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Social marketing

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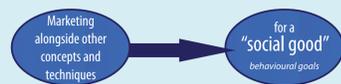
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SOCIAL MARKETING

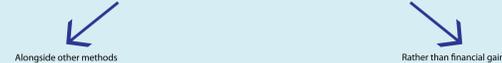
Social marketing is essentially a 'behavioural intervention'. This behaviour change strategy draws from a wide variety of theory and practice; to look at the best ways to achieve the desired influence on the 'specific behaviours' of individuals or groups being targeted for their social good and that of society. Historically, social marketing's roots lie in both:

- (a) The social system, which highlights its social context and the awareness of its links to the social sciences;
- (b) The commercial marketing system from which it has extracted the system's technologies and specially moulded and utilised the '4Ps' to the benefit of its interventions.

Social marketing is:
The systematic application of marketing, alongside other concepts and techniques, to achieve specific behavioural goals, for a social good.



In short...social marketing is about "using marketing for the benefit of people"



The key characteristic that differentiates social marketing from commercial marketing is its 'purpose'. Its purpose is clear; to influence and encourage positive behaviour and healthy living that will improve the wellbeing of the community and to achieve these goals through the voluntary actions of a targeted group. The main aim of commercial marketing is to accrue profits for businesses.

'Behaviour Change' is voluntary and the 'Concept of Exchange' is crucial. To obtain these, the marketer needs to:

- (a) Gain a clear insight into the everyday lives of the target audience, understanding what moves and motivates them;
- (b) Able to segment the group in order to better serve sub-groups' specific needs, such as, the use of psycho-graphic data to develop tailored interventions;
- (c) Using the correct marketing – mix and approaches for specific groups;
- (d) Be aware of the competition, both internal and external to the 'message' being marketed that the target audience have to deal with;
- (e) Customer-orientation- having a 'broad and robust' understanding of the target group within their own surroundings;
- (f) Clear behaviour and behavioural goals that are affordable, doable and measurable.
- (g) Consider ethical issues as they affect different audiences.

Achieving these mean that the marketer will always put the target audience at the centre of any designing, planning and implementation of any social marketing campaign. Social marketing works down-stream as well as up-stream – Policy and decision makers, as significant people, social norms, culture and the environment are major drivers of behaviour whether in the public, professionals or politicians.

AIMS:

To evaluate the impact and sustainability of relationships and exchanges that have been established between marketers and target audiences, in social marketing campaign activities designed to produce behavioural changes.

METHODOLOGY:

A mix method of quantitative and qualitative analysis is applied. A quantitative method is used to evaluate the secondary data of One hundred (100) case studies of different types of social marketing campaigns. Variables are selected, grouped and then analysed via SPSS. Four of the above case studies will be singled out for qualitative analysis.

RESULTS / OWN OPINIONS OF RESEARCH:

Review of the literature and evaluation of the case studies' secondary data are pointing to the fact that marketers and target audiences interactions, when underpinned by quality working together, ethics and clear benefits to the target audiences, will bring sustainable results. Involvement and a sound relationship encourages ownership of any behavioural change process and gives more meaning to the continuation of any outcome.

ON REFLECTION:

If those who are, and seeming to be in positions of advantage over others and at the same time wanting their co-operation in process outcomes, they will need to operate a system that makes all participants' contributions valued and equal as others, at all levels.

CONTRIBUTION TO KNOWLEDGE / WHERE NEXT?

Results could help to re-define how marketers design, plan and operate their social marketing campaigns. This may be especially salient for statutory services that are embarking upon service-delivery via a social marketing route. For many statutory services this is a change from the norm.

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