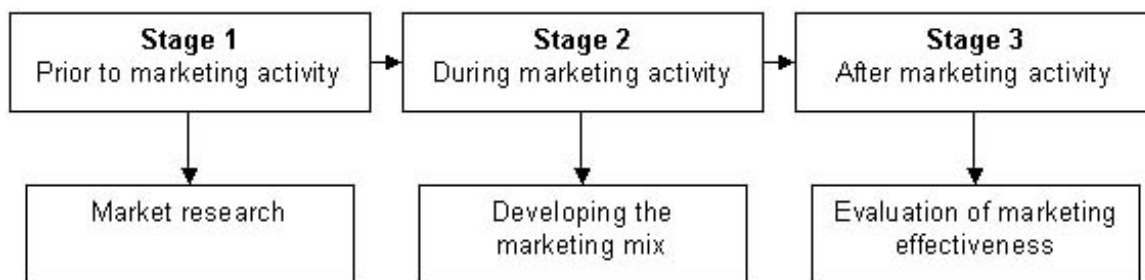


### **Marketing techniques**

A [marketing strategy](#) is an overall marketing plan designed to meet the needs and requirements of customers. The plan should be based on clear objectives. A number of techniques will then be employed to make sure that the [marketing plan](#) is effectively delivered. Marketing techniques are the tools used by the marketing department. The marketing department will set out to identify the most appropriate techniques to employ in order to make profits. These [marketing techniques](#) include public relations, trade and consumer promotions, point-of-sale materials, editorial, publicity and sales literature.

Marketing techniques are employed at three stages of marketing:



Market research enables the organisation to identify the most appropriate [marketing mix](#). The mix should consist of:

- \* the right product
- \* sold at the right price
- \* in the right place
- \* using the most suitable promotional techniques.

To create the right marketing mix, marketers have to ensure the following:

- \* The product has to have the right features - for example, it must look good and work well.
- \* The price must be right. Consumers will need to buy in large numbers to produce a healthy profit.
- \* The goods must be in 'the right place at the right time'. Making sure that the goods arrive when and where they are wanted is an important operation.
- \* The target group needs to be aware of the existence and availability of the product through promotion. Successful promotion helps a firm to spread costs over a larger output.

Finally techniques need to be applied to monitor the [success of marketing](#) activity. For example when carrying out advertising it is helpful to track consumer awareness of the adverts and their messages. Evaluation can also take the place of other aspects of the marketing mix e.g. which distribution channels were most effective? Was the chosen price the right one? etc.

### **Business behaviour: marketing**

Today businesses have an increasing market focus. If organisations are to serve the needs of their customers they need to be structured in such a way as to identify and meet customer requirements.

Businesses therefore need to behave in such a way that they recognise the needs of the customer.

A company prospers best when everyone in it believes that success depends on the excellence of his or her contribution. Short-term decisions made many times a day by individuals determine the quality of that day's work.

The governing principle should be that everybody has a customer - either outside the company (the traditional 'customer') or inside the company (the internal customer). Both kinds of [customer expect](#) to be supplied with the product

or service they need, on time and as specified.

The principle holds good for everyone in the company, whatever their level of skill and experience, whether their 'product' is answering a telephone in a helpful way or masterminding a major new project. It works to everyone's benefit. It gives the individual genuine responsibility and scope for initiative and it virtually guarantees that the company's performance will be improved.

However, individual behaviours will only match the organisation objective of being customer focused if the right sorts of structures are created. Hence the importance of developing structures such as team working and empowering employees to make decisions rather than be told what to do.

Modern companies like Travis Perkins (builders merchants), and Argos (catalogue retailer) have recognised the importance of team working in motivating employees and in providing close links to the consumer. By encouraging staff to listen to consumers these organisations are best placed to provide the products and the services that ensure ongoing business success.

Empowerment is the process of giving increased power and responsibility to employees at all levels within an organisation. It involves placing more trust in them.

Decentralisation is the process of handing down power from the corporate centre (e.g. Head Office) to the various parts of the organisation.

### **Advertising, promotion, packaging and branding**

Advertising, promotion, packaging and branding are important marketing tools which are used to make products and services more desirable and hence increase sales and profits.

Any form of publicity is advertising. There are two main forms of advertising although in practice the two are inter-related.

The informational aspect of advertising involves providing information about products, services, or about important issues. For example, the government provides information about the dangers of cigarette smoking, which is an example of informative advertising.

Persuasive advertising goes further and uses a persuasive message, for example by:

- \* showing a famous personality (e.g. Gary Lineker) using the product
- \* comparing the advantages of one product with another
- \* using sex appeal.

There are a number of processes involved in producing effective advertising, including:

- \* identifying the most appropriate market segments to target the advertising
- \* choosing the best possible media, e.g. television, radio, posters etc
- \* projecting the right message in the adverts
- \* getting the timing of the advertisements right
- \* tracking the effectiveness of the advertising, e.g. checking to see how many people can recall the advert and its message.

Advertising is just one way of promoting a product. Promotion is the business of communicating with customers. There are a number of ways of promoting products and services, including:

- \* in-store promotion e.g. giving away free samples in a supermarket
- \* publicity in the media, competitions, and sponsorship

- \* PR - public relations activities - i.e. presenting the public image of a company to a wide audience
- \* presenting products in attractive packaging
- \* creating an attractive brand for a product.

### **Sponsorship**

Packaging typically refers to the material in which a product is packed - or more specifically, the surface design on the material. However, a wider definition includes all the various aspects of presenting a product - e.g. the shape size and appearance of the packaging, colour and design, the convenience of using the packaging etc.

A brand is a product with a unique, consistent and well recognised character. The branding of the product therefore involves projecting and developing this character. The uniqueness can come either from an actual product or from its image - usually created by its manufacturer through advertising and packaging. The consistency comes mainly from the consistence of its quality and performance, but it also reflects the consistency of the advertising and packaging. A brand is well-recognised because it has been around for a long time. It takes years to develop a brand.

Shell has spent over a hundred years developing its brand image through the well known Shell pecten. Audi is associated with its easily recognised four rings logo. McDonald's is associated with its twin arches. Sponsorship is an important way of promoting the name of an organisation. Many sports and arts organisations rely on support from sponsors. For example Vodafone is a major sponsor of Manchester United Football Club, and Bic sponsored Martin Johnson the England World Cup rugby captain.

In return for sponsorship of a sports club or arts event the name of the sponsor will be mentioned prominently on advertising hordings, publicity materials, programmes and other literature associated with the club or event.

The term 'above-the-line' advertising and promotion refers to media such as TV, radio and press, for which commission is paid to an advertising agency. 'Below-the-line' comprises all media and promotional techniques for which fees are paid in preference to commissions - these might include exhibitions, sales literature and direct mail.