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Revision

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“What great things would you attempt if you knew you could not fail?”

Robert H. Schuller

This chapter gives a broad recapitulation of the topics covered in *Marketing Perspectives*. Some closing thoughts are given on keeping marketing as a subject in perspective, alongside notes on where we are in the lifetime of marketing, before each chapter in turn is offered in revision form, with the key learnings from each chapter being refreshed.

Perspectives on marketing

This book has attempted to give you a tour through some specific perspectives on marketing. Marketing is a broad subject area and whole books could be (and have been) written on the subject matter covered in every chapter here. So do not be tricked into thinking this book covered everything one needs to know on the subjects discussed. However, it did give you a basis on which you can develop your knowledge of each subject area.

One of the lovely things about marketing is its range of characteristics, from scientific and mathematical precision, all the way to pure creativity and artistic verve. Regardless of your interests and persuasions, you can find a home within the field of marketing that suits you.

Something that a book called ‘Marketing Perspectives’ would be wise to do as it concludes is to remind its readers of the necessity of keeping things in perspective. Marketing is a young professional field and so is management as an academic field. That means there is a lot of change and development still to take place. As technological innovation rapidly siezes control of society, the nature of work continues to evolve. The nature of marketing and the business world in ten years’ time is likely to include things that we currently cannot

even conceive of. The jobs that many people reading this chapter will be doing in their careers do not yet exist because they belong to an industry that has yet to be invented. So do your best to see the underpinning ideas that emerge from each chapter and remember there is no alternative to real experience. The best way you can prepare yourself for a successful career in business is to combine your theoretical knowledge with real practical experience. You wouldn't trust a doctor to treat you if they'd never engaged with a patient before, nor should you expect to be an expert marketer just by reading some books and journal articles – practical and theoretical knowledge need to be grown together.

Even the simplest innovations can represent significant opportunities for people in a certain context. Something as simple as standardised time had a revolutionary impact on the ability for businesses to operate more effectively and efficiently. Time is such a recently formalised concept that we should always keep in mind that it is both a construct we invented and one that we made significant progress without. For marketers, this reminds us not to take the status quo for granted, no matter how normal it seems or how difficult it is to imagine how we lived without it before (think about how normal Facebook and social media seem to us now).

Arguably the introduction of formal time-keeping across large geographical expanses came in North America when the railroads required to run on a standard timetable for safety reasons (avoiding collisions in particular). It was a Scottish engineer (Sir Sanford Fleming, who was involved in the development of railroads in Canada) who introduced the idea of global time zones. All railroads in Canada and the United States adopted these standard time zones in 1883. However, formalised time zones were not passed into law until the United States Standard Time Act of March 19th, 1918. This means that upon the publication of this book, internationally standardised time is less than 100 years old (please forgive the irony of stating how old time is). Another more recent example is of 'sun time' in the Middle East in the 1960s. Arab locals would make arrangements according to the sun, e.g. '2 in the evening' would be 2 hours after sunset. This caused issues with Western business people arriving in the Middle East following the oil deals made in the 1950s, who preferred to make the arrangements in relation to GMT. Can you imagine how that simple difference would have influenced the way everybody had to think when conducting matters of business? The lesson here is that being able to retain a solid perspective on what the world is like right now and what it was like before, best prepares you for being able to shape the future.

The following sections briefly return to the concepts in each chapter, and highlight what has been covered in this book.

Recapitulation

■ History

Historical research is a growing field within the academic discipline of marketing. This chapter looked at debates over the purpose of studying the history of marketing, as well as discussions of what that history might include. The benefits of historical understandings are summarised by Stearns (1998) as:

- Helping us to understand people and societies.
- Helping us to understand change and how things came to be.
- Contributing to our personal and social identities.
- Providing moral understanding and groundings for good citizenship

Similarly, a healthy understanding of the histories of marketing provides the discipline with identity, assists in moral understanding and helps to ensure that marketing can act for progress for business, consumers, and wider society. Historical research in marketing has developed in two broad areas:

- Marketing history (analysis of companies, industries or economies in order to explore the histories of advertising, retailing, product design, distribution, and other elements of the marketing mix)
- The history of marketing thought (scrutinising the philosophical development of marketing ideas, concepts and theory).

The pivotal historical points introduced were:

- The pre-modern expansion of trade between groups
- The development of ancient civilisations in Greece and Rome
- The regression of marketing in the warring Middle Ages
- Marketing's re-emergence amidst the growth of the later Middle Ages and early modern periods (including the impact of colonial expansion)
- The industrial revolution and its expansion of trade and consumption
- The mass consumption of the post-Second World War era.

The case study of Cadbury offered an example of a company with a rich marketing history spanning nearly 200 years, whose success relied upon