

Chapter 19

Marketing of Library Management Software Products

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ABSTRACT

Marketing is a human activity and it is the process of developing, promoting, and distributing products in order to satisfy customer needs and wants. Products include both goods and services. Goods are also known as tangible products. Services are things which one may not be able to touch, smell, or taste and are called intangible products. The traditional marketing concept focuses on the flow of goods and services from producer to consumer or user. In modern times, marketing is viewed as the anticipation, management, and satisfaction of demand through the exchange process. Product marketing and service marketing are essentially the same. The basic task of marketing remains the same irrespective of the products or services involved in the deal. Service is an activity or benefit that one party can offer to another that is essentially intangible and does not result in the ownership of anything.

INTRODUCTION

The marketing concept is a business philosophy which tells that the purpose of any business is to satisfy the wants and needs of consumers at a profit. A market-oriented organization defines its business in terms of the benefits its customers seek.

The evolution of marketing can be traced to people's earliest use of exchange process. It has really developed since the industrial revolution, as mass production and improved transportation enabled more transactions to occur. Thus, marketing has been expected to emerge as a social and managerial process by which individuals and groups obtain what they need and want through creating and exchanging products (Kotler, 2000).

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MODERN MARKETING CONCEPT

Modern marketing concept emerged in the 1950's as a new philosophy of business management. The modern marketing concept advocates that a business organization exists to satisfy the wants of its targeted customers (*McDaniel, 2008*). It approaches decision making from systems view of management and seeks to earn a satisfactory return on owner's investment in the business.

The philosophy of modern marketing concept focuses on the integration of all business activities towards a specific goal (customer satisfaction) which can alone lead to effective business management. No longer can the business produce whatever it is capable of producing, and offer the product unmodified to customers. Innovative business organizations found that products and services had to be expressly designed to meet customer needs and their line divisions have accepted marketing as a way of life.

CUSTOMER ORIENTATION

Customers are the focal points for all decision making in the organization and all functional areas are geared to satisfy targeted customer's wants. The marketing concept views customer orientation as the means to end of achieving the organization's goal. In the words of Stanton, marketing consists of all activities designed to generate and facilitate any exchange intended to satisfy human needs or wants. In this view "marketing is a total system of business activities designed to plan, price, promote and distribute want satisfying products, services and ideas to target market in order to achieve organizational objectives"

From the societal point of view, marketing links a society's material requirements and its economic patterns of response to satisfy the needs and wants of the consumers. It requires that marketers strike a balance among;

1. Their targeted customer's wants
2. Their targeted customers long-term best interests
3. The society's long-run best interests and
4. The firms long-run return on investment

The modern marketing concept is even tougher to implement than the traditional marketing concept. It requires marketers to accept their social responsibility. Further, it also makes the marketers to recognize that they exist within a larger social system that includes non-customers also, to whom they have obligations.

Conceptually, marketing may be described as marketing begins with determining customer needs and wants and then producing services and products to satisfy those needs and wants at a profit to the institution providing them. Functionally, it may be stated that, in broadest terms, marketing aims to manage, anticipate and identify the needs of customer and satisfy them through products or services at the right price, time and place. Organizationally, marketing may be described as combining at least the operations of advertising, public relations, sales, sales training, market and social research, service/product development and pricing into a coordinated unit thereby giving a synergistic effect in dealing with virtually all consumer oriented matters of the business.

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