The proceedings of the International Conference

MARKETING – FROM INFORMATION TO DECISION

4th Edition

28-29 October, 2011

Cluj-Napoca
ROMANIA

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Definitions and classifications of shopping centers

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ABSTRACT Despite the great development of the shopping center industry in Romania within the past years, there is still a lack of proper knowledge and understanding of this concept. The objectives of this article are to introduce the main approaches in the theory of shopping centers, namely the American, European and Asian-Australian ones, and then, consequently, to adopt a definition of shopping centers and to create a classification appropriate for the Romanian market. The article is important because it represents a collection of theoretical approaches of shopping centers typology from the three representative "continental schools" in this area. Its uniqueness stands in the fact that there has not been yet such an attempt to define and classify Romanian shopping centers or (to author's knowledge) to present main classification systems of shopping centers available in literature. Also, it may be asserted that it is highly important for both theoretical and practical purposes, in the sense that it succeeds in reflecting the complex landscape of shopping center formats.

1. Introduction

Although shopping center industry has greatly developed starting with the second half of the 20th century, the concept is not new. The first shopping center formats are antique markets, enclosed bazaars and seaport commercial districts (ICSC, 2000). It is considered that the oldest shopping center is The Great Bazaar of Isfahan, Iran built in the 10th century (Michell, 1978: 89). The modern shopping center had its birth in the 1920s in the US. Over the years, shopping center formats have been described in various ways, such as centers, commons, crossings, hybrids, lifestyle centers, malls, markets, marts, mega-malls, mixed-use, outlets, parkways, places, plazas, promenades, shops, strips, squares, super centers, town centers, urban retail, vertical, and villages (DeLisle, 2005: 96, DeLisle, 2007: i). So far, there is no agreement regarding the number of existing shopping center formats, or the exact description of each category's characteristics. The lack of consensus makes quantification of the situation on this market or comparison among countries difficult or to a certain extent impossible. For this reason, it is advisable for all actors involved in shopping center industry, whether be scientists or practitioners, to be aware of main classifications and definitions available in literature and of the differences between various approaches.

In the near future it would be useful to create a global system of definitions and classifications, accepted both by scientists and practitioners. In this respect, International Council of Shopping Centers has developed a series of classifications of shopping center formats. The changes in these definitions have tried to follow the transformations suffered by shopping center industry. At the moment there are still certain types of centers that cannot be included in any of the existing formats, as the innovations in this field are ongoing. Thus, the definition and classification process is not nearly over and new formats will have to be created as the limits between categories vanish and other types of centers will appear.

Influence of adoption factors and risks on ecommerce and online marketing

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ABSTRACT The dynamics of marketing—technology interaction sets the foundation for outstanding progress and business opportunities. Natural evolution, disruptive revolution, customization, and strategic value are considered highly relevant for online experiences. The paper introduces an influence model which connects ecommerce adoption factors and associated risks with ecommerce and online marketing assessment, and furthermore the ecommerce—online marketing relationship.

1. Introduction

The dynamics of marketing—technology interaction show important stepping stones for the future development of online businesses. The Internet is not the first technological shock that occurred in the marketing discipline. Thus, understanding the dynamics of interaction between marketing and technology in general can guide expectations about how to restructure the discipline in the face of major changes.

There are two different approaches: 1. online marketing has a revolutionary character and it is structurally different from conventional marketing practices and 2. online marketing is undergoing a natural remodeling of its established models and principles applied in different contexts.

Expected changes related to defining market segments and industries, product life cycles and competition will add to the importance of using technology. Strategic impact of technological advances will be felt also in changing the nature and dynamics of communication. As early pointed by Daz and Montgomery (1999), knowledge-based economy represents one of the major forces to determine the new direction of marketing.

Advancements in communication and information technology create a whole new world whose citizens (Internet users) will exceed the largest nation in a very short time period (The Economist, 1995). This nation is not just a compilation of people who use a common technology. Thus, understanding their culture is as important as the technological tools they use to connect (Cooper *et al*., 1996). With increasing globalization of the market, making Marshall McLuhan's famous vision about a "global village" is not far (Rao *et al*., 1998). Furthermore, there is a lot of enthusiasm created by the rapid changes induced by technology.

Should We Segment the Mobile Phone Market in Case of the Romanian Teenagers?

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ABSTRACT The aim of this paper is to create segments of the teenagers in the Romanian mobile phone market. Based on the literature we raised and answered this question: Is at useful to segment the mobile phone market in case of Romanian teenagers using the variables from the Technology Acceptance Model? In order to investigate the variables from the TAM model as possible segmentation variables, we used the SPSS statistical program performing the factor analysis to reduce the number of variables, cluster analysis for the segmentation, discriminant analysis, Chi-square test and ANOVA-test for the validation of the results. We found four factors accordingly to the simplified TAM model, and these compressed variables have defined four segments. Each segment can be characterized by a set of significant, mostly behavioral variables. An extensive set of findings that can be useful both for researchers and practitioners is provided afterwards and supplemented with implications and concluding remarks for both the academia and the industry.

1. Introduction

Prior to 1973, cellular mobile phone technology was limited to phones installed in cars and other vehicles. On April 3, 1973, Martin Cooper, a Motorola researcher and executive, made the first analogue mobile phone. After that, the mobile phone technology has developed very quickly (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_mobile_phones). No technology has ever experienced such a rapid adoption rate as the mobile phone (Katz, 2007). This phenomenon was true not only for economically developed countries but also for those in process of developing, such as the 90's Romania. In Romania the first mobile service was launched in April 97'. By the end of the year, the two mobile phone service operators had 212.000 clients. One year later (1998) the number grew to 633.000, and in 1999 it outturned 1.300.000 in a country with 22 million inhabitants (Bărbulescu, 2010).

The population really enjoys the new form of communication. We could even say that the evolution of mobile communication consumption is an overwhelming phenomenon (Mazzoni *et al.*, 2007). In Romania, by the end of 2010, there were 24, 6 million active sim-cards. Technically, the mobile phone and the related market is saturated, the number of active sim-

* Supported by Ph.D. scholarship, Project co-financed by the Sectorial Operational Program for Human Resources Development 2007 – 2013; Priority Axis 1. "Education and training in support for growth and development of a knowledge based society"; Key area of intervention 1.5: Doctoral and post-doctoral programs in support of research. Contract nr.: POSDRU/88/1.5/S/60185 – "Innovative doctoral studies in a Knowledge Based Society" Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania

Consumption-based segmentation: An analysis of a telecom company's customers

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ABSTRACT The scope of relationship marketing is to retain customers and increase their loyalty. To this end, companies need to tailor their services to match the demands of their clients, which is made possible via proper segmentation of the customers. This study is aiming to identify the behavioural patterns of prepaid subscribers of a telecommunications company. The analysis will segment customers based on the way they use their credit to make calls, send SMS or navigate on the Internet. Customer segments were drawn via the K-mean cluster analysis. To assess the internal cohesion of the clusters we employed the average sum of squares error indicator, and to determine the differences among clusters we used the ANOVA and the post-hoc Tukey tests. The study led to the identification of seven customer segments with different behaviours, results enabling the telecom company to adjust its marketing efforts to suit its subscribers' needs.

1. Introduction

It is common for the marketing environment in which companies evolve to feature fierce competition and high rates of dynamism. Under these circumstances, companies need to provide quality service and to be able to react to the changes in their customers' needs and behaviours. Thus, instead of submitting all subscribers to the same messages and incentives, companies should pinpoint customers differently, depending on their needs, characteristics and behaviours (Bose&Chen, 2010).

Offering quality service is essential to getting to a powerful market position. Given the high competition and the rapidly changing market, telecom companies cannot afford to simply gather as many subscribers, an endeavour which has grown increasingly difficult. They need to focus on preserving their current customers and develop the revenues generated by them instead of just blindly pursuing the increase of their market share. Most of the times, retention and increasing clients' profitability rates are equally important and easier to achieve then attracting new clients from the competition (Tsiptsis&Chorianopoulos, 2009: 291). To develop a proper relationship with the subscribers, telecom operators need to implement and apply the principles of customer relationship management.

Implementing Customer focused Service Concept in Auto Workshops in Israel

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ABSTRACT In the recent years, the automobile market in Israel had undergone substantial changes. Changes in government taxes, special regulations by the different ministries and changes in customer awareness have led the different car importers into intense competition. At the same time, the antitrust (commissioner of competition) and the ministry of transportation had led significant changes in the after-sales market, causing an increase in competition that led the *branded auto workshops* to lose market share. As result from increasing competition in the sales and the after sales car markets, the different car importers put their main attention in improving customer satisfaction and loyalty through after-sales service. This approach was led by adopting the "Service Profit Chain" concept, through intensive investment in facilities, processes and employee training. This report will examine the implementation of the customer focus service concept on branded car service network. The report will begin with the description of the relationship between service and sales of cars, it will continue by describing the Israeli car service market, which then will be followed by description of the service profit chain in the car service market. Finally, the report will examine the main findings on one auto workshop, which implemented this concept.

1. Introduction

The Israeli car market differs from most other automotive markets in the world due to its geographical isolation and high import taxes on automobiles. The automotive market in Israel is comprised 14 automobile importers that import automobiles which being produced in different parts of the world. The market is influenced by legislative and regulatory requirements, which are a significant factor that could affect the supply of and demand for automobiles. The last decade wide intervention of the authorities shaped the market and the competition. Mandatory requirements in Israel are based on EEC directives and US federal standards. The standards focus on air pollution, and passenger and pedestrian safety.

The entry barriers to the automobile import segment in Israel are relatively high mainly due to the essential of proven financial strength of the car importer, and the high costs for providing the required level of technical and customer service, provided by the importer, to the customers. The competition in the automobile market is between the various importers and, while reflected in the large number of car models imported from different parts of the world. The competition is based mainly on brand, model, price, payment terms, service quality and the car's resale value in the used car market.

The evaluation of inflation forecasts uncertainty for the improvement of marketing plan

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ABSTRACT The evaluation of the macroeconomic forecasts uncertainty improves the decisional process related to the government policy, but also to the companies' results planning. Basically, the original contribution of this research is given by the transition from the macroeconomic level to the microeconomic one, bringing improvements to the companies planning process by using forecasts accompanied by an objective measure of uncertainty. The forecasts uncertainty evaluation for inflation rate helps the marketing information system in two directions: the identification of opportunities and threats, which is one of the purpose of SWOT analysis (structural shocks of the economy), and the improvement of sales and expenses forecasts on a given forecasting horizon in order to make comparisons, by dividing these indicators on the price index. In Romania in 2004-2010 the Institute for Economic Forecasting predictions for inflation rate were efficient, but less accurate than those of National Commission of Forecasting.

1. Introduction

In addition to economic analysis, the elaboration of forecasts is an essential aspect that conducts the way of developing the activity at macroeconomic and also microeconomic level. But any forecast must be accompanied by explanations of its performance.The purpose of this evaluation is related to different aspects: the improvement of the model on which the forecast was based, adjustment of gouverment policies, the planning of companies' results. Basically, performance evaluation in this context refers directly to the degree of trust confered to the prediction. Although the literature on forecasting methods and techniques used in describing the evolution of an economic phenomenon is particularly rich, surprisingly, few researchers have dealt with the methods used to improve the measurement of forecast uncertainty. The aspect is important, because the macroeconomic predictions must not be easily accepted, taking into account the negative consequences of macroeconomic forecasts failures, consequences that affect the state policies. The decisions of economic policy are based on these forecasts. Hence, there is an evident interest of improving their performance.

The forecasts of macroeconomic indicators are essential for companies in making their decisions. Marketing planning is based on information related to economic, political, demographic factors quantified at macroeconomic level. Only those which can be effectively quantified by macroeconomic indicators (inflation rate, unemployment rate, GDP) matter for statistics.

In special literature there are 3 directions in evaluating the performance of macroeconomic forecasts: accuracy, bias and efficiency.A large number of articles have considered the problem of comparing the accuracy measures, contributions in the field are related of names like: Leith , Tanner, Makridakis, Yokum, Armstrong, Tashman, Makridakis ,Hibon, Koehler, Martin ,Witt , Hyndman .

Company Social Responsibility in Romanian and German students' vision

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ABSTRACT This study focuses on finding out the way Romanian and German students assess Company Social Responsibility (CSR). The theoretical basis of the study is GLOBE international research project (Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness). In GLOBE approach, CSR is a set of seventeen values based on which important decisions are made. The study was performed on a sample of 762 students (83% attending the last year of Bachelor or Master in business and/or engineering), out of which 427 are Romanians and 335 Germans. The data has been collected in partnership by Romanians and Germans researchers[*], during 2008-2009. The most important findings show that Romanians and Germans have rather similar understanding in the case of five CSR related values importance: *customer satisfaction, employee relations issues, employees' professional growth and development, decision effect on minority employees and on female employees.* The highest significant differences are recorded for *decision effect on long term competitive ability of the company* and *contribution to the economic welfare of the nation*.

1. Introduction

The research question of the present study concerns the convergence and divergence in Romanian and German students' opinion about the company's social responsibility values. Why students? The most important reason is that many of them will be tomorrow's managers, in charge with using in their decisions CSR values. And most probably, CSR will get other connotations, and (who knows?) other values tomorrow. Why Germany as country of comparison? Because it is the strongest European economy and one of the biggest economic powers in the world; it might be a development model for any European Union member (and not only). Moreover, after the economic crisis of 2007-2010, Germany seems to be one of the European Union leaders. It is also challenging for the researcher to understand the differences between the two countries in: population, surface, GDP, language, religion, human development index etc. as depicted in *Table 1*. More than that, it is interesting to notice that most of the German sample comes from the Eastern part of Germany, which as known, belonged to communist system between 1945 and 1989 (as well as Romania did).

As known, for a long time, CSR is no more just an academic subject, but a systematic behaviour of many organizations. In the same time, it is in the permanent attention of consumers, mass-media, governments, environment protection organizations, consumer

[*] Data for Germany has been collected in GLOBE student project, coordinated by professor R. Lang (Chemnitz University of Technology)

Measuring Luxury Value Perception: additions to the model of Wiedmann *et al.* (2007)

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ABSTRACT Looking at previous research concerning luxury dimensions and especially at two of the most representative studies, of Dubois *et al*. (2001) and Vigneron & Johnson (2004), we have observed that can we make some additions the most complex measurement model of consumer's luxury value perceptions, proposed few years ago by Wiedmann *et al.* By following, the main purpose of this study is to analyze the existing luxury perception scales and to identify basing on literature review, the most relevant luxury values that can be attached to the previous mention model. In addition, we decided to extend the conceptualization of the antecedent constructs of Wiedmann *et al.* (2007), as we consider that a correct implementation of the model implies a comprehensive approach of the dimensions. Considering that the luxury domain is changing and with it increases the ambiguity and the confusion, becomes more and more important to understand why consumers buy. The model offers answers to this old question raised by marketing academics in the luxury field, but also can be used by marketing practitioners to set the basis of their marketing strategies.

1. Introduction

The increasing academic interest in the luxury marketing domain has been often associated to the ongoing evolution of the luxury market over the last decades (Dubois *et al*., 2001; Vickers & Renand, 2003; Tynan et al., 2010). While papers before 90's mention the existence of small number of studies across most of the areas (Dubois & Duquesne, 1993; Dubois & Laurent, 1994), starting with the 90's, studies in luxury marketing have significantly intensified. More, in the last five years, the research directions in the domain have diversified leading to a higher number of papers, but even so, they are very few comparing to other sectors. We may say that luxury has finally reached the stage where questions begin to be raised, starting with 'what is luxury?'.

The abstract, symbolic, subjective and multidimensional nature of luxury (Roux & Boush, 1996; Wiedmann *et al*., 2007) make the definition of luxury to be complex and misleading.

The impact of assortment on satisfaction, trust and loyalty in retailing

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ABSTRACT Assortment, its structure and the range of complementary services can be approached both from retailers' as well from clients' perspective. The assortment allows retailers to differentiate themselves from their competitors and to gain a precise positioning in a particular retail format (supermarket, hypermarket, discounter). Retailers and wholesalers must take decisions regarding the articles that will be part of the assortment dimensions (width and length). They will also consider the possible effects of inclusion of new articles or of exclusion of articles that are no longer bought by clients (Vasquez *et al*., 2001: 1-14). Moreover they will have to take decisions regarding additional services that accompany the assortment, the assortments structure, the customer segments that can be addressed through them or the frequency with which they can be offered (Homburg *et al*., 2002: 86-101). Although a wide assortment will give the customer a greater utility, its proper management implies significant costs for retailers. From the client's perspective, the assortment represents the way he can perceive retailers, is attracted by them, and develops a certain loyalty to the preferred store (Liebmann *et al*., 2008: 459). The assortment structure may be useful to him in finding all articles that he needs in a single store, but it can also create some frustrations in the process of selection of the needed goods.The present study proposes a model to analyse the impact of assortment on trust, satisfaction and loyalty. When operationalized by means of a questionnaire, the model may provide an overview of the different strategies implemented by the management of the retail companys. A well-structured assortment with articles that have utility for the consumer may bind the latter to retailers, making him to return, thus increasing his degree of satisfaction and contributing to the overall positive perception of the retailer.

1. Introduction

Assortment and retailers' own-brand policies are derived from the basic service and the product policy peculiar to consumer goods companies. Retail companies have to decide upon the articles which will constitute the dimensions of the assortment (particularly its length and width). They also will have to take into account the possible effects brought about by the inclusion of new articles or the exclusion of those which are no longer in demand (Vasquez *et al*., 2001, pp.1-14).

The assortment is understood as the whole set of measures (Theis, 2007: 291) aimed at influencing and delineating a retailer's offer, as well as the total number of objects, whether goods, services or rights of use, provided physically or in a different form over a period of time (hourly, daily, weekly, monthly, seasonally etc.) (Müller-Hagedorn & Natter, 2011: 263).

* This work was supported by the European Social Fund through the Sectoral Operational Programme Human Resources Development 2007-2013, project number POSDRU / 1.5 / S / 59184 „Performance and excellence in the Romanian postdoctoral research in economics"

Study regarding the quality of teaching in higher education institutions

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ABSTRACT How to provide excellent training is one of the aspects that arouses the highest interest among researchers in the area of higher education, while the professors represents the factor with the highest influence to this process. The main purpose of the present study is to evaluate the performances of the professors from Cluj-Napoca universities, based on empirical research. The parameter considered in the questionnaire-based survey is students' satisfaction with the quality of teaching. The study sought to identify the relationships between the importance, satisfaction and performance of the quality of professors in the process of improvement of the university competitiveness and more effective in the process of student learning. The results emphasized that in order to be as efficient as possible in the teaching process, firstly the professors need to have the ability to easily explain and answer the students' requests. Also, the performance that requires the greatest improvements is "taking into consideration students' complains regarding teaching". Moreover there are significant differences between students' expectations and students' satisfaction regarding the quality of teaching activity. Therefore, due to the complexity and importance of the educational process in academia, the institutions of higher education must hire only professors with great teaching skills.

1. Introduction

Due to the current system of performance evaluation in the higher education institutions and legislation, somehow there is a tendency among academics to underestimate the teaching role, focusing less on the training process and more on the research (Olson & Einwohner, 2001; Serow, 2000). Once hired, professors may find that their position or function within the higher education institution, the opportunity to promote, the salary and external financing are highly connected to their research activity, rather than teaching (Fairweather, 1996; Hearn, 1999; Sutz, 1997). However, the reason for the existence of a university is the students, or in other words education. The training or learning process is one of the main missions of a

Internet and E-commerce – tools for creating value in the E-marketplace

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ABSTRACT The business world is in a state of permanent change. The consumers are subjected to an increasingly greater number of products and services that are offered worldwide. The development of the information and communication technology in the last decades has created the opportunity for the companies to reach their clients faster and faster, to receive a rapid response from them. With the help of the Internet and the new informational technologies the marketing specialists can involve the consumer in the creation process of new products and services as well as developing new tools for advertising those products and services in a more personalized manner. In this paper we will be presenting the Internet as a marketing tool, the concepts of e-commerce, e-business and mobile e-commerce. We will point out the stages in the evolution of e-commerce, several features of the e-commerce technology, and some rules for implementing an efficient e-commerce platform, as well as the impact that the usage of e-commerce has on the company.

1. Introduction

We are living in an age of permanent change. The fast developing global economy and the increase of competition between companies has made it clear that companies must fight more for their clients. In this digital age, the companies should take advantage more and more of the power and the edge offered by the information technology, in order to inform the present or potential clients or consumers in a better and faster way.

The transition to the global economy and the strong development of the media and modern information technology is a fertile ground which managers, marketers and organizations must use. The Internet has become one of the most important means of communication that can be used both by the organization and the consumer. The appearance of new means of communication, websites, e-mail, instant messaging chart rooms, blogs, web seminaries, have created a global system that makes life easier for individuals and the companies that want to find each other (Kotler &Caslione, 2009). In this paper we will present, the Internet as a marketing tool and its implications on modern marketing, the concept and evolution of e-commerce, the differences between this concept and the e-business concept, the concept of mobile electronic commerce as well as several rules for managers and companies alike if they want to have a successful e-commerce platform.

Positive Marketing - A New Meaning of Solution

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ABSTRACT Marketing as a philosophy, is based on thinking about the business in terms of customer's needs and their satisfaction. The leading question of the marketer is: "What is the need - or what can be the need - of a customer (potential or existing one)?" The word "need" implies that it is about something that is missing and therefore comes from a negative paradigm or a negative context. Positive Psychology approaches suggest that focusing on the "bad" aspects can at best, from a basic point of view, reduce or even eliminate the phenomena.Coming from a consciousness of abundance, a new paradigm is offered, based on the Solution-Focused approach - originally developed by Steve de Shazer in the late seventies, in the field of brief therapy. Generating a fundamental and an essential positive way of thinking in marketing, means exploring new territories of life - territories where the new *solution* is what is offered to the customer that is neither contingent nor linked to any problem. The new meaning of solution is a state - situation or product - with no problem attached to. Generating a positive way of thinking in marketing means working based on a solution that has no problem attached to it. Several implications on the positive marketing process are discussed.

1. Introduction

For many years the term *solution* has evolved and became a leading concept in marketing, in advertises and in the business language. Many companies entered the "S" word to their vision and mission statements. From selling products, companies started to develop, offer and bring comprehensive solutions for their clients, where products are part of them.

So the use of *Solution* in the organizational and managerial language is already used and many times even overused, as it is part of addressing the customer in broader manner. "Tell me what you need, tell me your problem, tell me what is missing - and we will provide you with the perfect solution." Some might even use the term solution-focused service as a way of saying that their company is focused on the best solution for the customer problem or need.

In such cases, it will be the same basic paradigm, addressed in a seemingly advanced language. But in reality nothing actually changes. It is a negative paradigm dressed with nice, polite and appreciative language. The concept is so elusive and so accepted that not only no one objects this use of the term, but every book, article and lesson, teaches this concept and anchors it in the negative paradigm.

The use of *negative paradigm* is not a value preposition but rather a descriptive one. It focuses on what is missing rather than what to gain. It comes from a competition of limited resources rather than endless opportunities. It is based on shortage consciousness rather than abundance consciousness. It focuses on the problem rather than the solution.

This paper presents a new meaning of the *Solution* concept. A meaning that was originally developed in the late seventies as an approach for obtaining effective results in brief

Becoming a Solution-Focused Marketing Team

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ABSTRACT Many concepts and paradigms are changing in every aspect of life. Some - happen very fast as if it seems that one has to run fast in order to stay on place.Marketing has a crucial role in sensing the market and allowing companies to adapt both to the existing and future demands of the market. Combined forces and knowledge are a necessary in marketing more than ever. The best mechanism for that in an organization is the *Marketing Team*: making sure different people in different roles, work together in order to achieve best results.Yet, just working with teamwork, in a team format, is not enough for the marketing team. New and advanced approaches are needed to meet the challenges of the future that appear already nowadays. Positive approaches and positive psychology lead today's trends. This paper offers the Solution-Focused approach and its tools as a leading positive approach for managing the marketing team. Furthermore - it is suggested that such a team will built its identity as a *Solution-Focused Marketing Team*.

1. Introduction

In new times marketing must adopt new ways of managing and working and even exceed them. Basic adaptation is not enough. A combined discipline is suggested: Working in a team and making sure that the marketing team works in an advanced positive approach - the Solution-Focused approach.

In the new decade, it is obvious that marketing plays an important role in the strategic planning and decisions making for many firms. In the recent years, the marketing method shifted in how businesses markets extend the market segment, some methods were left at the edge of a road and new methods were adopted.

One of the major risks and threats implicit production industry in the forecasting accuracy, especially where the product lifecycle is short or an expiration date exists. For example in high-tech technology product due to the MOOR law, the life cycle shrinks dramatically and new generation of product grows every 18 months, this forces the marketing team to develop a strategy which will achieve high results and in a very short time. In addition the market demand changes is very unanticipated, keeping the firms on one hand with high level of inventory that can be a financial smasher and quite costly while on the other hand, the disability of feeding the market can cause a long terms damage to the company (Erhun *et al*., 2007).

Companies face many business challenges on a daily basis, the major one is the product forecasting and the market demand which can be a critical for the company financial results. Setting the right price for a product, capacity planning, focus on future products and

The analysis of the risks assumed by the entrepreneurs in tourism industry

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ABSTRACT Risk management and risk assessment have become, and will remain an important component of how any business operates in the tourism industry. In the tourism industry there are many situations where the risk becomes outrageous disasters or dangerous events, and this leads to lower performance and slower business development. This paper aims to show that tourism destinations and small entrepreneurs can easily overcome and manage the four stages of a crisis by implementing the theory of the four R: Reduction, Readiness, Response and Recovery. The increasing exposure to different risks such as political, economic, social and not least the technologic risks has led to the need to implement an active management in the tourism industry. The most effective crisis management is the one that manages to identify on time the problem areas and takes action before the cumulative risks to turn into a growing crisis. The 4R Theory, suggests such a pattern through which all the crisis management strategies should be updated and improved continuously in order to demonstrate the efficiency and effectiveness of such a tool in an era of globalization in which the risks have become a subject of this globalization, getting a global perspective. The paper also states that although crises and disasters can not be stopped, their impact can be limited through effective management strategies; therefore in favour of this statement a study case was realized for a number tourism agencies, in Cluj Napoca, related to risks management. It concludes with the idea that although there is great difficulty in responding to risk generating chaotic situations, they are an important part of risk management in both public and private sectors and should be taken into account in the management of modern tourism.

1.Exploring the exting theories and risks models in relation with the tourism business

Any business activity in the market economy presupposes a certain risk. Entrepreneurs generally are ready to go at risk under uncertainty, because along with the loassland risks there is the possibility of obtaining additional revenues. The acceptance of risk in the market economy is realized under a certain knowledge base, realized through analysis and forecasting. The basis of any activity is a business plan. Every business has its specific way of

* This work was possible with the financial support of the Sectoral Operational Programme for Human Resources Development 2007-2013, co-financed by the European Social Fund, under the project number POSDRU/107/1.5/S/76841 with the title „Modern Doctoral Studies: Internationalization and Interdisciplinarity "

Advergames: marketing advantages and risks involved

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ABSTRACT Electronic games have become a great cultural phenomenon as they exceed it's geographical, demographic, ethnical, cultural, social and political limitations. This reality made a lot of marketers perceive the great potential that encountering of games and advertising has in increasing the brand messages receptiveness. Recent studies showed that advergames are more effective and pleasant for public than TV commercials, and can create a positive brand image, followed by purchasing intention. Also, they are cheaper and easier to implement. In spite of these obvious advantages, the new communication channel has its risks and companies have to find the right formula to obtain the intended results. Based on secondary data, this paper tries to presents a theoretical systematization of the main characteristics of advergames that bring advantages to companies that use them. Also it tries to highlight features that involve a high risk rate and brought law modifications and new regulations for protecting the consumer.

1. Introduction

Computers and video games industry development made advertising companies be aware of the video games potential as a communication tool. The numbers recorded in video games selling and the increasing of game players made video games become an attractive format for brand placement.

In the late years, companies approached many marketing extensions from classic models. This is how advertising made its way into the world of video games. This might be the future of marketing communication.

Advergames, as a new marketing type, represents a game constructed around a brand and is a communication practice often met in this field. It is an immersive mix of advertising and entertainment that takes the form of video games.

The advergaming concept is not new. According to eMarketer.com, Kool-Aid and Pepsi developed Atari 2600 games that featured their products and distributed the game cartridges as promotions in the early 1980's. These were the first advergames ever released for consoles, followed by KP Skips Action Biker on ZX Spectrum computers in 1985. From then advergames had a rapidly and spectacular development. Many other companies have developed games that are centered on their products or even their promotional characters.

* This work was possible with the financial support of the Sectoral Operational Programme for Human Resources Development 2007-2013, co-financed by the European Social Fund, under the project number POSDRU/107/1.5/S/77946 with the title „Doctorate: an Attractive Research Career "

Marketing and supply chain paradigms: convergence and integration

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ABSTRACT The composite nature of the SCM concept, which includes procurement, production, marketing, management, sales and distribution elements, indicates that the theoretical models developed in other business disciplines can significantly contribute to the development of a SCM business theory. Many authors emphasised the common roots and goals of marketing and SCM, and demonstrated the importance of the central marketing concept for SCM theory and practice. However, this process of mutual interdependence cannot be considered from a static perspective. The introduction of new marketing paradigms may influence directly the existing SCM models, creating novel perspectives and methods that are better adapted to the modern competitive conditions. This paper attempts to investigate and discuss the influence of three new marketing paradigms (the service-dominant logic, the multi-stakeholder approach in relational marketing and the sustainable marketing) on the SCM theory, and to outline possible future directions for theory development.

1. Introduction

Introduced in the 1980s, the concept of supply chain management (SCM) has gained an increased importance in academic and professional literature since the beginning of the 1990s (Oliver & Webber, 1992; Svensson, 2002 and 2003). The necessity of a new strategic approach to supply activities was determined by the poor performance of the traditional marketing channels, identified in various companies around the world (Oliver & Webber, 1992). Today, after more than 25 years of theory building, the SCM business philosophy development is still far from being complete (Mentzer *et al.*, 2001).

Many authors have outlined the mutual relationship between marketing and SCM theories (Emerson & Grimm, 1996; Mentzer *et al.*, 1989; Min & Mentzer, 2000; Svensson, 2002 and 2003). The application of the marketing concept, the market orientation, and the principles of relationship marketing are extremely relevant for the long-term performance of supply chain systems (Min & Mentzer, 2000). However, considering the continuous evolution of business theories and practice, this inter-disciplinary crossfertilisation must be regularly re-evaluated and updated.

The main objective of this paper is to investigate and discuss the influence of the new marketing paradigms on the SCM theory, and to outline possible future directions for theory development. After an analysis of the supply chain and supply chain management concepts, the influence of marketing on the SCM is briefly investigated, outlining their common roots and the potential for theory crossfertilisation.

In order to identify the influence of new marketing theories on the SCM, three modern marketing paradigms have been selected: the service dominant logic, the multi-stakeholder approach in relationship marketing, and the sustainable marketing. The main elements of

Marketing Communications: a conceptual approaches

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ABSTRACT Marketing communications are the means by which companies try to inform consumers, to persuade and remind them about products and brands that they sell. In other words, marketing communications is the "voice" of the product and are a tool to achieve dialogue and can build relationships with consumers. Marketing communication is an area of marketing that offers a unique perspective on the entire search marketing industry. This subfield, consisting of a group of functional activities has existed since modern marketing began. However, only within the last decade have serious attempts been made to consolidate personal selling, advertising, packaging, point-of-purchase, direct mail, product sampling, publicity, and public relations according to "marketing communication". This paper aims to present various approaches in the literature on marketing communication.

1. Introduction

Clearly communications are going through a big change. They are which make the link between individual and society. Communication is the tool used by the marketers to persuade consumers to act as they wish (e.g., to make a purchase, make a donation, to vote, to promote a retail store). Today, media and communications models that were used over the years, undergoes fundamental changes. The success of an effective marketing communication depends on developing a compelling message and delivery of the right audience. Appropriate ethical aspects focus on identifying and locating specific audiences and content of promotional messages. This article contains the following structure: (1) first is presented the integrated marketing communication, namely the definition and devices that includes, (2) the second part refers to the main components of marketing communication (sender, receiver, medium, message and feedback), (3) part three includes one of the greatest challenges of the past century in terms of communication, namely the Internet, and (4) the last part contains conclusions of the article.

2. Integrated marketing communication

In the last decade, the concept of integrated marketing communication has received wide attention in the marketing literature (Duncan & Everett, 1993; Schultz et al., 1993; McArthur & Griffin, 1997; Schultz & Kitchen, 2000), but a "definition related to this concept is difficult to establish" (Schultz *et al*., 1993). Integrated marketing communication can take many forms (Cornelissen & Lock, 2000), but in each case, confidence is given by the coordination of various marketing communication devices (e.g., advertising, direct marketing, etc.) to create a unified message. One approach that captures much of the essence of the concept defines the phenomenon as the coordination of different communication tools for a brand (Krugman e*t al*., 1994).

Removing biases: The physical elements affecting left-digit price cognition

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ABSTRACT The purpose of this study is to explore the non-conscious factors which lead prices ending in nine to be perceived as larger than a price one dollar higher or diminishing. First, this occurs only when the leftmost digit of the price changes (e.g., $299 vs. $300) in which case the difference between the two prices being compared will be perceived to larger difference than if the leftmost digit of the price remains unchanged (e.g., $369 vs. $370) as found by Thomas and Morwitz (2005). Second, magnifying the font size of smaller price, increasing the number of digits and displaying the price vertically will diminish the perceived magnitude of the left-digit effect of nine-ending prices in comparison between the target price and a competing product price.

1. Introduction

Studies indicate that the processing of price information by the consumer typically involves both conscious and non-conscious processes (Monroe & Lee, 1999). In the classical economics theory, the processing of comparative price information is assumed to be done in a conscious, rational and deliberate manner (Frank, 2004), however, non-conscious processes that may operate during memory encoding of magnitude representation have an influence on price and value assessments. (Dehaene *et al*., 1993; Dehaene, 1992). In short, the processing of comparative prices frequently relies on the non-conscious, automatic processing of price information (Coulter, 2003).

In comparative price advertising, marketers typically contrast a higher regular price with a lower sales price (Krishnan & Chakravati 1999; Compeau *et al*., 2002). Utilizing the 9-ending price in this type of promotion has been a focus of consumer and marketing research for decades. Several early researchers probed the effectiveness of this strategy or have voiced skepticism about the effects of nine endings on magnitude perceptions (Manning & Sprott 2009; Schindler, 2001). Recent studies have found that left-digit prices do affect magnitude perceptions and that nine-ending prices are perceived to be smaller than a price only one cent higher if the leftmost digit changes (e.g. $ 2.99 v. $3.00) and in certain specifiable situations (Thomas & Morwitz ,2005).

Based on these findings, in this study, we design four experiments to examine the effects of physical digits related to font- size, number of digits, and 9-ending price representation on perceived magnitude in a comparative price context. The goal is to find the factors diminishing or distorting the perception of magnitude in price between the sales and regular price.

The relationship between market orientation, learning orientation and performance. An approach from the point of view of the company's learning capabilities

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ABSTRACT This paper aims to analyze the literature of organizational learning in relation to market orientation. The purpose of this paper is to highlight how researchers presented in their studies various aspects of these two concepts over the years and, therefore, to establish the link between market orientation and organizational learning in terms of the firm's learning capabilities. At the same time, this paper tried to synthesize the conclusions of the most important empirical research on this subject since 1990 in order to highlight the influence of organizational learning on the firm's market orientation. Therefore, the model of analysis is descriptive rather than normative, focusing on the most important empirical research findings of the period we refer to. At the end of the paper, there is a presentation of conclusions about how learning orientation may influence the firm's market orientation.

1.Introduction

In the current environment, characterized by globalization, competitiveness and dynamism, a company's success depends on its ability to learn from its interactions with the environment, on its internal dynamics, on the knowledge and skills of its employees. In this context, we can say that the 21st century's organization is characterized by responsibility, autonomy, risk and uncertainty. Being aware of the importance of knowledge in the modern economy has led to the appearance of a new concept, the continuous learning organization. The study of learning organizations has enjoyed growing consideration in the business world, based largely on the results of Senge's studies and their impact on the market.

2. Definition and main features of organizational learning

Organizational learning theory may help organizations to assimilate new technologies and acquire competitive advantages and better process the data by having in view the real time realignment to the recent technologies (Templeton *et al.*, 2002).

The benefits of learning (the organizational survival and success) were studied in several empirical studies (Baker & Sinkula, 1999; Farrell, Oczkowski & Kharabsheh, 2008), the researchers suggesting that learning is the organization's most valuable source of acquiring a durable competitive advantage(Dickson, 1996; Calantone, 2002). Pedler (1990) defines a learning organization as a company that facilitates the learning process at the level of all its members and continuously transforms.

The "Dark Side" of Shopping – Materialism as a Driving Force in Deviant Consumer Behaviour

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ABSTRACT This paper addressed the question of materialism from two perspectives: as a significant effect of advertising and a positive predictor of deviant consumer behaviour, focus on compulsive buying. A comprehensive understanding of the relationships between advertising, materialism and potential negative consumer behaviour is appropriate for the consumer culture that our times are facing. A conceptual framework was proposed in this regard, in which deviant consumer behaviour is positively related to materialism as a negative effect of advertising. Further research is needed to test the model and to deeply analyse the relationships between these constructs.

1. Introduction

The past decades were characterized by a complex commercialisation process, the whole world being affected in different ways. People are tempted to redefine their models, to think about their real desires; they are actually sharing another set of values. In our everyday life, material possessions tend also to reduce the enjoyment of social relationships to simple meetings for "calculations" in order to establish a hierarchy of "happiness" based on different objects. Not only is the social environment affected, but also the individuals' self-perception. Moreover, different forms of behaviour such as excessive or uncontrolled buying can be understood as a way for individual's identity seeking.

Compulsive buying as a form of widespread dysfunctional consumer behaviour is still unclear and it becomes worthy to be analysed in relation with materialism and advertising. The present paper intends to improve this understanding through creating a conceptual framework that is deemed to explain directly the relationships of the constructs above mentioned.

When we decide to buy a certain product, how does our motivation look like? We can feel different hedonic shopping motivations, utilitarian motives that seem to be stimulated as well by many factors as materialistic urges. Studies show that the more materialistic consumers' values are, the more likely they are to like shopping (Goldsmith *et al*., 2011).

* *Investing in people!* Ph.D. scholarship, Project co-financed by the SECTORAL OPERATIONAL PROGRAM FOR HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT 2007 – 2013 Priority Axis 1. "Education and training in support for growth and development of a knowledge based society"Key area of intervention 1.5: Doctoral and post-doctoral programs in support of research. Contract no.: POSDRU/88/1.5/S/60185 – "INNOVATIVE DOCTORAL STUDIES IN A KNOWLEDGE BASED SOCIETY", Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania

La perception des rôles maritaux dans les processus de décision dans le contexte mondial*

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RÉSUMÉ Le premier modèle sur la perception des rôles maritaux dans les processus de décision appartient à Davis et Rigaux (1974). Ils ont étudié le marché belge et ont dirigé quatre catégories de rôles: Syncrétique (décisions prises en commun), Epouse dominée, Mari-dominé et Autonome. Plus tard, en 1981, Davis a repris leurs recherches pour voir la façon dont ces rôles ont évolué. Considéré comme une référence pour toute la communauté universitaire mondiale, leur étude est citée dans de nombreux livres et articles: Berkman et Gilson (1986), Dubois et Marchetti (1992), Filser (1994), Ladwein (2003), Evans, Jamal et Foxall (2006), Hawkins, Mothersbaugh et Best (2007), Solomon (2009). En outre, leurs travaux ont été poursuivis dans différents pays avec le but de tester le modèle et d'identifier les différences de potentiel ou de mutations qui pourraient survenir, principalement en raison de différences culturelles. De nouveaux modèles ont été développés en suivant l'exemple de différents pays: USA, UK, France, Belgique et Canada (Douglas,1981), Chine (Ford et al., 1995), Inde (Webster, 2000), États-Unis et la Nouvelle-Zélande (Lee & Beatty, 2002). Toutes ces études ont révélé de nouvelles facettes de la compréhension des rôles conjugaux dans la décision d'achat: les rôles conjugaux varient tout au long du processus de décision d'achat, non seulement en phase de prise de décision.Cet article est destiné à une revue de littérature des études entrepris.

1.L'introduction

Les implications de l`étude exacte du rôle des participants dans toute la chaîne du processus décisionnel d`achat contribuent à trouver la réponse à la question : « Qui est en réalité le consommateur ? ». La réponse n`est pas exigée seulement pour certains processus de vente, mais en spécial pour l`amélioration continue des contacts du vendeur avec le marché cible. Et la consommateur final.

La définition des possibles rôles que les diverses personnes peuvent les avoir a été une préoccupation des nombreux chercheurs. Une vision populaire de ces rôles retrouvée à plusieurs auteurs (Kotler & Keller, 2005) inclut cinq rôles considérés clé : initiateur, personne qui peut influencer, décideur, acheteur et utilisateur – dans le cas du consommateur final,

* Cette épreuve a été cofinancée par le Fond Social Européen, par le Programme Opérationnel Sectoriel le Développement des Ressources Humaines 2007 – 2013, projet no. POSDRU/1.5/S/59184 „Performance et excellence dans la recherche postdoctorale dans le domaine d`études des sciences économiques en Roumanie"

The Rise of the Internet - The New Force of the Consumer

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ABSTRACT Even before the boom of the dot-com industry, marketers have thought of Internet as a potential advertising environment. Predictions about what would come next in Internet, technology, advertising or commerce and how such changes would impact the consumer behavior were regarded as too futuristic when they were released. But in most cases, the reality exceeded even the most daring predictions. The present article is a study of the mechanisms that ensured the success of Internet as an efficient advertising media, and will discuss the growing role of the Internet in the modern advertising world, against the evolution of the powerful media, that is Television. We will try to observe closely the development of the Romanian Internet landscape, following in the development of this "new media", its advantages and the reach of the targeting beyond any other media. The importance of such a study is essential for the Romanian advertising industry and the marketing specialists alike, as we are discussing not just of an industry, but of a new chapter in the human history.

1. Introduction

Back in 1995, US author Clifford Stoll published in the reputed magazine Newsweek his strong opposition towards all the predictions about the evolution of Internet, dismissing e-commerce, interactive libraries, virtual communities, portable and size palm computers, or even cyber sex, all of which are now part of our lives(Hyperactive, 2011). At such pace of development, the task of looking at tomorrow becomes even more challenging. The tools and media that are being experimented today will become common place in a short period of time. Augmented reality, location based services, cloud computing are news at the moment, but their application will transform them in tomorrow reality and the Internet as we know it today will provide an even larger area of opportunity. Companies are trying hard to follow consumers into a more digitally oriented future, and create business models that will provide a controllable Return of Investment.

While the media and entertainment sector will continue to dominate, their growth is slowing substantially as consumers migrate to media delivered through digital and mobile channels. Digital and mobile distribution constituted only 5% of global media and entertainment spending in 2007 (Goeres, 2010 – Deloitte study Where the truth grows lies). However, during the next five years (2007 – 2011) there revenues have accounted for 24% of the industry's growth and will constitute 10% of global media and entertainment spending in 2012.

This paper is based on secondary research, using the information and statistics available from BRAT (Romanian Audit Bureau of Circulation), IAB (International Advertising Bureau), PriceWaterhouse Coopers studies, studies by Boston Consulting Group and Deloitte, EuroStat, morganstanly.com, mfinante.ro, capital.ro and money.ro.

A prototype of On-line database for Internet Consumers of On-line stores in Romania

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ABSTRACT In the last two decades, online shops wanted to be innovative keeping a careful navigation as easy and more efficient structuring of information.We can use all marketing techniques and tools like online malls, on-line databases, social networking, emailing and blogging. For all these techniques we can choose all forms of e-marketing, most useful and accessible for the customers.This paper describes the most accessed sites of electronic commerce in Romania and propose a way to develop an online questionnaire with a very easy to learn software for databases, Access 2007.

1. Introduction. The motivation of the research

Digital economy, the resulting interaction between the personal computer, telecommunications, Internet and electronic, is characterized by several characteristics quite different from the traditional economy (http://www.acad.ro/pro_pri/doc/st_g04.doc):

1. Creating a new business model (e-business, e-commerce, e-banking, etc..) through intranet, extranet and Internet which radically changes their efficiency in order to reduce costs;
1. The most important things are the needs of consumers who engage in a measure increasingly higher in the design, implementation and use of goods and services from early stage research and development. From this point of view, the new economy has an interactive interface;
2. The role of the consumer increases, it can become an important source of innovative ideas for the manufacturer, or forcing innovation in order to maintain or extend market, the increasing degree of comfort or, what is very important, of increasing the sustainability of economic development;
3. Competition and cooperation are two inseparable sides of the digital economy, taking into account the interaction between supply and demand. Forms of manifestation of competition between producers are radically changed by the priority what is given to a consumer in continuous and rapid change in the needs, tastes and requirements. That's why the competitors are obliged to cooperate;
4. Digital economy requires a higher consumption of design work, highly skilled which create higher added value, new jobs, parts unlimited business opportunities and creativity through flexible and interconnected existence of standards that facilitate integration and the need / or individualization of different consumers;

This paper aims to present a way to build an online questionnaire with existing applications currently on the market. It was chosen Microsoft Access 2007 because currently is quite familiar to all who work with Microsoft Office.

An Empirical and Exploratory Investigation of Romania's Country Brand Image

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ABSTRACT The objective of this research was to depict the country brand image of Romania as reflected by foreigners' perception regarding some of its main country brand constituencies: the people, the country as origin of products, governance, politics, tourism, culture, investment potential and attractiveness, and, respectively, living conditions. The nature of the research was basically exploratory and empirical, while the research method consisted in an online questionnaire based survey. The results showed that a significant part of those investigated had no opinion or no clear image regarding several dimensions of Romania's country brand image. In almost each brand image category there are certain aspects that are more or much positively perceived that the others: Romanians are associated to attributes like friendliness and hospitability, Romanian products are considered as being cheap, Romania is perceived as a democratic country, and it is viewed as having tourism attractions and a rich historical past. Unfortunately, there are more aspects in which Romania is poorly or mediocrely rated such as: people's tidiness, honesty, manners or civilization, the quality and innovation of products, the country's governance and management, the transportation infrastructure, the tourism facilities, business opportunities, living standards, health services etc.

1.Introduction

In the current context of globalization, the competition between countries all over the world in attracting investors, visitors, inhabitants or export markets is fiercer than ever and growing. Branding a country is not only a marketing fad or a current trend, but a necessity and a strategic move that must be designed for the long term.

Before any country branding strategy is developed, a rigorous investigation of the country brand's current image is strictly necessary. Romania is currently in need of an overall country branding strategy, including not only its tourism dimension, but also facets related to attracting businesses, export markets, keeping its population, and generally positioning itself in the international diplomacy spectrum. Implicitly, any investigation regarding its current brand image among foreigners is welcomed and should be considered by any capable authority.

2.Literature review

During the last years the concept of country branding has received much interest. Nevertheless, the conceptual development of the subject which is vital to take it forward to new dimensions, developments and uses (Dinnie, 2007), is far from being finalized, country branding still facing objections from well- known marketing specialists (Olins, 2002). One of the important trends in country branding is the competitive shift from individual enterprises

Marketing of public organizations. The case of a romanian public agency – an action research approach

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ABSTRACT As part of a larger intent to improve public institutions' activity and performance, as well as how they respond to the needs of their stakeholders (both individual citizens and organizations), an increasing focus on marketing is noticeable in the public sector in Romania. Efforts can be seen and are welcome in both practice and scientific research; when mixed together (i.e. an action research approach) the results can be even more valuable. Using the action research method, the authors, along with the co-researchers from a public organization in Romania, conduct a qualitative study on this topic of growing importance. During a three months' period of analysis, planning, implementation and evaluation, marketing issues are highlighted, solutions are suggested, marketing tools and techniques are developed and deployed, and all with the purpose of improving the institution's marketing process.

1. Introduction

Although not as present in the research agendas as marketing in private, for-profit organizations, marketing in the public sector is of growing importance. Communication and public relations are some of the most crucial activities in a public institution's daily business, considering the large groups of stakeholders they have to reach and serve. However, other strategic and tactical marketing resources can be scarcely seen in the case of most of the public institutions from Romania.

While large public organizations, such as the Government and other institutions with national presence can benefit of the human, technological and financial resources to conduct a well-articulated marketing process, smaller, regional and local agencies, do no benefit of these kinds of resources, being forced to either not resort to marketing or find solutions to fill in this need.

The purpose of our research is that of investigating how marketing is conducted in a regional Romanian public agency, what are the main problems such an organization faces and what could be the main solutions to overcome these issues. The research is an exploratory one, the method being action research, in which the authors, as formal researchers work together with

* This work was possible with the financial support of the Sectoral Operational Programme for Human Resources Development 2007-2013, co-financed by the European Social Fund, under the project number POSDRU/107/1.5/S/76841 with the title „Modern Doctoral Studies: Internationalization and Interdisciplinarity".

Customer valuation model adaption based on the case of a large public service provider in Hungary

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ABSTRACT At our „turbulent" times organizations face an important arising need to establish segmentation methods, which enable to look through the market and find their target group on the basis of the value created by their current and potential customers. In this regard they usually select and adapt certain customer valuation methods usually based on the available literature or their former experiences. Choosing the right method is a significant step in order to reach greater success through effectiveness. In our research we have focused on this adaption process, which generates hurdles and opportunities as well for every company. In our study we developed a general model, which enables decision makers to consider relevant factors of customer valuation methods. The "adaptation cycle" model is based on a case study of customer valuation model development at a large public service provider in Hungary as well as results of 5 in-depth interviews with decision makers working at companies in different industries using customer valuation methods in different development stages for different purposes.

1. Introduction

Customers have always played a central role in companies' life. Corporate success is up to this day dependent on customer acquisition, retention and customer value development. Customers give the only reason to build factories, hire employees, arrange meetings or start any other business process. Without customers corporations would not exist, there were only some hobbies (Peppers & Rogers, 2005). For three decades, executives have made maximizing shareholder value their top priority. Due to the vividness of marketing activities (Brown 1995) and move into a value oriented era (Rekettye, 1999), the way of sustaining customer relationships, interrelations between customer loyalty and satisfaction, segmentation based on customer profitability, arose as very important issues. However, evidence suggests that it is time for the era of customer-driven capitalism, when firms put the customer first (Roger, 2010: 58). Companies' main priority is to determine customer value (what customers expect) and offer products and services in order to meet these expectations. Although every customer need cannot be fulfilled simultaneously, organizations need to focus on profitable customers and make other customers also profitable. In his regard, the most profitable customers can be selected only along certain aspects and this process is called customer valuation in this paper. It is the process of grouping the company's customers regarding their value creation "ability". Regarding Kotler (1998) marketing is ultimately the art of attracting

The Romanian high-educated youth market for Internet Banking: investigating the drivers of adoption

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ABSTRACT The aim of this paper is to identify the drivers of Internet Banking adoption among the high-educated youth market in Romania. For this purpose, a large sample of students, both undergraduate and postgraduate, was surveyed. With the use of binary logistic regression, the impact of several input variables on the Internet Banking (IB) adoption status was analysed. Results show that age is the strongest predictor, followed by students' perceptions regarding the level of security/privacy of the IB service and faculty profile, respectively. To the best of authors' knowledge, this study is the first trying to explain the IB adoption behaviour in Romania. Therefore, its findings are of particular importance from both a theoretical and a practical perspective.

1. Introduction

Adoption of technology-enabled services has gained researchers' attention all over the world. Among them Davis, Fred, D., Bagozzi, Richard, P., Warshaw, Paul, R. and Venkatesh, V. have made a great contribution to the literature in the field by developing and refining models that help practitioners in explaining consumers' technology adoption behaviour. Soon, their initial attempts and efforts were carried on by other academics, in different activity fields, as well.

In the banking context, both the success and the failure depend on banks' ability to anticipate and to react to changes. An example in this respect would be the change in the technological environment. As new technologies are developed, in order to be able to meet customers' requirements and to gain a competitive advantage (Ho & Wen-Chuan, 2010), banks need to differentiate themselves from their competitors through distribution channels (Coelho & Easingwood, 2003; Gan *et al*., 2006) and banks in the Romanian market make no exception. Hence, besides territorial units, banks gradually introduced alternative distribution channels

Qualitative research in order to determine a conceptual model of integrated marketing communication to increase the efficiency of communication within the bakery industry in Romania

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ABSTRACT In an economy with a strong competitive character, organizations must capitalize on integrated marketing communication in a most effective way in order to ensure the establishment and maintenance of long-term relationships with current and potential customers. Through an integrated marketing communication companies "speak with one voice" and the impact of messages transmitted is a maximum one. Since the traditional communication models fail to attract attention of the target audience, the proposed communication model changes in another sense the order of carrying out steps of a communication process.

1. Introduction

In a landscape in which communication is controlled by the consumer through a dynamic process of learning the result is decreasing the effectiveness of traditional marketing communications activities. Therefore, organizations need to approach it today in an integrated way using a mix of communication tools, such as advertising, sales promotion, direct marketing, sales representatives, public relations, online communication, etc.

Today it is necessary for organizations to understand why integrated marketing communication programs have become so important in their activity, especially after 1990. Traditional components of the marketing mix – product, price, place (distribution) – are not as effective as they were before. When the market was going through a slow period of development, they prove to be particularly useful in the activity of any organization. But today traditional marketing mix elements have lost their value as competitive "weapons". So many ways to obtain the products can be copied by competitors in a very short period of time. Organizations' experience to provide value to products in a traditionally way is replaced today with their designing and manufacturing assisted computer or robotics. Also any form of distribution can be easily reproduced by competitors. Efficiency of the organization was sustained by price to the point where it became an advantage in decline. In a parity market the only way that organizations can make the difference is communication. Marketing communication can provide real sustainable and competitive advantage to any organizations that exploit its potential.

Integrated marketing communication allows creating and maintaining relationships with clients, providing strategic influence and controls of the message sent and finally encourage dialogue. Improving the communicational approaches may be provided by changing the

The effects of the economic crisis over consumers' behavior. Empirical evidences from Romanian

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ABSTRACT Although it has been more than two year since the world is facing the most sever global crisis, a precise estimation of its effects are difficult, given that many social and economic implications are not visible yet. Although the economic shocks that consumer have faced in this period, varies from one country to another, the number of those who said today that they can't afford almost anything increased significantly in all national markets, due to the fact that the economic crisis is the most traumatic event leading to a substantial deterioration in the quality of life of the household. In this context the propose of the paper is to identify the economic and social implication of the economic crisis over the Romanians consumers. Also, considering the unemployment the most severe economic shock that an individual can face, the study brings empirical support for the fact that the most important economic and social implications can be found in this group.

1.Introduction

The present economic crisis is unprecedented event for the entire world, taking into account the severity of the economic shocks that consumers faced and its global character. The negative economic evolutions in all national markets conducted to important changes in the way the people thing, behave, and in their value system. The individual well-being is determinate by many things like the level and secure income, labor market status, job stability and characteristics, health, social relationships, family etc. In some ways and to a different extent all these were affected by the economic crisis, for many people. The identification of the economic and social consequence of the economic crisis is a very difficult issue because a precise estimation can't be done because many of these are not visible yet. Still, a complex analysis should be conducted in some certain directions: implications over individual behavior (a less healthy lifestyle, alcohol abuse, marital conflicts, suicides, criminality rate, domestic violence and divorce rate), implications over consumer behavior (changing the consumer behavior with important consequences over market structure), implications over health (mental health and addiction problems, the adoption of a lees healthy food because of the consumption of cheap food, alcohol and nicotine due to stress, poor disease management due to overburdened health care services), implications over beliefs and attitudes (the things in which people believe and they treasure).

A great number of the research works were focusing on the identification of the social impacts of various crisis episodes. Many studies analyzed the impact of rising unemployment

Cause Related Marketing – A tool used for maintaining or improving consumer's brand loyalty

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ABSTRACT Cause Related Marketing, a relatively new concept born around the '90s, starts to manifest also in Romania, being increasingly used by companies. To present date, despite its novelty, there are several studies addressing the concept of CRM in terms of benefits for the company and for society.The main objectives of this article are: observing the behaviour of young consumers towards the products covered by humanitarian causes related campaigns and researching the natural link between this kind of behavior and brand loyalty.

1. Introduction

A question occurring more frequently is whether consumers are willing to reward "good corporate behaviour" through their consumption decisions. Thus, it can be considered that one of the ways through which socially responsible behaviour and consumption can be put together is Cause Related Marketing. In the case of CRM campaigns, the companies basically promise to donate a certain amount of money for a humanitarian cause based on the achieved sales.

According to www.responsabilitatesociala.ro, in Romania it is considered that a CRM campaign involves an "offer" valid for a certain period of time, refers to a particular product of the company and it is performed for the benefit of a NGO or another partner that has legitimacy in the case and ability to manage the money.

According to Kotler şi Lee (2005), CRM represents the commitment of a company to donate an amount of money for a certain cause, ussualy humanitarian. Precisely the amount represents a percentage of the product's price, although there are many other types of donations, as we will see further on in this paper. This kind of campaign is generally implemented in a previously determined period of time and its most important objective is represented by selling products of the company. A certain part of the product's price is donated to a non-governmental organizations or to several other kinds of partners who have legitimacy in the chosen cause and the ability to manage the money. Ussualy the partnership between a company and a nonprofit organization appears when the cause related marketing

Standardization—a solution to product counterfeiting in international markets

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ABSTRACT The product, taken by the present paper in its broadest sense as performance, is the object of the dilemma that the activity of the international market is faced with, that is, the oscillation between two strategies to approach external markets: global approach and local approach. The main difficulty arises from the contradictory nature of this juxtaposition. The enterprises have considerable room, although they prefer to be rather limited, to oscillate between a marketing exercise/action that is uniformly applied to all markets expected to be penetrated/processed by a company and another one peculiar to each individual market (Lendrevie *et al*., 2009: 935). The operationalization of the above-mentioned dilemma takes the shape of the standardization versus adaptation dichotomy in the international product policy.

1. Introduction -Standardization or adaptation in the international product policy

The key question of the product policy in international marketing is "Export—but what?" Some possible answers that may be given to this question are "a product identical to the one manufactured for the domestic market", "a product adapted to each foreign target market" or "a product similar to the domestic product but promoted as different from the latter". In reality, a more comprehensive answer is envisaged when a new foreign market is about to be penetrated in order to be subsequently processed by means of the exported product, that is, the options to develop either a global marketing or a local marketing program (Pop *et al.,* 2011: 321).

Whereas product adaptation in compliance with the requirements of the foreign target market allows the offer to be more flexible to the specific requirements of the local consumer, product standardization implies that the same product is delivered on all foreign markets, thus requiring less financial effort per unit for sale. The freedom of choice/to choose between these two external alternatives is considerably curtailed by the wide range of regulations peculiar to each foreign market. There are, however, factors that support each of the two solutions.

Among the factors that support standardization the most notable are the geographical and psychological proximity, the generic character of the product, the economic similarities as well as those pertaining to the level of development, language, culture and value system, the

Factors affecting E-procurement adoption

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ABSTRACT Nowadays, more and more organizations become aware of how electronic commerce solutions can lead to integration along the entire supply chain, especially in the procurement process. In the information age, E-procurement is an important subject. That is why organizations have to analyze and implement the E-procurement form that fits them best. In this respect, organizations must take several steps in order to prepare processes for a successful implementation of E-procurement. They have to know and understand the most important factors that influence the process of E-procurement adoption. This paper studies the most important factors that can influence the implementation of E-procurement in organizations. We studied the factors that we found in the literature and furthermore we develop a theoretical framework of factors influencing E-procurement adoption. At the end of the paper we present conclusions and recommendations for further research.

1. Introduction

At the beginnings, organizations used internet-technologies in the marketing and sales processes, but soon it was also being used in the purchasing process. The use of internet-technologies in the purchasing process led to the introduction of a new expression in 1999: e-Procurement.

Nowadays there are many forms of E-procurement available on the market. In this paper we choose to focus on the main well known and developed forms of E-procurement: *E-ordering, Web-based ERP, E-sourcing, E-tendering, E-reverse auction, E-informing.* We will briefly define these forms of E-procurement in the next section of the article. Also, we will present the main benefits of implementing E-procurement that the organizations can take advantage.

In the current business environment, organizations don't ask if they should adopt E-procurement, instead they analyze how to implement it in order to get the maximum benefits from it. During the adoption process, organizations have to take into account a series of factors that can affect the success of the implementation process. By gaining understanding of the most important factors that can affect the implementation of e-procurement, organizations have to organize themselves in a way that ensures success. Therefore, based on a literature review we describe the most important factors that can affect the E-procurement adoption.

Furthermore, we developed a theoretical framework of the factors affecting the implementation of E-procurement. The paper ends with conclusions and recommendations for further research.

* This paper was made within "The Knowledge Based Society Project" supported by the Sectoral Operational Programme Human Resources Development (SOP HRD), financed from the European Social Fund and by the Romanian Government under the contract number POSDRU ID 56815

The behavior of healthcare services consumer

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ABSTRACT In Romania, there are two forms of medical services (private and state) that healthcare consumers can access. In the first part, the paper presents Romania`s current legislation according to which the medical services are performed and it also stipulates the patients' rights, responsibilites and obligations. The behavior of healthcare services consumer is influenced by a number of psychological factors such as perception, learning, motivation, attitude, personality. Perception is influenced by several factors including: Exposure to a stimulus, attention, interpretation, intensity. Human behavior is acquired and modified in the course of life through learning. Motivation is the linkage between stimulus and consumer behavior reaction. Attitude is a mindset that we acquire and maintains us on an idea, an object and medical services.Personality can be defined as: the consistent behavior and intrapersonal processes originating within the individual. The paper shows how they can change the behavior of healthcare services consumer. A table showing the classification of reasons for the particular behavior it also presented in the paper.

1. Introduction

In our country, public health and the growth of national economy influence each other. Thus, public health and the development of the health system involve a steady economic growth in all branches of Romania's economy.

In Romania the health system has two forms: public and private. The private one was developed after the revolution as a result of stimulating the development of free initiative and private property, in healthcare domain. With the appearance of the private health sector, the concept of healthcare services consumer was developed and with it also the need to implement marketing in the medical field.

To define the concept of healthcare services consumers we should have consumers, bearing the name of patients, with different needs and desires and also the existence of a market for these services. Thus, patients have become consumers, medical services consumers. Therefore, we can define the consumer of healthcare services as "the person purchasing medical products/services"(http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/consumer).

2. Romanian legislation and the rights of healthcare services consumers

2.1. Legislation

In Romania, the law number 46/2003 defines the patient as being the user of healthcare services. It is not the only law governing the rights, duties, responsibilities and penalties applied in the field of patients' rights in Romania; the current legal framework includes a broad set of special laws:

- Law No. 95/2006 of Health Reform;

A Brief Literature Review on Perceived Value

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ABSTRACT The main objective of this study is to provide a holistic view on the research literature on perceived value. Various schools of thought are investigated in order to identify major contributions on this subject and also to group them in a cohesive framework. Two broad and complex approaches in the operationalization of value were identified, namely a uni-dimensional approach, and a multi-dimensional one, each of them, in turn, encapsulating a number of narrower research streams on this interesting and exciting, but at the same time very challenging and difficult topic. Although significant progress has been made in understanding 'value', there is still work to be done in understanding this important but elusive concept.

1. Introduction

According to the definition of marketing proposed by Kotler (1991), value is given a central role in understanding the foundations and rational processes of the entire marketing activity and therefore deserves the necessary attention of any marketing academic.

Furthermore, both AMA (2007) and the Marketing Science Institute (2006) included in their definition of marketing, value as a central concept, and also one of the top priorities for research in the near future.

Similarly, Holbrook (1999) demonstrated the key role, played by perceived value, to the marketing concept, by showing how value could resolve one of the critical problems of marketing strategy namely product positioning. Holbrook (1999) started his argument formulating two intriguing questions, the first one regarding the origins of market space dimensions, and the second one focusing on locations of ideal points for targeted market segments. The author (Holbrook, 1999) concluded that market space dimensions are in fact value laden product characteristics or product features that consumers seek, and ideal points represent positions that provide maximum value for targeted consumer segments.

Despite the positioning of perceived value at the heart of the marketing concept, and also the numerous articles debating this research topic, it seems a relative consensus regarding what value is, and how it can be operationalized still exists.

At first glance the research literature on perceived value seems like a very diverse, complex and often contradicting, collection of pieces of information, and also relative few areas of consensus could be identified.

* *Investing in people!* Ph.D. scholarship, Project co-financed by the SECTORAL OPERATIONAL PROGRAM FOR HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT 2007 – 2013 Priority Axis 1. "Education and training in support for growth and development of a knowledge based society"Key area of intervention 1.5: Doctoral and post-doctoral programs in support of research. Contract no.: POSDRU/88/1.5/S/60185 – "INNOVATIVE DOCTORAL STUDIES IN A KNOWLEDGE BASED SOCIETY", Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania

Electronic Negotiation – Advantage / Disadvantage

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ABSTRACT There are still many unknown about the efficiency of auctions versus negotiations. While the use of electronic tenders are the most popular procedures in the public procurement sector, the section of the economy in which businesses and companies are privately owned and buyers are free to choose their acquisition methods, auctions bids is far from their preferred option (Bajari *et al.*, 2009). With Web development and established on World Wide Web technologies, the uniqueness between traditional markets and the global electronic market, are gradually reduced. Strategic positioning is cardinal points in the company business environment; company must encourage their unique capabilities and expertise of individuals to utilize the e-business platform in order to determine emerging opportunities, due to the fact it's very simple in the new economic environment.

1. Introduction

Since the advent of the internet Auctions and reverse Auction gained popularity with buyers, especially since the advent of the internet (Subramanian,2009: 1). Lately, with the development and implementation of different branches of technology in information processing and the growing of the electronic business enterprise, pricing strategy become a key role for companies in the private sector.

Many of organizations began to see reverse online auctions, in which suppliers competed for customers' business, as the way of the future. E-auctions, the managers believed, would allow them to quickly connect with a whole universe of potential vendors and reel in much more attractive offers, an auction is an "efficient negotiation and dynamic pricing mechanism that resolves the, resource allocation problems in one-to-many and many-to-many market structures"(Lee,2007:8)

Researchers and philosopher are still having an argument on the impact of reserve auction and electronic negotiation, on the negotiation process and his final results. The opinions are being in disagreement, on the one hand there are, who argue that face-to –face negotiation has a great advantage, while many found that electronic negotiation offer better media on the parties participate in the process.

There are many factors and gaps need to be determine "whether you should conduct an auction or a negotiation" (Subramanian,2009: 1). It is obvious where complex settlement require high level of communication between the parties we will choose the face-to face negotiation, but where the collaboration between parties require low level of interaction, we should consider to use an auction.

SERVQUAL – Thirty years of research on service quality with implications for customer satisfaction

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ABSTRACT In almost thirty years since its introduction in 1985 by Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry, the SERVQUAL model has been used in identifying the ways in which service quality and, implicitly, customer satisfaction could be improved. However the model is not without flaws, which has led to several variations of the model, culminating with one based on the performance paradigm - the SERVPERF (Cronin, 1992), that have been introduced to literature and practice ever since. Since none of the proposals was a perfect solution, in spite of several refinements and reassessments of their dimensions, items, scale and wording, the objective of this article is to evaluate the main criticism related to SERVQUAL, how the model has been modified and used and to offer a personal opinion whether the SERVQUAL model is superior to the other proposed alternative in both literature review and in practice.

1. Introduction

Service quality is an elusive concept. While consumers have difficulties in articulating their requirements for it, the service providers have their difficulties in defining, controlling and, most of all, measure it. That's why it is necessary for the researchers to give a helping hand in creating a valid model and instrument capable of measuring the service quality. However, until now, only a small number of researchers have managed to operationalize the concept: Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (1985, 1988), Brown and Swartz (1989), Carman (1990), Boltan and Drew (1991), Cronin and Taylor (1992), Babakus and Boller (1992), Teas (1993, 1994).

What is more, when it comes to measuring service quality, there are two perspectives that need to be taken into account: internal and external. The internal measurement of service quality is based on the zero-defects or getting it right the first time approach, while the external perspective focuses on understanding the concept in the light of customer perception, customer expectation, customer satisfaction, customer attitude and customer delight.(Sachdev & Verma, 2004) The external approach has become more important lately as the consumers are reportedly more knowledgeable, more sophisticated in their choices and with significant changes in their tastes. Among the definitions for service quality, looked at from the external perspective, the one created by Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (1985) seems to be the most useful: service quality is defined as the degree and direction of the discrepancy or gap that exists between the customer's expectations and perceptions, in terms of different dimensions

* *Investing in people!* Ph.D. scholarship, Project co-financed by the SECTORAL OPERATIONAL PROGRAM FOR HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT 2007 – 2013 Priority Axis 1. "Education and training in support for growth and development of a knowledge based society"Key area of intervention 1.5: Doctoral and post-doctoral programs in support of research. Contract no.: POSDRU/88/1.5/S/60185 – "INNOVATIVE DOCTORAL STUDIES IN A KNOWLEDGE BASED SOCIETY", Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania

Future trends in alternative banking

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ABSTRACT Among the existing alternative banking channels (Internet banking / ATM / mobile banking/ home banking etc), Internet banking has the leading position. Such a leadership position, in a continuously changing environment, is doomed to uncertainty. This raises the issue of whether Internet banking will remain or not on the first position of the alternative banking channels top in the near future, given the fact that new threats appear each day (e.g. interactive TV banking). The paper's objective is to create a foundation of an early warning addressed to the banks that are in the process of anticipating competitive developments and moves in the alternative banking industry. Such an untimely understanding of the future trends in alternative banking will help banks formulate the best-course action options in terms of alternative banking. As such, the paper is one of a limited number of published studies addressing comprehensively to the alternative banking services providers, who can benefit from a fresh perspective that might determine them to shift their managerial focus from present to future.

1. Introduction

The queues behind a row of tellers and the permanent hum of a traditional bank become things of the past, given the fact that alternative banking is gaining more and more ground.

More and more people are switching to alternative banking rather than continuing the endless and tiring trips to the bank. This trend fortunately coupled with the banks' attempt to optimize services and minimize costs.

As a result, the migration towards 24-7 alternative banking services came naturally, and made both parts (banks and clients) enjoy the main advantages: costs on one hand and greater sense of comfort and freedom on the other hand.

As technology adds new valences to the classic banking, the variety of alternative banking channels enlarges constantly. Today, the main self-service banking technologies are: automated teller machine (ATM), Internet banking, home banking, phone banking, fax teller, wireless application protocol (WAP) and, last but not list, electronic fund transfer at point of sale (EFTPOS).

Among the most important alternative banking channels, Internet banking benefits from a certain supplementary '*value of time*', because of being a little ahead of the other alternative banking channels in the customers' preferences.

Nevertheless, the element of surprise is always present in the alternative banking industry so Internet banking's supremacy might be ephemeral. As such, the past, the present and its relevant events are the pillars on which bankers should develop their projections on the future of alternative banking.

How SR Management Can Help Marketing?

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ABSTRACT Organizations today have to cope with a changing world, a new societal discourse and a global society that demands ethical behaviour, more transparency and responsibility from all its stakeholders - organizations as well as consumers and the public as a whole. Organizations are adopting initiatives under the title of Social Responsibility (SR), although in most cases these are unrelated activities that might have a limited value, but do not constitute a comprehensive SR strategy in management. Social and environmental challenges are even more substantial for marketers, who face a growing wave of criticism concerning their ethical behaviour along with demands to create real value not only for their organization but also for society at large. Marketing is no more confined to one specific department of the organization, but rather leads the overall attitude of the organization and thus is at more risk to have a negative impact on the organization and its stakeholders. This paper proposes an integrative model of SR that can be implemented in marketing and provide answers to many of these challenges. Its implementation can assist marketers to prevent crises, manage risks and create true value for the organization and society at large.

1. Introduction

Marketing exists in the space that connects the marketer and its market. Kotler and Keller (2006) identify ten types of entities that are marketable: goods, services, experiences, events, persons, places, properties, organizations, information and ideas. Marketers wish to market those entities to the market, which is, in fact, a collection of stakeholders that surround the marketer and his organization. Stakeholders are all the individuals and groups that might influence or be influenced by the organizations decisions and activities (Freeman, 1984).

Marketing literature is rich with theories and definitions. Kotler (2005) argues that marketing is the science and the art behind exploring, creating and delivering value to satisfy the needs of the target market at a profit for the organization. Kotler and Keller (2006) emphasize the value for customers instead of profit for the organization. They conclude that marketing is responsible for keeping and growing its customers through creating, delivering and communicating superior value for their needs.

It is widely agreed today that marketing is not an isolated limited function of a particular department in the organization but rather an overall attitude of the organization in its entirety, and as such, it can serve as a frame of operation that connects the organization and its widest environment.

According to the American Marketing Association (AMA), "Marketing is the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners and society at large". This definition (from 2007) replaced the previous one, which was drafted in 2004 and stated that "Marketing is an organizational function and a set of processes for creating, communicating, and delivering