

SOCIAL MARKETING VS COMMERCIAL MARKETING: SOMETHING IN COMMON FOR GAINS

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ABSTRACT

Social marketing is a distinct marketing discipline and it was first coined formally 41 years ago by Philip Kotler and Gerald Zaltman, based from a pioneering article in the Journal of Marketing by Kotler and Levy in 1969. These articles describe “the use of marketing principles and techniques to advance a social cause, idea or behavior”. Indeed, social marketing shares much in common with marketing in the business world. In business marketing, sellers dispatch goods, services, and communications (e.g. advertising) to the market and in return, money (consumer purchases), information (consumer research), and customer loyalty are received. However in social marketing more concern with the principles and techniques to create, communicate and deliver value in order to influence target audience behaviors that benefit society (public health, safety, the environment, and communities) as well as the target audience (Kotler, Lee and Rotschild, 2006). On the other note, social marketing is more concern with “influencing public behavior”. Many concepts and tools are shared by marketing goods and services and social marketing. This conceptual paper explores the relationship and benefits gained by those who know the application. .

Keywords: behavior, gains, marketing, social marketing

I INTRODUCTION

Changing attitudes is among the most difficult things for us to do. Much of the problems that arise in today's society a very close relationship with our failure to modify attitudes and behavior. In Malaysian context, we are always displayed with several issues that are closely associated with attitudes. Intervention either by the Government or by the NGOs to modify the behavior and attitudes of people to an issue has been done in various forms and methods. This effort is not a new thing and debate toward an eventual modification of the general attitude of the community people continuously growing. This paper will focus on the discussion to look at the variations in the point of differences and similarities between social marketing and commercial marketing.

DEFINITION: SOCIAL MARKETING AND COMMERCIAL MARKETING

Specifically, as a discipline social marketing as a field of study refers primarily to efforts focused on influencing behaviours in particular in a few aspects such as to improve health, protect the environment, and any other social-related issue. Social marketing is typically defined as a program-planning process that applies commercial marketing concepts and techniques to promote voluntary behavior change (Andreasen, 1995, Kotler, Roberto and Lee, 2002). Hastings & Saren's (2003) definition of social marketing includes also the analysis of the social consequences of commercial marketing policies and activities, e.g., monitoring the effects of the tobacco or food industries' marketing practices. Social marketing is a process that applies marketing principles and techniques to create, communicate and deliver value in order to influence target audience behaviours that benefit society (public health, safety, the environment, and communities) as well as the target audience (Kotler, Lee

and Rothschild, 2006). From other perspective, Bill Smith (2006) define social marketing as a process for creating, communicating and delivering benefits that a target audience (s) wants in exchange for audience behaviour that benefits society without financial profit to the marketer. Whereas, another scholar in the social marketing discipline, Alan Andreasen (1995) view social marketing as the discipline that apply commercial marketing technologies to the analysis, planning, execution and evaluation of programs designed to influence the voluntary behaviour of target audiences in order to improve their personal welfare and that of their society. Social marketing is the systematic application of marketing concepts and techniques to achieve specific behavioural goals relevant to a social good (Jeff French and Clive Blair-Stevens, 2005). It is clear that social marketing can be deduced as a discipline that applies the techniques, tools and principles that modified commercial marketing practices to affect the target groups to modify their behavior and their attitude towards certain issues. This application translated voluntarily by the target group and this is among the most important elements and other elements of the social marketing.

According to Andreasen (1994, 1995), social marketing is the application of marketing concepts and tools drawn from the private sector to programs designed to influence the voluntary behavior of target audiences to achieve social goals. As far as social marketing terminologies is concern, it is originally stimulated by an article by a sociologist, G. D. Wiebe in the 1950s (Wiebe, 1951-52), social marketing's intellectual roots within the marketing field are found in Kotler, Levy and Zaltman's initial use of the term in 1969 and 1970 (Kotler and Levy, 1969; Kotler and Zaltman, 1971; Elliott, 1991). Its roots as a practice go back as least as far, beginning with family planning applications in the 1960s (Manoff, 1975; Harvey, 1999). Within the academic literature, its introductory period lasted perhaps 20 years, during which time social marketing struggled to establish a separate identity (Luck, 1974; Bartels, 1974), while at the same time broadening its scope (Andreasen, 2001).

Next, what is marketing? Based from this following statement clarifies that there is actually no universal agreement on what marketing is all about:-

“It has been described by one person or another as a business activity; as a group of related business activities; as a trade phenomena; as a frame of mind; as a coordinative, integrative function in policy making; as a sense of mind; as an economic process; as a structure of institutions; as the process of exchanging or transferring ownership of products; as a process of concentration, equalization, and dispersion; as the creation of time, place and possession utilities; as a process of demand and supply adjustment; and many other thing” (Marketing Staff of the Ohio State University, 1965).

Despite of many confusing in defining marketing, the main idea of marketing lies in the exchange process. The simple concept in this discipline was it is no marketing occur unless there are two or more parties, each with something to exchange, and both able to carry out communications and also distribution. It is indeed quite close to what has been mentioned by Belshaw when in an excellent study of marketing exchange and its evolution from traditional to modern markets, shows the exchange process in marketing to be a fundamental aspect of both primitive and advanced social life (1965). In this context, way back in 1935, American Marketing Association (AMA) defined marketing as “the performance of business activities that direct the flow of goods, and services from producers to customers” Then in 1985, AMA amended the definition of marketing is “the process of planning and executing the conception, pricing, promotion, and distribution of ideas, goods and services to create exchanges that satisfy individual and organizational objectives. In 2004, AMA once again has been revised the definition of marketing as follows “marketing is an organizational function and a set of processes for creating, communicating and delivering value to

customers and for managing customer relationships in ways that benefit the organization and stakeholders”

SOCIAL MARKETING IN LITERATURE

The terms of social marketing firstly coined in 1971 by Philip Kotler and Gerald Zaltman based from their pioneering article, “Social Marketing: An Approach to Planned Social Change” which has been published in the Journal of Marketing. Soon after that, more distinguished researchers and practitioners join this voice and promoting this terms, this is including Alan Andreasen from Georgetown University, James Mintz from Federal Department of Health, Canada, Bill Novelli a cofounder of Porter Novelli Associates and also Bill Smith from Academy for Educational Development. In 1980s the term been use by World Bank, World Health Organization and also Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and in 1990s an academic programs are established, such as at the university of Strathclyde in Glasgow as well at the University of South Florida. In 2000s a lot of text book as well as the conferences relate to social marketing being held and this shown the progress of this discipline worldwide.

The field has grown dramatically over the years-although still exhibiting some of the signs of post-adolescent angst (Andreasen, 2004). Probably the most significant development during the most recent growth period has been the migration of social marketing from its initial close identification with the marketing of *products* involved in social change (condoms, pills, oral rehydration salts) to a broader conception of its potential areas of application. This is a pattern consistent with a general model of intersector transfer of marketing concepts and tools from the commercial to the nonprofit sectors (Andreasen, 2001). Social marketers, both scholars and practitioners, have come to accept that the fundamental objective of social marketing is not the promotion of ideas (as Kotler and Zaltman suggested in the 1970s) but the *influencing of behavior* (Andreasen, 1995). It is also recognized that, while products are often involved develop and implement strategies and tactics toward changing behaviours (Andreasen and Kotler, 2003; Kotler and Roberto, 1989).

Andreasen (1995) say that in practice, any social marketers work to encourage individuals or groups to adopt behaviours that are socially desirable. Before that, Andreasen, (1994) clarified that “influencing behavior is social marketing’s fundamental objective.” Social marketing is a relatively new agent of social/behavior change that resulted from the Kotler and Levy (1969) proposal that marketing principles and tactics could be applied beyond their traditional boundaries to the marketing of services, persons, and ideas. Following Kotler and Levy’s (1969) suggestion that “marketing is a pervasive societal activity that goes considerably beyond the selling of toothpaste, soap, and steel” and asking “whether the principles of ‘good’ marketing in traditional product areas are transferable to the marketing of services, persons, and ideas,” the debate began. One group of writers argues for the expansion of the concept of marketing (Kotler and Levy, 1969; Kotler and Zaltman, 1971; Lazer, 1969; Shapiro, 1973) while another group (Bartels, 1974; Hutton, 2001; Luck, 1969, 1974) questions the long-term effects of applying marketing concepts to broader contexts, inferring that the definition of marketing should include only buy-and-sell transactions.

Within the debate, a number of significant theoretical contributions were made. For instance, Kotler and Zaltman (1971) provided examples of churches, museums, and symphonies using marketing to increase membership, and charities using marketing to raise money. Kotler (1972) then crafted a generic and very broad concept of marketing. Meanwhile Shapiro (1973) demonstrated how marketing theory could be applied to non-government non-profit organizations. Bagozzi (1974) proposes marketing as a behavioural system of exchange, which established the basis for the future development of social marketing theory. By the late 1970s, the application of marketing tactics to areas other than the private sector had increased dramatically, identifying the importance of considering strategies and tactics in

addition to those traditionally employed (Rothschild, 1979). The rationale for this shift was to account for the complex differences between sectors (Laczniak, Lusch, and Murphy, 1979). In this context, social marketing developed rapidly in the practitioner and applied research (DeJong, 1989) settings driven by the increased need of nonbusiness organizations for marketing services.

Recently, research has pointed out some of the antecedents that allow for social marketing to occur. These include (among others): (a) open competition for the acceptance of ideas and behaviors that exist in developed countries (Rothschild, 2001), (b) increasing pressures on policy makers to implement their policies, and (c) increasing mobility in society with its accompanying decrease in the strength of traditional group norms influencing individual behaviors (Ouchi, 1980). Defining social marketing and determining where it fits among the many sub disciplines of marketing has been a challenge for the field (Andreasen and Kotler, 2003). McMahon (2001) positions social marketing as “part of a larger, non-private market sector marketing concern which includes public-sector marketing, government marketing, political marketing, not-for-profit marketing, non-government-organization (NGO) marketing, charitable marketing, cause-related marketing, and voluntary or third-sector marketing.” There is general support for the current definition articulated by the Social Marketing Institute (2003), defining social marketing as “the planning and implementation of programs designed to bring about social change using concepts from commercial marketing,” although other theorists support similar yet subtly different definitions. Andreasen and Kotler (2003) stress that social marketing benefits the target audience and society in general, not the marketer. Brenkert (2001) clarified that when defining social marketing, one must consider that it is defined by its twofold nature: “its aim and the method it adopts to achieve that aim.” Rothschild (2001) supports a definition that includes the dual objective of encouraging behaviour change in the target audience and supporting the development of a related environment that is conducive to that change.

SOCIAL MARKETING VS COMMERCIAL MARKETING: SOMETHING IN COMMON

This section will discuss some of the differences between social marketing and commercial marketing. The first aspect of difference is in term of 4Ps. In this context, the marketing is focusing through the lens of the right to produce a product that is aided by the promotion is compatible, or placed in strategic locations and also at the right price and reasonable. These key variables in the marketing mix have been named the four P's by McCarthy (McCarthy, 1968).

According to Kotler & Neller (2005), product is anything that can be offered to a market to satisfy a want or need. It isn't, as many typically think, just a tangible offering like soap, tires, or hamburgers. It can be one of several types: a physical good, a service, an experience, an event, a person, a place, a property, an organization, information, or an idea. Products in commercial marketing is quite clear when it is designed in order to meet the needs and wants of market in which, it will offer the right price, and if it fulfills the tastes of the market, then it will be an exchange occur when both party willing to buy and sell those product or services. In commercial marketing, the product is usually in the form of either a tangible product and also in the form of services, such as car and banking services or education at the university. While in social marketing, the marketers are selling a desired behaviour (e.g. exercise, recycle, and vote), which come under the category of idea. Besides that, the term product in social marketing also include among others the creation, distribution, and or promotion of a physical good (e.g. dye tabs to test for leaky toilets), a service (e.g. a tobacco quiltine), an experience (e.g. reading 20 minutes to a child at night), an event (e.g. natural gardening demonstration) and so forth. Products in social marketing is the idea and the most challenging parts here is how the best to delivered it effectively.

The product design in social marketing far more challenging compared to the process in commercial marketing. This is closely related to the effort to provide a consistent explanation and understanding of ideas to the market. Take the example of prevention of corruption associated with the campaign. A social objective of the introduction of anti-corruption campaign is to communicate to the public about the negative effects that can occur as a result of corruption. Obviously, there is not a clear product here. Based on product level, the first product level which is core product in social marketing it is talk about the benefit, same as been discuss in commercial marketing. However in terms of the actual product, it is found to be slightly different when in commercial marketing, it refers to the actual product, such as a car, telephone phones and so on, but for social marketing, the actual product here has slightly different when it refers to changes in behavior and attitudes of society on issues. Further to the third level of product which is augmented product, in social marketing it refers to aspects of tangible objects and services of a marketing campaign for a commercial but it refers to anything that could be offered by the seller to the buyer such as warranty, after sales service, gift and so forth.

In this context, it is very clear that as mentioned by Kotler and Levy that identical reasoning is needed by those who market altruistic causes (e.g. charity giving, blood and organ donation campaign), personal health causes (e.g. non-smoking, drug abuse, nutrition campaign) and social betterment causes (e.g. civil rights, improved housing, better environment). It is clear that in social marketing, the marketer concerned shall clearly state the social objectives to be achieved through the featured products and the level of social behavior and attitude change to be achieved. This situation has a major impact in terms of changes in values, beliefs, affects and behavior. Thus the design concepts of the social product social marketing is much harder and more from the very difficult to influence the "purchase" of this product compared to products in commercial marketing

The second control variable in marketing is promotion. Promotion is persuasive communications designed and delivered to inspire your target audience to action. It is the communication persuasion strategy and tactics that will make the product familiar, acceptable, and even desirable to the audience. In principle, the application of commercial marketing campaigns and social marketing is not much different. Promotional activities play a very important role to inform and disseminate the information in the form of a product whether tangible objects and services offered by neither commercial marketing nor ideas can be shared by social marketing among the target market. Here, there is some communication mix that will be used by both groups of this marketing discipline. The social campaign strategist will tend to think of this as mass media communication, but promotion is actually a much larger idea (Kotler & Zaltman, 2005). According to Kotler and Zaltman, promotion includes the following major activities, which is shown in Table 1:-

Table 1: Promotion Major Activities

Advertising	Any paid form of nonpersonal presentation and promotion of products, services, or ideas by an identified sponsor. Advertising can be done through many mediums such as electronic media, print media, outdoor advertising and so forth
Personal Selling	Any paid form of personal presentation and promotion of product, service, or ideas by an identified sponsor
Publicity	Any unpaid form of nonpersonal presentation and promotion of products, services, or ideas where the sponsors are unidentified
Sales promotion	Miscellaneous paid forms (special programs, incentives, materials and events) designed to stimulate audience interest and acceptance of a product

Source: Kotler & Zaltman, 2005

Place is where the product can be obtained (Kotler & Zaltman, 1971). Hasting & Haywood (1991) define place as a process which identifying ways to reach the consumer and Wilson & Olds (1991) define place a process to make the product available to the customer. The place also can be considered where the consumers put motivation into action (Kotler & Zaltman, 1971). The last definitions by Kotler & Zaltman are really referring the place in the social marketing. In terms of place in social marketing, to be specific it is where and when the target market will perform the desired behaviour, acquire any related tangible objects, and receive any associated services (Kotler & Lee, 2008). However in commercial marketing, place is often referred to as the distribution channel, where the target market purchase or buy the products or services.

Another Ps which distinguishes between this two marketing were price. Price is one of the P's which consider the exchange theory. Exchange theory in marketing is defined as the transfer of something of value between two parties. (Flora et al., 1997). It can include among others giving up one behavior in exchange for something else (Hastings & Haywood, 1991). The exchange emphasis is on voluntary exchange (versus coercion), and should emphasize the benefits to the customers by participating in the exchange (Lefebvre & Flora, 1988). Closely related to the concept of exchange is the process of positioning. In social marketing, positioning is the process of showing the key benefits of the product relative to the competition (Wienrich, 1999). On another perspective, in social marketing, price also can be defined as the cost that the target market associates with adopting the desired behaviour. In that sense, the commercial marketing however define price as the "The amount of money charged for a product or service, or the sum of the values that consumers exchange for the benefits of having or using the product or service" (Kotler & Armstrong, 2001).

There are a few more differences between social marketing and commercial marketing. According to Kotler and Lee (2008), the other differences can be seen from the Table 2 as shown below.

Table 2: Differences between Commercial Marketing and Social Marketing

Aspect	Commercial Marketing	Social Marketing
Product sold	In the case of commercial marketing, the marketing process primarily around selling goods and services	In the case of social marketing, the marketing process is used to sell desired behaviour
Primary Aim	In commercial marketing, the primary aim is financial gain	In social marketing, the primary aim is societal gain
Segmentation	In commercial marketing, marketers often favour choosing primary target market segments that will provide the greatest volume of profit	In social marketing, segments are selected based on a different set of criteria , including prevalence of the social problem, ability to reach the audience, readiness for change, and others
Competition	In commercial marketing, marketer is most often focused on selling goods and services, thus the competition is often identifies as other organizations which offering similar goods and services or ones that satisfy similar needs	Meanwhile in social marketing, since the focus is on selling a behaviour, the competition here is most often the current or preferred behaviour of our target market and perceived benefits associated with that behaviour, including the status quo

source : Kotler and Lee (2008)

Despite these differences, again Kotler and Lee (2008) found many similarities between these two which discuss in Table 3.

Table 3: The Similarities between Commercial Marketing and Social Marketing

Aspect of common	Explanation
A customer orientation is critical	The marketer knows that the offer (product, price, place) will need to appeal to the target audience, solving problem they have or satisfying a want or need
Exchange theory is fundamental	The target audience must perceive benefits that equal or exceed the perceived costs they associate with performing the behaviour (
Marketing Research	The research is equally important for both disciplines in order to understand the specific needs, desire, beliefs and attitudes of target adopters
Audiences are segmented	Strategies must be tailored to the unique wants, needs, resources and current behaviour of differing market segments
All 4Ps are considered	Both disciplines apply all the 4ps and all of the Ps were use in an integrated approach and not just rely on specific P's only
Results are measured and used for improvement	Feedback is valued and seen as "free advice" on how to do better next time

source : Kotler and Lee (2008)

CONCLUSION

The development of social marketing over the past four decade when first been introduced was overwhelming. From being predominantly approach to disseminate an idea about something to the community, the approaches taken now by social marketing far more prominent and visible. Now, it does not merely disseminate about particular idea or information on issues of concern to the community, but more importantly, social marketing is now more emphasized on the efforts to influence the beliefs, attitudes, behaviour and values of the individual and society as a whole. This paper has been looking into the definition between social marketing and commercial marketing. This paper further examines the development and also some literature about social marketing. The last components in this paper were about the differences and similarities between the two. Notwithstanding of the differences, the application of techniques, tools and principles of commercial marketing in social marketing should encourage and Malaysian government should look into this matter seriously in the future, in order to achieve a better quality of life in our society.

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