

## PROMOTION

is *persuasive communication of selling products or services*. Very often the most important decision, which a marketing manager makes, is how to inform customers about the product. Promotion is not a luxury, it's a necessity. If a business wants to make money and compete, it must promote.

**Promotion includes four methods** – advertising, publicity, personal selling and sales promotion.

**ADVERTISING** has reached fantastic proportions; it has found its way to all the media. Companies use many tricks to push their products – famous people, beautiful pictures, attractive men and women. The greatest advantage of advertising is that it reaches mass audiences quickly at a low cost (per person reached). However, one-shot advertising is a waste of money and quality advertisements will tend to indicate a quality product or service.

The main advertising media are *newspapers, magazines, radio, television and the Internet*. You can also advertise on billboards and posters, neon signs, hot-air balloons, electronic scoreboards at sport stadiums, you can use direct mail or telephone marketing (phoning people at their homes).

*Newspapers* – are distributed to many people; the larger the ad is the more likely it is to be seen; the ad should be unique, if it looks like the rest of the paper, people will not notice it; repetition is important.

*Magazines* may stay in the house for weeks, so the ads have a better chance that they will be read and remembered; the artwork is better quality than newspapers (and those are thrown out after a day).

*Television* is very expensive but the ads reach millions of people and appeal to both sight and sound. Advertisers have a choice of *sponsoring an entire program* or buying *spot time* – announcements during or between programs.

Advertising by means of *trade fairs* and *exhibitions* is very important nowadays. Trade fairs provide an opportunity for advertising new products, for gaining new customers, and for concluding contracts. Advertising has become a prosperous industry that employs thousands of people.

**PUBLICITY (PUBLIC RELATIONS)** is any information in the form of a news story which concerns a company and / or its products and which appears in the media on a non-paid basis, for example recipes which use new food products, or newspaper and magazine reports about car shows.

**SALES PROMOTION** offers added value or incentive to buy or sell the product or service. There are several ways of sales promotion:

- ✓ *Coupon offers* – discounts through coupons are distributed through newspapers, magazines, direct mail or even on the product package.
- ✓ *Refund offers* – manufacturers sometimes give rebates or money to people for trying their products (cash refund for proofs of purchase, usually product labels)

- ✓ **Giveaways** – samples of products, or calendars, pens, matches, key rings, T-shirts, caps with the firm's name and address.

**PERSONAL SELLING** informs customers and tries to persuade them to buy products in an exchange situation.

Businesses that want to survive must know how to gain customer confidence, present their products, and ultimately close the sale. There are **five stages of selling** – help the customer relax, find out what the customer wants, show product knowledge and expertise, close the sale, post-sales contact.

- **First impression counts.** A warm smile, a pleasant appearance, and good eye contact all **help the would-be-client to relax**, safe in the knowledge that he or she is in the hands of a professional.
- **Identify the needs of the prospective client.** This is done by asking questions about the duration of the stay, what services he wants to use, his preferences and anticipated expenditure...After establishing the client's requirements the salesperson can move to the next stage.
- **Demonstrate good product knowledge** – point out not only the variety of services which are offered but also their advantages. It is impossible to be familiar with all the aspects of each service so it is vitally important that the salesperson is able to access information quickly.
- That way, with luck, the salesperson may proceed with **closing the sale** – in other words the client makes a commitment of some kind. The ideal outcome is that the client makes a firm booking by paying the deposit.
- A good sales technique doesn't stop with a successful sale. We should show some interest and care to ensure customer satisfaction. Some form of **post-sales contact** has become a common practice to ensure customers' loyalty and to get a high level of repeated business. The skill of selling successfully requires human interest, dedication, and above all, hard work.