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**QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM IN
TRADE - INTERNATIONALISATION OF
MARKETING RELATIONS WITH
CONSUMERS**

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Abstract: The aim of marketing management is to satisfy the needs and desires of consumers. A lot of factors have influenced the consumers and their purchasing. Besides price and assortment factors there are requirements of consumers to the quality of a product. It means that a product should possess physical, chemical, designing, aesthetic, ecological and other desirable properties that should be expressed before the use of products. Because of this, the quality in the theory and practice of management is beginning to affirm itself. This has been particularly expressed by the introduction of ISO 9000 which makes possible the internationalization of quality system and circulation of goods and services without “physical-fiscal-technical” barriers.

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Introduction

The understanding that the company's success primarily depends on the rational use of production factors, productivity, mass production and cost has long been present in theory. Today this attitude is still not at stake, it is even actualized to the extent to which the factors of production-line goods are expensive and limited. However, marketing-oriented companies in their philosophy of business realized the fact that quality is one of the alternative ways to maintain existing and obtain a better strategic position in the market.

Survival in the market will be provided only for those companies which are able to outperform competitors, and that means being able to offer true quality products and services in the right place and the right way, that is to operate on the principle of “just-in-time”. In the beginning, the companies insisted on product quality, its functional properties, not on content and expectations of the psycho-social and status dimension.

The paper is intended to provide an answer to the question - What constitutes a quality management system in the trade (QMS)? How to achieve the marketing mix of functions and other aspects of quality in the trade? How to provide quality products and services in trade from the point of use value (quality range)? How to achieve quality of service activities in accordance with the requirements of consumers? How to provide customers with products labeled “eco”, “natural” and “healthy”?

As a logical continuation of the research, the issues of trade relations and eco-standards ISO 14000 and the instrumentalization of eco-marketing in trading (eco-mark and eco-packaging) arise. The European Union has actualized and internationalized this issue by establishing quality standards ISO 9000 (ISO 9001:2000 QMS) and eco-standards ISO 14000 (EMS-ISO 14001:2004).

Marketing strategy in trade quality - new model of brand construction

Most of the production of goods, especially consumer goods is carried out through trade. In fulfilling the role of intermediary, the trade is exposed to the demands of millions of consumers' army. As such, it is not a passive mediator between producers and consumers. Each “forgetfulness” of trade in relation to its consumers, whether in terms of range, quality, or services is an anti-marketing act. In order to be accepted by consumers, products of a company's portfolio should meet the requirements of quality, in addition to those of design and price. The consumer is that “king” who requires a high level of quality products and services. Gone are the days when consumers bought goods exclusively at their own risk. Today, that risk is borne largely by trading companies and manufacturers. The customer market provides the consumer with sovereignty by putting him in position to express his preferences by buying products from the “offer package” of a trading company offering a higher level of product quality than its competitors.

Trade must behave as a consumer advocate with the manufacturer. Only a satisfied customer may remain loyal to a particular business enterprise. This implies a continual adjustment of the trade to the changing human needs and desires of consumers. In this regard, quality innovation of the “offer package” of commercial enterprise is particularly important.

Trade market experience of developed countries tells us that there is no successful marketing in the trade without a reliable quality products and services. On the horizon there is the process of creation of a new market philosophy; quality is one of the alternative ways to preserve existing and obtain a better strategic position in the market.

Consumer's expectations about quality are various. In poor markets these expectations are increasingly reduced to the elemental nature of the product, and less on the aesthetic properties, delivery

on time, delivery to customers home, and so on. In developed market economies with a high standard and level of consumption consumers' expectations are more refined, more cultivated, and most importantly they are expressed in a wide range of requirements. In addition to functional properties (durability and usefulness), the consumer also wants to like the goods offered. Therefore, the concept of quality in trade expands to the area of aesthetics. Such requirements impose the need to not only constantly maintaining the achieved level of quality in trade management, but to increasing it as well; this could be achieved through innovation in product assortment, improving style serving, improving the external appearance and interior design shops, preparedness goods for sale, behavior and appearance of sales personnel and communication culture. It is the affirmation of TQM in the trade.

Marketing mix of qualitative properties of products and services to meet customers

The scientific literature has accepted the thesis that a trading company will survive in the market if it is oriented to customers. The marketing management of a trading company sees the quality as a prerequisite for the successful operation of enterprises and creation of the competitive advantage. Adapting to the demands of consumers for the quality, trade management should create a "offer package" "combining: quality products, quality servicing, quality installation, quality of service and quality maintenance. Thus, designed procedures are based on the quality of customer value "package deals" with respect to economic principles (cost/costs).

The marketing function is also supposed to establish a system for continuous monitoring and collecting information. All information relating to the quality of products or services should be analyzed, processed, explained and communicated to the appropriate functions in accordance with established procedures. Such information will help to determine the nature and severity of the problem related to the product or service in relation to the consumer's experience and expectations. Competition, as an important factor in the market, often offers equivalent products and services of similar levels of performance and quality, creating such a market condition that determines the significance of other market factors. Institutions to protect markets, such as consumer associations, environmental movements and other organizations, for infringing the expected level of quality are put into action.

The effect of these institutions can be of great importance to the market position of products. Some products may even be prohibited from sale in the case of failure to observe required safety or other standard regulations. The marketing function at the same time should allow the market to test the readiness to accept new or innovated products. Depending on the type of product, testing may include the following: a) the availability and

acceptability of technical instructions for installation, operation, maintenance and repair, b) the existence of appropriate organizations to distribute and service the customer, c) training staff to use and maintenance products, d) availability of spare parts and e) testing the service.

Some polls suggest consumers are willing to purchase eco-products in allocating 6% -10% more money than for traditional ones. For this purpose, the contemporary conditions of competition in trade bring to light the latest forms of competitive tools.

To highlight the quality of eco-products that occurs before the eyes of consumers, the management of hypermarkets "FIESTA" Houston (Texas) has decided that the hypermarket of 22 000 m² on four floors accommodate a garden in which vegetables grow before the eyes of the consumers from the water, with no land at all (Brown and Loughton, 2001) without artificial fertilizers and pesticides. Not only are the physical needs of consumers met, but the hidden needs of their psyche are met as well. It is obvious that this competitive tool can lead to very successful differentiation of the quality of offers in the eyes of consumers.

Loyalty of consumers as a measure of quality

Combining the available elements is always done according to the selected target groups of consumers. On this basis, there are certain marketing strategies of trading companies. Changes in quality are one of the alternative ways to maintain existing and obtain a better strategic position than that of the competition. The emphasis is to create a preference among consumers for the benefit of portfolio that the firm offers. Each feature of quality products and services offered has a specific weight in the creation of the total supply of commercial enterprise.

Marketing mix as a result of their optimal combination has to be adapted to the selected market segments. It is a process that is manifested in the trade with much more specificity than in manufacturing. For example, while certain characteristics of quality, in terms of functionality, use and safety products, are primary, some other properties are of secondary importance. Since a function of use value and satisfaction of consumer needs is only found in sold goods, external appearance and other aesthetic properties may, in certain market conditions, be given the primary importance.

The product quality as perceived by consumers is a set of physical, structural, environmental, aesthetic, and many other features that come into play when using. We should bear in mind the service of commercial enterprise as an element in the determination of the consumer to purchase.

Quality management system in trade-integrated value chain of different stakeholders

In order to be accepted by the consumers the products range of a trade enterprise should meet the

customer requirements concerning appearance, price and quality. This means that a balance between the needs and demands, on the one hand, and the capabilities manufacturers, on the other side must be established. The above equilibrium cannot be achieved if the manufacturing and trading companies do not cooperate. Joint planning of production and sales range is the best reflection of the marketing unity of production and trade enterprises.

Customers' satisfaction - the starting point in the strategy (QMS) trade

The first and the most important task to be solved in the policy portfolio is identification of consumer demands in terms of qualitative characteristics of the product. It is necessary to determine which features of quality consumers will give priority to. What should a product mean to customers? What problems should it solved for them? Decisions to buy products include selecting among numerous functional, structural and aesthetic properties.

It is obvious that a trading company has to take into account the requirements of increasingly choosy consumers and to be adjusted to them. Even minor changes in the composition or package can increase sales volume because of its greater attractiveness, higher promotional abilities, and easier use of the product or provide a greater protection of the content. The product can sometimes get a quality innovation by changing its packaging, especially if the packaging has a functional use beyond the protection of goods. It should also be noted that the packaging color can lead to certain positive or negative effects for consumers. Colors can cause certain feelings and stimulate the association's attention and associations.

Marketing partnership of trade and manufacturers to overcome the "secrets" of quality management system (QMS)

Optimal quality, seen as a whole, can only be the result of joint efforts and cooperation of all participants in the cycle of creating a product. It is understood that production is central in this cycle, but it cannot solve quality problems (particularly for the quality range) without close cooperation with the trade and consumers.

The producer, starting from procurement of raw materials, through the technological process and the final placing a product to the market and bringing it to consumer, must follow the channel through which the product travels. The production must comply with the existing legislation, regulations and norms of its own production, to make the product capable of satisfying consumers' demands. This created a series of standards ISO 9000 (QMS) which regulate all activities to be undertaken, in order to achieve an international recognition of the company and its product. These activities include: a) marketing research market in terms of needs and demands of consumers, b) development projects (specification and product development), c) acquisition of

adequate reproductive material, d) planning and development process, e) production, f) monitoring, testing and verification, g) packaging and storage, h) sales and distribution, i) installation and commissioning, j) technical assistance and maintenance, k) recycling and industrial destruction of environmentally hazardous products. By undertaking these, we enable the products to appear in the market and to meet technical, safety and environmental requirements. Thus, the constraints of national markets are removed and a free international market, based on flexible contractual relationships of producers and consumers is created. This prevents the marketing of products that do not meet prescribed standards of quality, and consumers are given the opportunity to conduct a proper selection of products. This means that social or economic recognition of the quality of the product is given by the consumers - the market.

Trade needs to have products of the quality that the market or certain categories of consumers are looking for. Therefore, the management of a trading company has to procure and sell quality products that meet their requirements. Failures in the qualitative structuring range are accompanied by frequent sales, excessive inventory and often permanently lost customers. On the other hand, unnecessarily tying funds to the goods with a low turnover coefficient equals the collapse of the company. In most cases, the purchase as a trade function is responsible for qualitative structuring of the range. By procurement market research we find out whether the market has goods of the required quality, what kind of prices there are, who the suppliers are, what delivery terms are and so on. Often, commercial businesses have a number of alternatives in determining the source of procurement, and therefore in practice resort to choosing the best suppliers; non pricing criteria deserve an increasing attention, among which the quality is the most important on.

Trade can in many ways affect the quality range. It primarily depends on the extent of its involvement in the policy process range. Practice shows that most of the advertised products in the store are manufactured with poor quality. That resulted in the appearance of conflict between producers and shops. In such conditions, long-term and firm cooperation of trade and manufacturer becomes a guarantee that consumers have the products of required quality. How to establish such cooperation is the central question to be answered.

Modern commercial practice in this respect provides concrete experiences of a number of commercial firms. Long-term and strong cooperation with the manufacturers contributes to success of these trading companies. Their relationship goes beyond commercial relations. Effective cooperation allows them optimize processes that are necessary in creating a good quality product range, which are: a) analysis and monitoring of final demand in order to promptly supply the necessary information to manufacturers, b) the provision of technical product which can be the basis for cooperation between producers and

trade in the field of innovation, improving product quality and reducing costs, c) achieving a complete quality control of products and d) control of raw materials, and provision of reliable, high-quality sources of supply (Ćuzović and Ivanović, 2010).

Aesthetization of quality management in commerce

Consumers in making decisions about buying products, in addition to the presented qualitative properties, increasingly take into account the quality of services for trading companies. Retail facility location, external and internal appearance, landscaping and ambient culture of communicating the sales staff are of prime importance for the reputation and sales trading company. The consumer is interested to hear from the seller the information concerning a product use, product reliability, differences in relation to similar products of other manufacturers, warranty and service. As a result, for any economic activity is not as substantial the cooperation in trade between consumers and producers as is the case with the provision of retail services. So, there is a need to define the interests of consumers and community goals and interests with manufacturers and trade in terms of quality of services they provide.

Therefore, the trade should be in constant cooperation with the manufacturers to 1) assume any liability for the proper functioning of complex technical and expensive products, 2) to organize customer service and technical support services to consumers, 3) to provide spare parts, 4) to organize delivery of goods to the apartment, its installation, commissioning, and 5) to inform consumers about the latest scientific and technological developments relevant to the provision of quality services

As the highest level of application of modern scientific and technical progress in raising the quality of service at the store, I should mention computerization and on this basis, information technology trade. It significantly contributes to the information standards (BAR-code) that can be read using an automated reader-scanner. Using a unique encryption product and its scanning increase the level of quality and sales services. Direct connection of electronic (scanning) point of sale cash registers to the terminal allows computerized collection of store.

It is evident that consumers are increasingly vocal in their demands for improved services offered by trade. The quality of electronic services and general e-commerce will have a central role in future trade, which will take place over the Internet. This gives grounds for assuming that our trade management to go to meet global trends and look for solutions that this development opens.

Conclusion

Development of marketing concepts in trade company highlights the need in comprehensive approach to the problem of quality. If the quality

implies a set of specific properties meeting customer needs, then one can conclude that it has its individualized dimensions. With quality products and services of individual observations and views are of special value because they answer the company's question of which product characteristics are essential, contradictory or less relevant in a given time and cultural environment. The key factors here are: a) the economic power of the buyer, b) education, c) culture, d) religion, e) personality and personal value system.

Consumers are increasingly oriented to buying organic products labeled as "natural." They are willing to pay for such expensive products. There is a wider range of customers' demands concerning the quality of goods and services. Marketing literature in recent times has often discussed the conclusion that quality is what customers say about, not what the manufacturers and the trade say it is. The fulfillment of these requirements is a measure of the success of marketing strategy of a company.

The existence of quality standards is the best protection for consumers and traders from careless and incompetent manufacturers. In this light there is the need of cooperation between business partners and qualitative formation of "package" of the total offer. The European Union has actualized and internationalized this issue by establishing quality standards ISO 9000 (QMS) and eco-standards ISO14000 (EMS).

This gives grounds to, when it comes to quality in the trade, talk about the unity of the quality of the product (range) and quality of services. Therefore, a marketing-oriented management of commercial enterprises must not only force the functional or service component, but to accept them in mutual unity as well.

With the implementation of ISO 9000, ISO 14000, HACCP, the CE mark, the quality management system in terms of technical, technological and environmental demands of consumers comes to the fore. Quality management system in the store is moving towards aesthetization of quality

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