

Annals of Marketing Management & Economics
Vol. 1, No 1, 2015, 85–92

AN INTERDISCIPLINARY APPROACH TO MARKETING

Joanna Szwacka-Mokrzycka

Warsaw University of Life Sciences – SGGW, Poland

INTRODUCTION

The modern economy is characterised by the progressive process of globalisation, involving a need to search for more and more sophisticated methods of reaching the customer in various areas of the enterprise's marketing activity. Therefore, there is a growing need for knowledge of marketing mechanism rules and the ability to apply flexible marketing tools, depending on the operating conditions of the enterprise.

The aim of this study is to present the contribution of various sciences to the creation and emergence of marketing as an independent discipline of science. This article is a review of opinions on the evolution of marketing as a concept and the direction of its development.

MARKETING AGAINST THE BACKGROUND OF OTHER SCIENCES

Marketing is an interdisciplinary science. It involves achievements of many other sciences: economics, sociology, psychology, management and finance. The relationship between marketing and finance is expressed mainly in the methodology of customer or brand valuation studies. The roots of advertising can be traced back to behavioural economics or behavioural finance. When it comes to the achievements of Polish scientists in this field, Tyszka should be mentioned, as he presented the possibility of applying behavioural economics in marketing [Tyszka 1999].

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MARKETING AND ECONOMICS

Undoubtedly, the substantive basis for the development of marketing as an independent discipline of science was created by the broadly understood economics. I would like to refer here to the key concepts of economics that have been adopted in marketing: demand and needs, exchange and market.

I will discuss these economic concepts, and define their utility in the interpretation of marketing. Human needs are defined as a state of feeling a lack of satisfaction. Some scientists define it as a state of desire or a feeling of hunger. Human desires are an expression of the particular means of satisfying the needs and are diverse in their nature. They change and are shaped by the prevailing patterns in a given society, under the influence of various institutions, family, etc. Demand is a desire to possess certain products, supported by purchasing power and the desire to acquire them. People have unlimited needs but limited financial resources.

With this in mind, companies must define the buyer market – the potential of buyers, which determines how many people would like to purchase a product, and how many of them are actually able to acquire it. Human needs and desires, and demand are a starting point for product planning by companies. While each product has a different capacity to satisfy various needs, it is the buyer himself who ultimately decides which product provides the greatest satisfaction. The starting point for this decision is the buyer determining the product's value. The value consists in the buyer's assessment of the overall ability of the product to meet his needs. When choosing a product, the buyer takes into account both its value and its price, and ultimately chooses the product that has the highest value for him in relation to the price.

Marketing activity emerges whenever people make decisions on how to meet their needs through exchange. Transactions are essential elements of exchange, and include an exchange of values between two parties. The success of any transaction depends on the existence of mutually agreed conditions, and the time and the place of the agreement. Exchange (the process of value creation) is the act of one person acquiring a desired product from another by offering something in return, and is the basis of marketing activities. For the exchange to come through, both parties involved in it must agree to its terms. The market consists of current and potential buyers of products. They have specific needs and desires. In order to satisfy such needs and desires, they are willing and able to perform the act of exchange [Kotler 1994]. Thus, the concept of marketing involves human activity occurring in the market processes. Both sellers and buyers are active participants in this process. Sellers are constantly looking for buyers. They identify their needs, design products tailored to customer needs, and are involved in research, pricing, distribution, promotion and logistics activities. In turn, buyers, based on available selection alternatives, decide to purchase products which will properly cater for their needs. In the final analysis, the marketing process is determined by buyers. Another term which requires explanation is the concept of "buyer". In marketing, we distinguish institutional buyers and individual buyers (consumers).

The close relationship between economics and marketing is also expressed in the determination of conditions of buyer behaviour in the market and the consequences of such actions. There are many factors determining changes in consumer behaviour. Some of the key factors include economic, social, psychological and marketing factors. The importance and relevance of each of them is related to the nature of the products that meet consumer needs [Szwacka-Salmonowicz 2003].

Among various economic factors, the most important ones are income, prices and the relationship between them. Supply is also a significant economic factor, but in a market economy it does not impose any restrictions on the free establishment of price and income

relations. Income, prices and supply create material conditions for certain consumption decisions and provide a framework in which psychological, sociological and social factors can manifest themselves. Among economic factors, income is of particular importance. It determines the level of wealth of society and individual households. At the same time, household income is a major determinant when it comes to meeting consumption needs in quantitative and qualitative terms.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MARKETING AND SOCIOLOGY

Marketing is also significantly rooted in sociology. Consumption does not only involve the acquisition of certain nutritional elements or commercial values but also certain “social signs” [Świętochowska 1988]. The search for specific types of to various degrees, related to their symbolic meaning, enables consumers to meet their non-nutritional needs, namely the need to belong and to stand out. Both these needs are present to various degrees in each individual consumer, depending on personality. Various economic and non-economic features of the product and the manner of participation in the consumption process, as well as its time, indicate affiliation with:

- a particular social stratum (class);
- the place of the individual within a social group;
- a specific cultural group.

Consumption habits are quite significant in the analysis of sociological determinants. There are two forms of impact exerted by such habits on consumption decisions. The first is related to the obligation to consume or use certain products within a specific time (or possibly, in a specific form). The second form of impact is related to the prohibition of consumption (taboo products). The emergence of such obligations and prohibitions is associated with the system of values cherished in different social groups how human relationships with the surrounding world are perceived. Consumption habits and customs are elements of culture. Cultural heritage can be divided into material elements and symbolic values, including moral standards and the concepts of good and evil or justice and injustice. The system of moral standards organises the world of values – those which should be accepted and followed, and those that should be rejected. Cultural heritage also governs the perception of various sensations and the manner of response to such stimuli. This also applies to the intensity of influence of positive emotional experience on the amount and structure of the consumed goods.

Culture determines both “quantitative”, as well as “qualitative” standards, i.e. those governing the structure of sensations.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MARKETING AND PSYCHOLOGY

There is a strong substantive relationship between marketing and psychology. It is particularly pronounced in the analysis of determinants of consumer behaviour, the application of qualitative methods to analyse marketing phenomena, and in the sphere of marketing communication. Psychological determinants of consumer behaviour originate from the way in which individual people receive and respond to stimuli. The differences between

individuals in this regard are determined by the difference in the construction of receptors and the processes of learning and information processing. It should be emphasised that each consumer has his own individual manner of responding to stimuli [Świętochowska 1988]. On the one hand, it is connected with the accumulation of learning outcomes, and on the other hand – with changes in the human body resulting from the passage of time (the ageing process). The general principle of selecting products for consumption is to seek positive emotional states associated with consumption itself, as a process and evidence of fulfilment of a particular need. The range of the products that enable compliance with this principle changes as a result of attempts to avoid boredom. The need for a change is further supported by the need to know and the need to understand. Thus, we arrive at a set of incentives to modify our behaviour and, at the same time, to maintain its stability. Depending on the proportion of such incentives in individual people, consumers may be divided into various groups according to the rate at which they accept market novelties.

The process of receiving internal stimuli – those generated by the state of absence – and external stimuli – those related to products (and their properties) – is different for each individual consumer. This results from such factors as, e.g. individual temperament, or rather personality. Particular temperament types are connected with certain behaviours in terms of the consumption of various goods. Regardless of temperament, the intensity of reception of internal and external stimuli also depends on the time which has elapsed since the last act of consumption. The longer the time, the more intense is the need.

Personality is a broader category than temperament. It is understood as either a system of relatively stable features, or a central system responsible for controlling behaviour. One of the elements of personality is the individual's level of self-esteem. Research conducted by Maslov indicates that differences in the level of self-esteem affect the consumption of food products: "A stronger person tends to choose more salty, sour, bitter and spicy foods, i.e. foods with more distinct flavour" [Maslov 1990]. The way we perceive ourselves is not only important in the selection of products with certain qualities but also in the process of decision-making.

Finally, when it comes to needs fulfilment, some decisions are habitual. Such habits, developed over the lifetime of the individual, have important functions. They enable the individual to:

- avoid additional effort (cost) related to making new decisions – collecting and processing information;
- avoid the risk associated with new decisions;
- devote more time to higher needs.

These "economic" functions of habits are implemented whenever the habit itself is the result of optimising original decisions. Apart from such functions, pathological habitual consumption can also be distinguished.

The close relationship between marketing and psychology is also manifested in the creation and implementation of motivational research scenarios. The subject of marketing research is widely used to solve fundamental market problems. Motivational research involves applying techniques which allow insight into circumstances beneath the surface of market phenomena, and in particular, psychological techniques. Motivational research should be conducted in the framework of individual market segments, with the use of various research techniques.

The so-called Target Group Index (TGI), i.e. single-source research, is an important example of how various research methods and techniques are applied to the consumer market [Wielkopolan 2001]. TGI research facilitates multifaceted analysis of the consumer market. It is based on a single source, which means that all the information on the consumption and use of goods, services, media, as well as lifestyles, comes from a single respondent.

MARKETING AND MANAGEMENT

Marketing is also significantly related to the discipline of “management”. From this point of view, it is important to define the concept of customer relationship management (CRM). A closer understanding of this concept includes a number of definitions. The first focuses on the cultural patterns of customer behaviour. The point of reference of CRM strategy is the customer and his needs, which are met by activities properly adjusted to support the sales process. This understanding of CRM is further extended by the next definition, which holds that CRM is a continuous process involving all of a company’s employees. The aim of the process is to build purchasing loyalty and to define customer value. In order to achieve this aim, it is necessary to continuously monitor changes in customer needs.

The application of the customer relationship management system is complex. It is an integral part of the strategy and philosophy of operations of any company for which customer satisfaction is a point of reference. Therefore, CRM is treated as a new approach in management, one which enables companies to integrate their activities related to sales, order implementation and offering services in order to coordinate all elements of the process of communication with the customer.

The CRM system consists of three basic components:

- a communication (interactive) component – responsible for communication with customers;
- an operational component – related to the automation of core business processes, including marketing, sales and services;
- an analytical component – responsible for customer behaviour analysis based on the data collected in the operating system.

The application of the CRM system is based on an extended formula of communication. Among the widespread principles of multichannel customer support, the following are of key importance:

- the speed of response and its influence on the level of customer satisfaction;
- automation of simple operations;
- personalising communication.

An interdisciplinary approach to marketing communication is particularly important. Marketing communication cannot be regarded merely as a marketing tool, but rather as an element of comprehensive business management [Garbarski 2004 – ed.]. With this in mind, we should turn to a key element of market communication: the concept of promotion. The significance of promotion, and the range of promotion forms and methods applied in the process of market communication, increase as the market develops and competition grows.

Promotional activities should be an integral component of any company's marketing strategy, and therefore, promotion policy objectives should be subordinated to the general objectives of the company. In line with its objectives and based on marketing research, the company collects information on the needs and preferences of potential buyers of the product. Market analysis enables the company to develop a set of promotional instruments.

In the implementation of its promotion policy, the company may use various instruments.

The relationship between marketing and management is especially visible on the example of advertising and its association with the brand. Another important issue is brand valuation, where knowledge of management and psychology becomes quite useful.

THE CONCEPT OF MARKETING AND ITS INTERPRETATION

Marketing is derived from the English word market. However, it does not have an adequate equivalent in Polish or most other languages. Hence the name "marketing", first used in the USA at the beginning of the 20th century, was adopted practically throughout the world. However, there is no consensus as to the definition of marketing [Dietl 1985, Garbarski et al. 2008]. A.W. Shaw is considered the forerunner of marketing. He was the first scientist to attempt to systematise marketing issues as a separate area of interest, independent of related disciplines of science [Shaw 1912]. The term "marketing" was introduced by Bartels in the first decade of the 20th century [Bartels 1962]. According to Bartels, marketing is a branch of applied economics, which in the first phase of its development adopted the name "market distribution" [Kamiński 2012]. In terms of the development of the main fields of marketing, the most important definition was proposed by the American Marketing Association (AMA) in 1942. It reads as follows: "Marketing is a business activity focusing on and relating to the movement of goods and services from producer to consumer or user" [Dietl 1985].

The definition proposed by world-renowned marketing expert Philip Kotler requires a broader reference. He defines marketing as: "a social and management process by which individuals and groups are able to obtain what they need and desire, through creating, offering and exchanging valuable products with other individuals and groups" [Kotler 1994]. This definition is deeply rooted in economics and based on such concepts as: needs, desires, demand, product, value, price, transactions, markets and market participants. In Poland, the concept of marketing has been defined by numerous experts recognised at home and abroad. The following names are worth mentioning: J. Dietl, R. Głowacki, L. Garbarski, T. Kramer, I. Rutkowski, Z. Wrzosek.

Dietl defines marketing as "rules and activity based on such rules, aimed at understanding and stimulation of demand and supply, and indirectly exchange, as well as fulfilment of needs, demands and preferences of buyers, while taking into account social, micro- and macroeconomic point of view" [Dietl 1985]. The author emphasises that the concept of marketing was not created as the result of economic theories but rather of numerous social and economic changes in the area of production, sales, market and consumption, and the basic feature of marketing is a defined approach to market phenomena.

Marketing is recognised mainly from the point of view of functions performed by it, and such functions are performed in the market by all of its participants. The concept of marketing is based on the subordination of all activities in the sphere of production and trade to the primary purpose, i.e. meeting the needs of the end-user and stimulating his intention to purchase goods.

According to R. Głowacki, marketing is not only a set of functions for creating a certain utility but also a modern concept of market management: “The concept of marketing involves adjustment of the activities of the company to the needs (demand) of buyers, whereby those are not only currently existing but, primarily, future needs” [Głowacki 1987]. Thus, Głowacki, Kotler and Dietl all emphasise consumer needs and fulfilment of such needs in the market, in the form of demand.

Modern marketing may be defined as conscious operations of companies in the market. These are comprehensive and interdisciplinary operations, creating a defined system centred on the market, and more precisely, buyer preferences and needs [Kos and Szwacka-Salmonowicz 1997].

By linking the concept of marketing to the market, we should emphasise the regulatory impact of the market mechanism on supply, demand and prices [Szwacka-Mokrzycka 2012]. In a progressive approach, market mechanisms could be defined as a “demand and supply game”. In a situation of market equilibrium, the demand for certain products may decrease as a result of changes in purchasing preferences. In this case, a crucial function in the stimulation of demand is performed by the flexible application of marketing instruments, based on marketing research and forecasting changes in consumer tastes and preferences.

CONCLUSION

Marketing involves achievements of many other sciences: economics, sociology, psychology, management and finance. The first scientist to attempt systematise marketing issues as a separate area of interest was A.W. Shaw. He presented marketing issues as a comprehensive system of organised knowledge, in the form of a scientific discipline. At the end of the 20th century and during the first decade of the 21st century, marketing knowledge and conditions for its application were broadened and deepened. Modern marketing is based on an interdisciplinary approach. It is a system of conscious market operations centred on buyer needs and preferences.

REFERENCES

- BARTELS R., 1962. *The History of Marketing Thought*, Grid Pub., Columbus.
- DIETL J., 1985. *Marketing* (3rd edition), PWE, Warszawa.
- GARBARSKI L., RUTKOWSKI J., WRZOSEK W., 2008. *Marketing – punkt zwrotny nowoczesnej firmy (Marketing – a Turning Point of a Modern Company)*, PWE, Warszawa.
- GARBARSKI L. (ed.), 2004. *Kontrowersje wokół marketingu w Polsce – tożsamość, etyka, przyszłość (Controversy over Marketing in Poland – identity, ethics, future)*, Wyd. Uniwersytetu im. Koźmińskiego, Warszawa.

- GŁOWACKI R., 1987. *Przedsiębiorstwo na rynku (Enterprise in the Market)*, PWE, Warszawa.
- KAMIŃSKI J., 2012. „O niektórych problemach dystrybucji rynkowej” A.W. Shawa w setną rocznicę pierwszego naukowego opracowania na temat marketingu (“Some Problems on Market Distribution” by A.W. Shaw, on the 100th Anniversary of the First Study on Marketing)], *Marketing i Rynek* 2.
- KOS C., SZWACKA-SALMONOWICZ J., 1997. *Marketing produktów żywnościowych (Marketing of Food Products)*, PWRiL, Warszawa.
- KOTLER Ph., 1994. *Marketing. Analiza, planowanie, wdrażanie i kontrola (Marketing. Analysis, Planning, Implementation and Control)*, Gebethner & S-ka, Warszawa.
- MASLOV A.M., 1990. *Motywacja i osobowość (Motivation and Personality)*, Instytut Wydawniczy PAX, Warszawa.
- SHAW A.W., 1912. Some Problems on Market Distribution, *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 4.
- SZWACKA-SALMONOWICZ J., 2003. Zmiany zachowań nabywców jako determinanta kształtowania strategii segmentacyjnych przedsiębiorstw przemysłu spożywczego w Polsce (Change of Buyer Behaviour as a Determinant Shaping Segmentation Strategy of Food Industry Companies in Poland), Wyd. SGG, Warszawa.
- SZWACKA-MOKRZYCKA J., 2012. *Marketing – mechanizmy gry rynkowej (Marketing – Mechanisms of the Market Game)*, Wyd. SGGW, Warszawa.
- ŚWIĘTOCHOWSKA M., 1988. Psychospołeczne czynniki kształtujące popyt i spożycie żywności. (Psychosocial Factors Affecting Demand for and Consumption of Food), *Zagadnienia Ekonomiki Rolnej (Issues of Agricultural Economy)* 5.
- TYSZKA T., 1999. Psychologiczne pułapki oceniania i podejmowania decyzji (Psychological Traps in Assessment and Decision-Making), GWP, Gdańsk.
- WIELKOPOLAN B., 2001. *Badania TGI, czyli minicyklopedia wiedzy o konsumencie (TGI Studies, a Mini Encyclopaedia of Consumer Knowledge)*, Media Marketing Polska, Warszawa.

Summary. This article looks at the issue of the interdisciplinary approach to marketing. The purpose of this study is to present the contribution of various sciences to the creation and emergence of marketing as an independent discipline of science. The subsequent parts of this study are devoted to the relationship between marketing and related sciences. In addition, this paper illustrates a pioneering approach to marketing and the directions of its evolution, including the emergence of the extended concept of marketing.

Key words: the concept of “marketing”, interdisciplinary approach to marketing, market mechanism

Corresponding author: Joanna Szwacka-Mokrzycka, Warsaw University of Life Sciences – SGGW, Faculty of Economic Sciences, Department of European Policy, Public Finance and Marketing, Nowoursynowska 166, 02-972 Warsaw, Poland, e-mail: jesm54@wp.pl