Promotion Essay, Research Paper

Abstract Promotion is a four step process defined as “encouragement of the progress, growth, or acceptance of something . The four important steps to promoting a product or idea are: marketing, finding a target audience, advertising, and sales. In the following readings we will discuss more in depth how the four steps tie business together and how target interest surveys are the basis to compiling a consumer profile. From there a target audience can be marketed and a product advertised. The final step being the sale should be the easiest part if a product or idea was researched, marketed, and advertised effectively. The many examples of promoting range from the automotive corporations, to boxing matches, new candy bars, and even political elections. An effective plan must be put in order to succeed and through this research the plans for efficiently meeting promotional goals will be accomplished. Marketing Marketing is the entire process of getting the goods from the producer to the consumer. This process can be achieved in a number of ways through promotion, advertising, research, and selling. Marketing concentrates primarily on the buyers, or consumer, determining their needs and desires, educating them with regard to the availability of products and to important product features, developing strategies to persuade them to buy, and finally enhancing their satisfaction with a purchase. There are two types of marketing that are commonly used, target marketing, and mass marketing. Target marketing is useful when a product or service being marketed, is only perceived useful by a specific group of potential customers within a market. Mass marketing assumes that everyone is a potential customer and uses the same marketing mix for the whole market.By developing a marketing strategy, one can specify a target market and a related marketing mix. The target market is a fairly similar group of customers to whom a company wishes to appeal, in our case, potential automobile buyers. The marketing mix is the controllable variables the company puts together to satisfy this specific target group. The marketing mix can include anything from the product itself and its pricing and availability to the advertising used to promote the product. In developing a marketing strategy, it is important to the follow the five “P s” of a marketing mix: product, people, place, promotion, and price. The product area is concerned with developing the right “product” for the target market. This product or service need only serve and satisfy some customers needs. The people concept deals with knowing who your potential customers are and why they will purchase your product or service. It is very important to know who your target audience is. Place is concerned with all the ways your products will reach it s customers, such as which stores your product will be located in and how the product will reach its destination. Promotion deals with informing the customer about the “right” product. This can involve personal selling, mass selling, and sales promotion.Price is very important because setting the right price can make or break a product. This must be determined carefully by market research in order to the estimate buyers reaction to a certain price. In order to implement any of these strategies with optimum effectiveness, one must first conduct market research. Market research involves the use of surveys, tests, and statistical studies to analyze consumer trends and to forecast the quantity and locale of a market favorable to the profitable sale of products or service. The more you know about a potential product and its market, the better. The marketing research process is a five-step application of the scientific method that includes: defining the problem, analyzing the situation, getting problem-specific data, interpreting the data, and solving the problem. The first step of defining the problem is the most difficult. In our case of promoting a new car, we need to determine whom our automobile should be marketed to.Analyzing the situation usually involves an informal study of what information is already available in the problem area. Getting problem-specific data is very important to the research process. There are various types of research available to suit the needs of data collectors. Qualitative research can be used in order to seek open-ended answers, such as interviews with customers. Quantitative research can be done with items such as surveys where “yes and no” answers may be acceptable. Also, much research has already been conducted and one may not need to conduct their own research. In this instance, one may be able to buy someone else s already completed research, such as surveys done by another automobile manufacturer, which is called secondary research. When research has not been already conducted, one may implement new research which is called primary research.Of course this research is useless unless is it is analyzed correctly. Analyzing the information involves taking the conducted research and interpreting it using statistical computer packages, and other forms of statistical analysis. The data must also be determined if it is a valid representation of the target customers. Solving the problem involves taking all the conducted research and analyzed information and determining whether or not the problem can be solved, such as whether or not an automobile should be sent into production.Target Audience Once a product is designed the next step is to see how the market or public reacts before it goes into production. First you must find a target market. A target market is a specific group within a population that is the focus for a product or idea. As businesses spend $103 billion a year promoting products and ideas it is very important to understand the consumer. There are five questions that businesses try to answer as they enter target market research. To whom do you want to communicate this message, which product users will you target, can you define your target audience more specifically than simply demographically and not just with numbers, what are the psychographics or attitudes and lifestyles of the public, and finally, can you create a profile of the consumer you re addressing, are all important factors in formulating marketing and advertising campaigns. One example of this process is within the auto industry where car makers produce prototypes that are seen around the world to different populations of car enthusiasts. Interest surveyors act as bystanders at places like the Detroit International Auto Show to evaluate the opinions of the public and their reactions (Feldmaier, 12/98). Next, target market surveys or sometimes called target interest surveys are released to get specifics on every aspect to life: from age, sex, and salary to when they watch TV, what magazines they read, and any ideas they have for futuristic cars. The purpose of these target interest surveys is to find in which part of the population the product or idea appeals most or even has any appeal at all. Once this data is compiled, the company can then target a specific audience for each particular product or idea. The biggest target in the auto industry are “YAM s” or Young Affluent Males. Market research show that if a car appeals to “YAM s”, the chances greatly improve for success of that vehicle. That s not to say that all cars target males. The Lincoln Town Car for example appeals to an older generation looking for a classy, smooth ride. Another example is the Chrysler Sebring Convertible that boasts it sales to 73% women (Feldmaier, 12/98). Other examples are at the Hershey Chocolate factory in Hershey, PA. Different candy bars are tested by a wide range of individuals to see if there s a market for the new product. Wine tasting and the old ladies you see at the grocery store sampling foods are other examples of everyday target market research. Target market research show us the psychological aspects of what and why people want what they want. Here s a list (in no particular order) of why Americans buy what they buy (:achievement- the need to perform difficult tasksindependence- the need to be autonomousexhibition- the need to gain public attentionrecognition- the need for positive notice from othersdominance- the need to exercise power over othersaffiliation- the need for close association with otherssexuality- the need to establish and develop one s sexual identitystimulation- the need to stimulate the sensesdiversion- the need to relaxnovelty- the need to alter routineunderstanding- the need to learn and comprehendconsistency- the need for order and cleanlinesssecurity- the need to be free from fear Using the auto industry again as an example, the breakdown of the psychographics of the new 1999 Volkswagen Beetle is a promotional piece of art. How one car can appeal to such a wide variety of people for different reasons is phenomenal. For nostalgic customers: this initial group of buyers grew up with Beetles. Most of them are former Beetle owners, automotive enthusiasts or car collectors. They are fundamentally sold on Volkswagen and are willing to pay a little more to own New Beetles now. Volkswagen can rely on these customers for dramatic short term growth immediately after the car s release. These customers are: self-confident and open-minded, out-going, friendly and accessible, willing to try new things, and active athletically. This age range is 35-50 years old, 33% married with children, most are college graduates and making a higher then normal salary. The psychographics for younger customers: this second group of buyers has no emotional attachment to the original Beetle, but if properly informed on the New Beetle s benefits, this group will help ensure the New Beetle s long term growth. These 18-34 year old customers are: very self-confident and independent, highly out-going and friendly, trend-setters, not satisfied with the ordinary, active in sports, and very big music and fashion fans. They have an average household income and the fifty male to female ratio is mostly single. With the American public becoming more and more interested in material things, trends, and fitting in: it s no wonder that advertising geniuses come up with slogans like “image is everything.” Once a consumer portfolio is established using target market surveys, advertisers can then target the marketed audience and further the hype of promotion. With the understanding of psychographics and the breakdowns of the interest surveys, allows the advertisers easy access to the where and when their target audience can be influenced. Advertising The average adult today sees over 3,000 advertisements a day, which soon adds up to over 1 million ads each year. With amount of competition, how do you create an ad that is successful, one that has the ability to gain the attention of a mass audience of potential consumers, and have them invest their money in the image and attitude your product can give? The answer is through successful advertising. “Advertising is any message that is paid for by an identified sponsor in a recognized media” (Amstell 3). The soul purpose of this communication tool is to present goods, services, or ideas to the public for a certain goal or purpose. Generally speaking, all advertising falls into two categories, institutional and promotional advertising. Institutional advertising is designed to build a reputation for the advertiser. It is geared to build confidence in a company and its product, so when a consumer considers buying a product, they will be reminded of the trusted name (Amstell 28). For example, State Farm Insurance Agency advertises to their audience “like a good neighbor, State Farm is there”. Promotional advertising is used to achieve immediate results. Its strategy is to make a compelling offer and show a bargain price so consumers will respond quickly to the product. Retailers do promotional advertising for example, to show their unbeatable prices during the holiday season. Advertising is also achieved nationally or locally. The difference between the two is that national advertising involves manufacturers of industrial or consumer products that are distributed on a national or regional basis, where as local advertising is restricted geographically and only covers city or metropolitan areas and pays close attention to local retailers.

Whether advertising is done as institutional or promotional, nationally or locally, there are four major institutions through which advertising takes place as noted in Promotion: Advertising, Publicity, Personal Selling, Sales Promotion by Richard Stanley. The first is the Advertiser, which is an organization or person that initiates an advertisement and ultimately pays its cost. Advertisers can vary in size from large corporations to simply individuals. The difference is however that large corporations, such as Proctor and Gamble, can spend up to hundreds of millions of dollars annually on advertising while a person can spend under ten dollars simply in the classified ads in a newspaper. However no matter how large or small an advertiser may be, in this institution, everything about the ad in question must get final approval from the advertiser before its publication or broadcast can legally occur. This “original censorship” is a safeguard used to protect the advertisers because of their being liable by the courts for their content (161). The second organization is known as an Advertising Agencies. It is in these agencies where most national ad s are created and then placed by these establishments. Ad agencies are said to be the middlemen between advertisers and media vehicles who represent the advertiser. They also employ a number of people who possess specialized advertising talents to apply to the business of creating and placing advertisement (162). The Media is a classification of the third institution of advertising. The media are the initial messengers of the advertising message. It is important to note that media refers to a general class, such as newspapers, television, etc., while a media vehicle refers to the specific class of media (162). The Spectrum, for example, is the media vehicle for The State University of New York at Buffalo s newspaper. The last establishment in advertising consists of other venders, such as the printers, engravers, typographers, and art studios, who assist advertisers, ad agencies, and media vehicles with their workload in presenting the advertisements (163). With this background information into consideration, how do you actually begin and apply the process of advertising a product? With reference to George Felton, author of Advertising: Concept and Copy, the following six steps are a summarized view of the advertising process. The first step in the advertising process is to Create a Strategy. The secret to succeeding in this step is to keep in mind that you want to initiate a process that will talk to people about real needs. What you are saying will be considered your actually strategy, or the plan of attack, or the advertisement s big idea and its selling arguments. How you say it is the presentation of your advertisement, including the image, language, layout, and the media used. When creating a strategy you must keep also in mind 3 key elements; the product, or what you re selling; the consumer, or who you are selling to; and the marketplace, the representative of the best area where your product will out due competition (3-5). The second step it to Research your product. You must become an expert on all aspect of the product and its category you wish to sell. Doing so will allow you to have the necessary knowledge to create your product into something that is in demand and need by consumers. When researching a product you must also find out all opinions, good and bad, about the product to respectively highlight and downsize these qualities. Contacting local dealers and retailers is a third factor to researching a product. This is done to gain added knowledge and an insight to consumers opinions about similar product already on market. This leads into the last aspect in research, which is to study your competition. You must be aware of how a rival company s product stands against yours so you can therefore take steps to improve your product (9-12). Step three in the advertising process is to Understand consumer behavior and Analyze the marketplace. With regards to consumer behavior, you want to keep in mind “what is the highest possible benefit I can claim for this product?” This will allow you to focus on the aspects of you product that will appeal to consumers, therefore stressing these qualities to lead to purchasing in consumers (23-24). When you analyze the marketplace you need to pay close consideration to both the demographics and psychographics involved with your product. Demographics will reveal the socioeconomic and cultural variables associated to your product, while the psychographics will reveal consumer s interests and attitudes toward your product (32-34). Step four in this process is to Write a strategy statement. This is where you need to address 3 specific aspects surrounding your product in the actual advertisement. The first is noting what benefits you are promising in your product. The second is acknowledging who you are making the promise to, and the third is to give reasons why consumers should believe in your product (45-47). Once you have a strategy statement, you want to develop it into a Consumer-Orientated Strategy, step five. This is where you stress the key points of brand image, lifestyle, and attitude in your product. All three points are targeted to the consumer audience and are designed to reflect and appeal to their needs and wants. More specifically, the brand image is the personality of the product. The lifestyle is the desired way of living a consumer will have if they buy this product. The attitude is the reflection of the wants and desires of the consumer (64-70). Volkswagen s advertisements for their new car, The VW Bug, are excellent examples of these three aspects. For the Bug s brand image, VW said “The engines in the front, but the heart s in the same place”(Drivers wanted 5). The advertised lifestyle that is associated with the Bug was shown by a picture of the car with the caption; “Reborn. January 5, 1998″ (Drivers wanted 1). And finally, the attitude of the VW Bug was simply stated by “less flower, more power” (Drivers wanted 15). The sixth and final step to the advertising process is Executions. This is the step where you combine the ideas from the prior steps and decide on the physical look of your advertisement. However, you need to keep in mind that advertising is a relationship between language and imagery, that “words are tied to pictures”. This step is where you decide how television or magazine advertisements will look, how radio ads will sound and so on. This step will decide how each of these vehicles will portray your message about your product to the consumers (79-193). In following these six steps to advertising a product, you can create a successful advertisement to promote your product. It will be one that states benefits, creates a wanting and a desire for the product, and puts forth an image and attitude of a product and its company that will be in demand. Your advertisement can also have the possibility of selling itself. However, you always want to give your product one final advantage on the market, which leads us to the sales aspect of promotion, where salespersons capitalize on the image, lifestyle, and attitude a product has presented and stress its value to the consumers. Sales Personal selling is very important in the automobile industry. Although promotion and advertising is generally paid for and financed by the automobile manufacturer, when the customer walks in to a specific car dealership, they want to be informed and educated on the automobile that will best fit their specific needs. To be an effective salesperson, one must be able to help the customer by understanding their needs and desires and present advantages and disadvantages to various products, not just “sell” the customer. By being able to cater to each individuals needs, one can develop long relationships and assist in creating a better image not only for the local company you work for, but also the corporation as a whole. The stereotype of the salesperson being nothing more than a prepared speech with a large expense account is being replaces by professionals who are problem solvers and customer-relations experts. Since the salesperson is considered to be a representative of the whole company, they are receiving increased responsibility. Instead of just “pushing” and product, the salesperson needs to be able to provide accurate and detailed information about a product, explain and interpret company policies, and even negotiate prices and diagnose technical problems. Sales presentations are very important on the ability to close a sale. There are three different sales presentations that are commonly used: the prepared sales presentation, the consultative selling approach, and the selling formula approach. The prepared sales presentation consists of a memorized presentation that is not adapted to each customer. This is generally only used with short presentations and with salespeople who are generally not very skilled. This is very common with industries such as telemarketing. This technique is good for the firm in the idea that they have complete control over what the sales representative says. The weakness is that all customers are treated alike and it is not very useful for complicated selling situations. The consultative sales approach involves developing a good understanding of the individual customer s needs and wants before trying to close the sale. The sales person asks questions of the customer and together they come to an understanding of what product will fit the customers needs and desires. This method is commonly used in typical business markets where the salesperson has already established a close relationship with a customer. The selling formula approach starts with a prepared presentation outline and leads the customer through some logical steps to a final close. Initially the key points are made by the presenter in a speech or presentation format, and then the customer is brought in to the discussion to help clarify the needs of the customer. Once needs are established, the presenter can continue with the presentation in a format that will suit that specific customer. In general, salespeople and presenters need to follow the simple “AIDA” approach: attention, interest, desire, and action. The time a salesperson may spend on each step may vary with the situation, but the initial aspect of grabbing the customers attention is the most important. By getting the customers attention, the salesperson can continue on to the next step in their sales presentation. Drawing the customers interest is also very necessary. The salesperson can draw interest to a specific product by explaining key details that fit the customers wants and desires. Their presentation must also be able to keep the customers interest by adapting to what the customer likes and dislikes. Desire is the ability to persuade the customer into wanting or believing they need a specific product. This can be an especially effective tool in auto sales because automobiles themselves can spark interest and desire in a customer, and the combination of those desires with an effective salesperson can almost guarantee a close on a sale. Action is the ability to reach the desired goal. On an automobile lot, the salespersons ultimate goal is to provide the customer with the automobile that they want and make the sale. ReferencesAmstell, I. Joel. Advertising. New York: Oceana Publications, Inc., 1969.Adler, Richard. The Future of Advertising: New Approaches to the Attention Economy. Washington, DC: The Aspen Institute, 1997.Drivers wanted. Volkswagen of America, Inc.: U.S.A., 1998.Felton, George. Advertising: Concept and Copy. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1994.Stanley, Richard E. Promotion: Advertising, Publicity, Personal Selling, Sales Promotion. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1977. Feldmaier, Robert. Chief Executive Engineer, Daimler-Chrysler Corp. Interview, 12/98.Alrech, Pamela. American Consumer Inside and Out: Why They Buy. New York: Laidlaw & Sons, 1995.

319