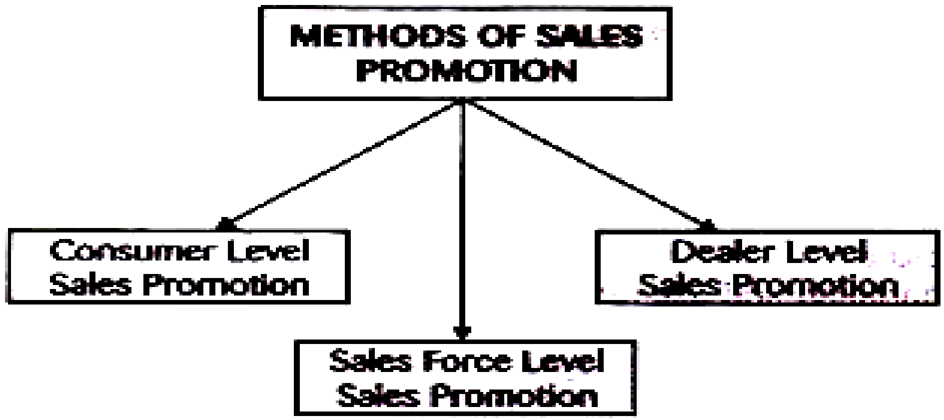


Figure 1: Sales Promotion Methods

1. Consumer Level Sales Promotion: To stay and grow in competitive market situation, producers offer several incentives to attract new consumers and maintain existing consumers. Selection of sales promotion tools for consumers depends on objectives of company, types of products, company's financial position, consumer behaviour, market trend, competition, and other relevant variables.

Most popular tools of consumer level sales promotion include:

1. Free samples 2. Gift articles like balls, stickers, pens, cards, diaries, calendars, manuals, and other literature 3. Coupons 4. Credit facilities 5. Guarantee and warrantee 6. Exchange offer 7. Price discount and rebate or temporary price-cut 8. Seasonal discount 9. Loan facility 10. Installment payment scheme 11. Courtesy visit by sales representatives 12. Free accessories and parts 13. Extra quantity/excess product 14. Free demonstration 15. Display – arranging products in articulate and attractive manner 16. Free trial – permitting consumers to use product for short time 17. Premium – extra gift with product 18. Money refund offer 19 . Contests and prizes 20. Free home delivery and installation, instructions and other services.

2. Dealer/Channel Level Sales Promotion: Some companies offer short-term incentives to middlemen to make them active and interested. These incentives may be financial or non-financial. Such incentives encourage them to make more efforts to sell particular brands.

Most common dealer level sales promotion tools are as below:

1. Bonus 2. Training to staff 3. Trade discount and cash discount 4. Credit facility 5. Gifts on excess sales 6. Parties and meetings 7. Gifts on special social occasions and festivals 8. Financial assistance during difficulties 9. Storage facilities 10. Free transportation and insurance 11. Dealers' symposium 12. Free tour or visits to visiting places 13. Awards, prizes, momentous, and certificates 14. Sales contests 15. Advertising materials 16. Gifts articles and samples for consumers 17. Premium on certain brand

3. Salesman Level Sales Promotion: In this type of sales promotion, salesmen are offered certain incentives to encourage them to make more sincere efforts. Such incentives are not offered in regular course. The incentives are offered for a short-period of time. These incentives may be financial or non-financial.

They include:

1. Extra commission – high rate or more amounts 2. Free training 3. Sales materials and samples for customers 4. Gifts articles 5. Offering products at free-of-costs or at concessional rate 6. Bonus – extra payment for extra and/or excellent performance 7. Profit sharing (exceptionally, not regularly) 8. Special allowances and commissions 9. Free holiday-home 10. Customer entertainment allowances 11. Participation in formulating sales policies and strategies 12. Appreciation, recognition, and praise 13. Sales contests among salesmen 14. Awards, prizes and certificates 15. Sales force conventions (conferences, meetings, seminars, discussion, etc.) 16. Leave encashment etc.

Push Promotion Strategy

A push promotional strategy, is a marketing strategy that sees companies take its products to its consumers. The goal of this strategy is to get the product directly in front of the customers, in the form of trade shows and point of sale displays. These are the most common push promotion strategies used today:

- Direct selling to customers in showrooms
- Point of Sale (POS) displays
- Trade show promotions
- Package or display design

Advantages of Push Marketing Strategy

There are many advantages to using a push marketing strategy including:

- The ability to establish a sales channel
- Create product exposure, demand, and consumer awareness about a product
- Able to forecast and predict demand

Pull Promotional Strategy

A pull promotional strategy, also called a pull marketing strategy, is the opposite of a push strategy. Instead of directly attempting to get products in front of customers, a pull strategy aims to get the customers to come to the product (hence the term “pull”).

A pull strategy is all about getting the customer to come to you. There are six widely used pull marketing strategies employed today:

- Advertising and mass media production
- Word-of-mouth referrals
- Customer relationship management

- Sales promotions and discounts
- Social media coverage
- Email marketing

Pull marketing strategies have gained momentum in the mobile-based world. With geofencing, geotargeting, and similar technologies, pull strategies are becoming increasingly easier and more relevant.

Advantages of Pull Marketing Strategy

There are many **advantages** of using a pull marketing strategy, including:

- Establishing direct contact with your customers
- Building consumer loyalty
- Stronger bargaining power with retailers or distributers
- No pressure to conduct outbound marketing
- Ability to test a product's acceptance in the market and gain feedback on the product

Meaning of Personal Selling:

Personal selling is an act of convincing the prospects to buy a given product or service. It is the most effective and costly promotional method. It is effective because there is face to face conversation between the buyer and seller and seller can change its promotional techniques according to the needs of situation. It is basically the science and art of understanding human desires and showing the ways through which these desires could be fulfilled.

According to American Marketing Association, "Personal selling is the oral presentation in a conversation with one or more prospective purchasers for the purpose of making sale; it is the ability to persuade the people to buy goods and services at a profit to the seller and benefit to the buyer".

Features of Personal Selling:

The main features of personal selling are:

i. It is a face to face communication between buyer and seller.

ii. It is a two way communication.

iii. It is an oral communication.

iv. It persuades the customers instead of pressurizing him.

v. It provides immediate feedback.

vi. It develops a deep personal relationship apart from the selling relationship with the buyers and customers.

Functions of Personal Selling:

1. Personal selling is an important method of demonstrating the product to the prospective customers and giving them full information about the product. It is easier to persuade a person to buy a product through face-to-face explanation.

2. In most of the situations, there is a need of explaining the quality, uses and price of the product to the buyer to help him purchase the want satisfying product. Thus, salesmanship is also very important from the point of the buyers.

3. A good salesperson educates and guides the customers about the features and utility of the product.

4. If a product cannot fully satisfy the needs of the customers, the information is transmitted to the manufacturer who will take appropriate steps.

5. Salespersons can also handle the objections of the customers. Creative salesman are always ready to help the customers to arrive at correct decisions while buying certain products.

6. There is direct fact-to-face interaction between the seller and the buyer. The salesperson can receive feedback directly from the customer on a continuous basis. This would help him in modifying his presentation and taking other steps to sell satisfaction to the buyer.

Personal Selling Process:

The process of personal selling includes prospecting and evaluating, preparing, approach and presentation, overcoming objections, closing the sale and a follow up service.

1. Prospecting and evaluating: The effort to develop a list of potential customers is known as prospecting. Sales people can find potential buyers, names in company records, customer information requests from advertisements, telephone and trade association directories, current and previous customers, friends, and newspapers. Prospective buyers predetermined, by evaluating (1) their potential interest in the sales person's products and (2) their purchase power.

2. Preparing: Before approaching the potential buyer, the sales person should know as much as possible about the person or company.

3. Approach and presentation: During the approach, which constitutes the actual beginning of the communication process, the sales person explains to the potential customer the reason for the sales, possibly mentions how the potential buyer's name was obtained, and gives a preliminary explanation of what he or she is offering.

4. Overcoming objections: The primary value of personal selling lies in the sales person's ability to receive and deal with potential customers' objections to purchasing the product. In a sales presentation many objections can be dealt with immediately. These may take more time, but still may be overcome.

5. Closing the sale: Many sales people lose sales simply because they never asked the buyer to buy. At several times in a presentation the sales person may to gauge how near the buyer is to closing.

6. Follow up: To maintain customer satisfaction, the sales person should follow up after a sale to be certain that the product is delivered properly and the customer is satisfied with the result.

Direct Marketing

Direct marketing is also known as direct selling, mail-order Selling or Catalogue Selling. Through direct marketing the marketer reaches his customer directly at any location. It uses one or more advertising media to influence customers at any location. The prospective customer may contact the marketer through telephone, fax, e-mail or by post.

The success of direct marketing is the preparation of data base for existing and prospective customers by the marketer. Data base marketing is an interactive approach to marketing that uses all communication tools and media vehicles to reach to the target market. Data base marketing is also the basis of relationship marketing efforts of the company. The information stored in the data base is used for direct marketing and relationship marketing efforts.

Features of Direct Marketing

The features of direct marketing are: no middlemen, customer oriented, various forms, direct distribution channel and direct contact between producer and customers etc.

1. No middlemen

In direct marketing system, selling and buying take place keeping direct contact between marketers and customers through different media. So, no middlemen are found in this marketing. Since no middlemen work in it and no commission is given to them, the cost is saved and the customers can get goods at the cheapest price.

2. Customer oriented

In direct marketing, relationship between sellers and customers becomes deep as well as strong. The sellers give emphasis on the wants, desires of each customer. It is one-to-one marketing. As the producers remain in direct contact with customers, they make marketing mix keeping the customers at the center.

3. Forms

The channels which help to conduct direct marketing are taken as its forms. So, there are many forms of direct marketing. They are direct mail, and catalogue marketing, telemarketing, television marketing, Internet marketing, etc. Any of these forms can be direct marketing.

4. Direct channel

Marketing channel becomes direct in direct marketing. In this marketing channel, no middlemen can be found. The producers themselves deliver products to the customers directly. Customers also keep direct contact with producers or distributors through different media. Selling and buying take place directly between them. As the channel becomes short in this marketing, distribution cost also becomes least.

5. Direct contact

There is direct channel in direct marketing. Since no middlemen remain in this form, direct contact is established between sellers and customers. Producers can keep contact with customers one by one. This makes easy for the producers to know about the purchasing power, wants and interest of the customers. Direct ransacking taking place. Distribution cost is also reduced due to direct channel of distribution.

Functions of Direct marketing

1. Generate Direct Order

2. Promotes Information Requests (Leads)

3. Generates Stores and Business Traffic

4. Build and Maintains a Consumer Database

Benefits of Direct Marketing:

The advantages of direct marketing are:

1. Focused approach – Marketers can identify specific segments by looking at demographic data like age, sex and education. Then design the appropriate message and channel and suit the segment.

2. Reduce wastage – Through selecting the right target group the message is directed to the hot prospects and prevent wastage of efforts. For example, a hoarding attracts many viewers of whom several may have no interest in buying the product.

3. Frequency – Because of its low cost as compared to other promotional tools frequency can be increased to gain impact and increase effectiveness.

4. Immediate and flexible – The response from direct marketing is immediate. It also provides flexibility in creativity. Direct marketing are used to send CDs on products to be marketed.

5. Lead time – Relatively a direct marketing campaign can be put together in a short time. Buying space/time in media on a casual basis can bring economy in spending.

6. Personalization – Insurance buyers are congratulated on their decision to buy insurance through personalized mail.

7. Measuring effectiveness – Effectiveness of promotion can be easily measured in direct marketing. Feedback is immediate and likely to be accurate.

Types/Forms of direct marketing

1. Internet marketing:

Internet marketing (also known as digital marketing) leverages the power of the web to drive sales.

Internet marketing is a method of promoting your organization's services and products through the internet to generate traffic and new business. This type of marketing is an inexpensive and wide-reaching way to communicate with your target market.

Search engine optimization (SEO) is one of the most popular forms of internet marketing. SEO helps a business optimize its site to boost traffic through organic search engine results. Other common internet marketing initiatives include affiliate marketing, influencer marketing, and newsletter campaigns.

2. Content marketing

Content marketing is a form of internet marketing that has exploded in the past decade. Content marketing provides value to an organization's target audience through content that informs, educations, motivates, entertains, and inspires.

Content marketing costs 62 percent less than traditional, outbound marketing and nets three times as many leads. Moreover, 92 percent of marketers report that their company views content as a business asset.

3. Social media marketing

Social media is another powerful direct marketing tool for businesses large and small.

Organic social media marketing focuses on building a community and developing relationships with users to promote a company's brand, and is one of the most-used direct marketing examples.

Many companies use social media to connect with customers, boost brand awareness, and even conduct business transactions. Facebook has recently developed business-friendly features, such as Business Manager and Marketplace.

Companies often hire a dedicated social media manager or a third-party firm to manage their Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and other social media accounts. These accounts are regularly updated with news, promotions, and other content relevant to prospective clients.

4. Display ads

Display ads often click through to a company's website and the company is usually charged per click, so businesses can easily measure the return on investment.

However, these types of ads can be tricky to implement. Display ads, on average, have a maximum of three seconds to convince a user. As web users become savvier, advertising must keep pace with an increasingly sophisticated audience. Display ads are useful for homing in on your target demographic.

5. Email marketing

Email is the currency of the internet, and because most web users have an email address, email marketing is an effective way to generate leads.

Through email marketing software, brands promote their products and services to prospects and customers through well-crafted email messages. Email marketing has come back into vogue as companies explore increasingly sophisticated ways to reach customers and nurture leads.

6. SMS marketing

SMS (short message service) marketing uses permission-based text messages to promote a company's services or products. The texts send updates, promos, and information to customers to raise brand awareness and increase engagement and sales. SMS marketing is a quick and cost-effective way for businesses to reach their target market and is especially effective for demographics that consist of heavy smartphone users.

7. Experiential marketing

Experiential marketing pulls consumers into an experience to inspire, educate, or entertain, while raising brand awareness and deepening brand loyalty and trust.

Also known as "engagement marketing," companies often organize an activity that prospects take part in. Common examples of experiential marketing include webinars, podcasts, trade shows, fairs, seminars, and conventions.

Experiential marketing can be time-consuming and requires significant effort, but this type of engagement can help brands connect with new customers and deepen a brand's relationship with its customers.

8. Catalog marketing

One of the oldest methods of direct marketing, catalog marketing, involves sending booklets of products to prospective or returning customers – usually through the mail or email.

Catalogs showcase an organization's products, potentially leading to revenue generation. Typically, catalogs are sent to consumers who have expressed an interest in a company through a past purchase or website visit.