

# 10

## Marketing, Communications and Public Relations

### In this chapter you will cover:

- History and theory of marketing
- Application of the marketing concept to events
- Events marketing research and planning
- The five stages of marketing research
- Estimating attendance and evaluation
- Consumer behaviour at events
- The consumer decision-making process
- The events consumer and segmentation
- The events marketing mix
- Marketing communications
- Relationship marketing for events
- Experiential marketing

The aim of this chapter is to apply marketing process models to the events industry from conception to evaluation, to examine marketing research, segmentation, targeting and positioning of specific events as examples, and to highlight the application of marketing research. The focus will be upon positioning an event favourably in the mind of its target market in order to ensure long-term success.

The chapter will begin with a brief look at the history and theory of marketing followed by a discussion of marketing concepts and marketing research in relation to events. The chapter will then examine the behaviour of consumers and how they can be segmented. A detailed discussion will then follow on the marketing mix and its constituents: product, price, place and promotion, as applied to events. Finally, how events can be positioned within the marketplace to compete successfully and how relationship marketing can be applied to achieve repeat visitors and loyalty will be discussed.

## History and theory of marketing

The *marketing era* could be said to have begun in the early 1950s, when the public appetite for new goods and services appeared insatiable. In western markets consumption rose substantially as prices fell. This was also the period when independent commercial television was launched in the UK and this became the marketer's most powerful mass market communication medium. The influence of marketing was such that consumer spending doubled during this time (Egan, 2011).

## Application of the marketing concept to events

Marketing is one of the concepts in management which is difficult to define. If you ask people in a business what they understand about marketing and the role of the marketing department, you could expect to get a variety of answers. There have been numerous definitions of marketing but no single definition is correct; they are simply opinions of how people view marketing. Below are just a few of the definitions which have been used.

*The process by which companies create value for customers and build strong customer relationships in order to capture value from customers in return.* (Kotler and Armstrong, 2014: 27)

*Marketing is the achievement of corporate goals through meeting and exceeding customer needs better than the competition.* (Jobber and Ellis-Chadwick, 2019: 8)

The above definitions do seem to be different. However, what is needed is an explanation which will apply to every company in every situation. In the UK, the definition given by the Chartered Institute of Marketing is widely accepted:

*Marketing is the management process responsible for identifying, anticipating and satisfying customer requirements profitably.* (Chartered Institute of Marketing, 2020)

This definition is an elegant description of what marketing means. Of the many definitions that are available it is the most to the point. It emphasises the wide scope of marketing, ranging from the initial identification of customers' needs, by means of research, through to the eventual, profitable satisfaction of those needs.

Academic research on marketing in events management was slow to get off the mark, as Shannon noted when discussing, in particular, sports marketing:

*The primary focus of most of the sport marketing publications, to date, appears to be in the marketing communications (advertising/promotion) and consumer behaviour areas of marketing. There appears to be less research in the pricing, product, and distribution/place areas of the marketing mix. These areas provide rich research potential for future studies in sport marketing.* (1999: 517)

Taking into consideration the broad definitions of marketing, events marketing can be defined as:

*A management process to achieve the objectives of an organisation through identifying, anticipating and satisfying the needs of the customers who attend an event and building strong customer relationships.*

In order to satisfy the customer an event organisation must identify what business it is in and the purpose it is serving to satisfy customer requirements.

The following list shows the marketing activities that an event manager should undertake to produce a successful event or festival:

- Analyse the target market to establish appropriate event components, or products.
- Establish what other competitive events could satisfy similar needs, in order to ensure their event has a unique selling proposition.
- Predict how many people will attend the event.
- Predict at what time people will come to the event.
- Estimate what price they will be willing to pay to attend the event.
- Decide on the type and quantity of promotional activities needed to inform and attract the target market to the event.
- Decide how the tickets to the event can reach the target market.
- Establish the degree of success for marketing events.

All the above activities are important in the organisation of a successful event. In order to achieve these marketing principles, the business will carry out a series of marketing functions such as:

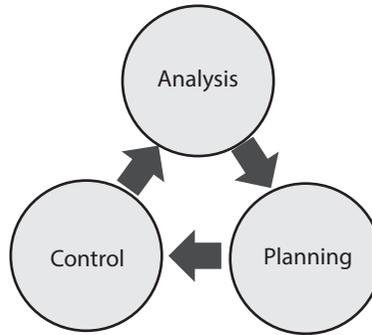
- Managing change
- Coordinating marketing planning control
- Managing the effects of competition
- Ensuring the survival of the business.

The success of any business depends on its ability to satisfy the customer. This statement suggests that the main purpose of the marketing function should also be the purpose of other functions within the organisation. The enterprise stands to win or lose by its ability to attain such a goal. To enable organisations to satisfy their customers effectively there are a number of questions which need to be asked:

- Who is our customer and what exactly are his or her needs?
- Who is responsible for satisfying the customer?
- What do we need to 'know' before we can commence the task of planning the process of satisfying customers, now and in the future?
- To what extent do our customers expect us to be creative and innovative in whatever we do?

## Events marketing research and planning

Marketing research has a specific function which is to aid effective planning and decision-making in markets. It plays an important part in designing and implementing an effective strategy. There are three areas of activity involved in successful marketing management of events.



**Figure 10.1:** The process of design and implementation of marketing management of events strategy

### **Analysis**

This is a crucial area of marketing. Its aim is to find out about the market in which the company operates or which the company is planning to enter. Through systematic market research, present and future needs can be identified, analysed and evaluated. To gain a comprehensive view of the market behaviour and opportunities both qualitative and quantitative assessments should be made.

### **Planning**

Planning is critical in professional marketing. It follows logically from the analytical approach. From the data derived from the marketing research process, management should be in a position to select markets suitable for exploitation. Products and services designed to satisfy the identified needs of specific markets should then be developed.

### **Control**

Control is the third area of successful marketing. It is important for the productivity of the business or any type of organisation. Standards of performance need to be set and closely monitored. Marketing management should recognise that success in markets depends substantially on total commitment to management control throughout the business and an awareness of the need for specialists in marketing, design, finance, purchasing, personnel, etc., to work together creatively to achieve the objectives of the organisation to which they belong.

## **The five stages of marketing research**

There are five sequential stages of the marketing research programme as discussed below.

### **Stage 1: Brief research**

This initial stage is where clients and researchers can identify the marketing problems. Some areas the company or event manager may discuss are: the industry background and the nature of products made by the company; the proposed topic of market investigation; and the extent of market research activities.