

# The Promotional Mix

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As you read before, most promotional strategies use various elements or tools, which may include advertising, public relations, sales promotion and personal sales to reach a target market. This combination is called promotional mix.

The right promotional mix is one that management believes will meet the needs of the target market and achieve the overall goals of the organization.

The more funds allocated to each promotional element and the more administrative emphasis goes to each technique, the more it will be thought that that element is important to be in the overall mix.

## Advertising

Almost every company that sells a product or service uses any advertising, either in the form of a multi-million dollar campaign or a single ad classified in a newspaper. Advertising is any form of communication paid on an impersonal (in a sense) form in which a sponsor or company is identified. One of the main benefits of advertising is its ability to communicate at once with a large number of people. Traditional media such as television, radio, newspaper, magazines, books, direct mail, spectacular and transit cards (advertisements on buses and taxis, as well as at bus stops) are most commonly used to transmit advertisements to consumers. With the increasing fragmentation of traditional media options, companies are using other methods to send their ads to consumers, such as websites, email and interactive video technology in kiosks located in department stores and supermarkets. However, as the Internet becomes a more essential component of the promotion and mixing of

# The Promotional Mix

marketing from large numbers of companies, consumers and legislators are increasingly concerned about potential breaches of consumers' privacy.

## Public Relations

Concerned about how their target markets perceive them, organizations often spend large sums to develop a positive public image. Public relations is the marketing function that evaluates public attitudes, identifies areas within the organization where the public can be interested and undertakes a program of action to achieve public understanding and acceptance. Public relations help an organization communicate with its customers, suppliers, shareholders, government officials, employees and the community in which it operates. Companies use public relations not only to maintain a positive image, but also to educate the public about the company's goals and to introduce new products and help support the sales effort.

## Personal Selling

Personal sales are a shopping situation that includes paid personal communication between two people in an attempt to influence each other. Traditional methods of personal sales include a planned presentation with one or more likely buyers in order to achieve a sale. The most current notions about personal sales emphasize the relationship that develops between the sales staff member and the buyer.

Recently, both business-to-business and business-to-consumer sales focus on developing long-term relationships, rather than making a one-time sale.

Personal sales, like other elements of the promotional mix, are increasingly dependent on the Internet. Most companies use their websites to attract potential buyers looking information about products and services. While some

# The Promotional Mix

companies sell products online directly to consumers, many do not. Instead, they rely on the website to direct customers to their physical locations, where personal sales can close the sale. Whether it takes place face-to-face, over the phone or online, the personal sale attempts to persuade the buyer to accept a point of view or take action.

## Sales Promotion

Sales promotion consists of all marketing activities, other than personal sales, advertising and public relations that stimulate consumer purchases and the effectiveness of dealers. Sales promotion is a short-term tool used to stimulate immediate increases in demand. In fact, companies frequently use sales promotion to improve the effectiveness of other ingredients in the promotional mix, especially advertising and personal sales. Research shows that sales promotion complements advertising by offering faster sales responses. Sales promotion can target end consumers, business customers or employees of a company. Sales promotions include free samples, contests, prizes, trade events, gifts and coupons. A major promotional campaign could use several of these promotional sales tools.

## The Communication Process and Promotional Mix

The four elements of the promotional mix differ in their ability to affect the target audience. For example, elements of the promotional mix can be transmitted directly or indirectly to consumers. The message can flow in one or two ways.

Feedback can be fast or slow, sparse or abundant. Similarly, the communicator can have varying degrees of control over the delivery of a message, content and flexibility.

# The Promotional Mix

For example, advertising, public relations and sales promotion are impersonal means, with a single sense of mass communication. Because they offer little opportunity for direct feedback, it is more difficult to adapt these promotional elements to changing consumer preferences, individual differences, and personal goals.

On the other hand, personal sales is a two-way communication. The sales staff member receives immediate feedback from the consumer and can adjust the message in the response. However, personal sales are too slow to disperse the company's message to large audiences. Because a sales staff member can only communicate with one person or a small group of people at a time, it's a bad choice if the company wants to send a message to multiple potential buyers.

## REFERENCE:

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