

Chapter 12

Personally Engaged with Retail Clients: Marketing 3.0 in Response to New Consumer Profiles

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ABSTRACT

This chapter examines how social and economic changes of recent years have led to a new consumer profile. Furthermore, it explores how current responsible concerns regarding consumption, as well as a greater concern for welfare sustainability and the environment, are affecting purchasing behavior. With these ideas in mind, this chapter analyses how organizations have to evolve towards a new marketing paradigm in order to link to their customers emotionally. In this regard, the evolution of the marketing concept is reviewed—departing from a Marketing 1.0 paradigm, passing through a Marketing 2.0 paradigm—in order to understand how the so-called Marketing 3.0 emerged. The chapter concludes by analyzing the different rules that guide this new approach and how companies in the distribution sector are applying them in their daily activities.

INTRODUCTION

Companies in both the public and private sector continue to explore not only new ways to influence the decisions of individual consumers but also to look to gain the heart and minds of the

consumers. That has become a challenge in a new context where the increasingly visible emerging social and economic trends also point the way to alternative, more sustainable forms of living, creating and consuming.

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The new consumer exhibits a socially responsible buying and consumption behavior. As this is a demanding and informed consumer, he/she has more power with respect the company, being able to participate actively in the development of certain business processes. In this context, companies must reconsider how they appeal to their clients. Developing new formulae to achieve their active participation, as well as their emotional engagement, is essential for a companies' survival and the key might be Marketing 3.0. This shift is especially crucial for retail companies which have recently suffered growing competition, due largely to the global and technological environment where they now operate (e.g., Kacker, 1986; Ghemawat, 2007; Coe & Wrigley, 2009; Corstjens & Lal, 2012).

In line with these notions, this chapter seeks to offer evidence regarding the ways that companies use to enhance their relationship with consumers, considering the new consumer profile. With these ideas in mind, we revise the philosophy and strategic changes exhibited by retail companies to better serve their consumers. We also present a discussion of Marketing 3.0 - one of the primary changes companies are undertaking to serve their customers.

This chapter concludes with some key conclusions and managerial recommendations for retail companies. For example, companies must know the main factors, which contribute to the success of modern retail businesses. Likewise, we indicate how the combination of these types of factors together with the decrease in average household income, the greater penetration of mobile Internet applications and social media, give rise to a demand for products adapted to more sustainable, responsible lifestyles and the appropriate use of resources. Thus, active consumer participation can enable the development of processes and business that are both economical and more socially sustainable, as well as more efficient and more appropriate in terms of best fitting consumers' needs.

THE NEW ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CONTEXT: DEFINING THE NEW CONSUMER PROFILE

We are experiencing a time of significant changes. The world is going through a period of rapid and unexpected turbulence. The recent financial meltdown has increased the level of poverty and unemployment, thus reducing the rate of growth of developed countries. Meanwhile, economic power has been shifting to countries in the East, which are experiencing higher rates of growth. Moreover, climate change and rising pollution are forcing countries to limit the emission of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere, which is also imposing a higher burden on business.

These changes have a profound impact on the economic and social context. But it is true that their effect have been enhanced by two other factors such as: new technological development and the globalization process.

Technological advances have brought about huge changes in consumers, markets and society in general. Thus, since the end of the last century, information technology has been introduced into the market and further developed into what it is considered as a new-wave technology.

Technology

As technology evolves, consumers and especially businesses and other organizations adopt it in order to develop their activities. The application goes beyond the development of commercial activities in the network which, known as electronic-marketing or e-marketing, is based on the use of ICT in the field of marketing. Companies implant complex technological applications, which collect, analyze, store and distribute information, which is used in decision-making processes: systems, which ultimately constitute the heart of the intelligence system of the organization.

To a large extent these changes are caused by connectivity, interactivity and information pro-

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