

The European Consumer’s Profile in a Global World

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Abstract

The key to success in business is to focus on the client. You must concentrate less on the product. The client must be seen as a financial active. The great challenge for a modern company is to keep their clients longer than their products. From a new point of view the marketing department has an important role in creating a database of clients.

Some new phenomena have appeared on the base of some less perfect competition mechanism of Romania’s transition to the market economy, avoiding the European structures and its participation on the international market. The community citizen must have some characteristic to all the citizens from each participant (partner) country.

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In the modern marketing, the consumer is placed in the centre of attention, for the companies interested in a long term full success. In the opinion of Ph. Kotler (2004) “we reached to a customer's economy, an economy where the client is king! It is one of the results of the capacity excess. The clients, not the goods, are in deficit”.

In these conditions, the companies should learn how to “focus on the product” and to give up to the “concentration on product” and replace it with “the concentration on keeping the client”. More than that, Kotler (2004) affirmed that “If the company doesn't take care of its clients, there will be someone who will”.

The companies should see in the client a financial active, which needs to be administrated and optimized same as any active. The acceptance of the value of the active will determinate the companies to recreate their total marketing system, obtaining a higher rate to attract the clients, using their own products and services and marketing strategies created and applied.

30 years ago, Peter Drucker appointed the importance of a company to focus on the client. In this sense, he shows that the purpose of a company is to create a client. Therefore, the company has two – and not only – basic functions: marketing and innovation. Only the marketing and the innovation produce results – all the other represent costs.

The great challenge of a company is to keep their clients longer than their products. In general the companies spend the most part of their financial resources to

attract new clients and they are not concentrating to keep the existing clients and the transaction volumes they have with them. Almost 70% from the marketing budget is spent for attracting the new clients, in the conditions when 90% from their expenses come from transactions with the current clients.

The modern marketing idea has deviated from the perspective of increasing the company's profit from each made transaction, getting closer of the optimization of the profit. Therefore, in a not far perspective, an important role comes to maximization of the data base concerning the clients and adapted to the client's request. The perspective according to which we need to see a client in each individual should be changed into the concept according to which we see the individual from each client.

The specialists agree that after Romania joined the European Union, the estimated impact on the consumer's behaviour will be very different according to their structures. In this sense, basing on some competition imperfect mechanisms, the transition to the market economy and the efforts made in order to integrate the European structures in Romania, certain phenomena already appeared:

- Passion for variety concerning the goods;
- The confrontation with an enormous variety of goods compared to the planned economy;
- The appearance of an important commercial deficit for many categories of goods which should normally be equilibrated by an export of industrial Romanian goods;
- The confrontation of Romanian companies, as users, with a conjuncture which influenced substantial the conditions of developing the activity, especially the investments and the profit level. Although the volume of the low or very low, the commercial supplements have disproportional levels, which make the Romanian products to be less competitive.
- Therefore, in relation between the consumer's behaviour and the marketing practice a multidisciplinary approached is welcomed, where the economy, sociology and psychology are found again. In this sense, the necessity of taking into consideration many elements appears:
- The attitude towards price, because the acquisition act represents an act of resource allocation. Therefore, the theory of the consumer's behaviour cannot limit only to attitudes and psychological processes. The multidisciplinary approach represents at the same time an examination of the resource allocation act and also the attitudes and psychological resources, both of them having the product as “an economic object”;
- The acquisition act, the multidisciplinary approach requires a substitution vision between products, marks etc.;
- **The market study** must take into consideration the psychological elements related to the product and also the elements of the quantitative analyze and request prospect. The results of individual observation are satisfactory, being absolutely necessary the transition from “microscopic” level (individual observation) to “macroscopic” level (generalization of collectively level);

- **The product**, using the multidisciplinary approach the following things are relevant: the object of the real choice of the consumer is represented the specific good with its characteristics and not the product without characteristics. The product is considered as an economic good, which assures many services of functional nature, psychological and sociological. The product is an object to which the consumers attribute it an assembly of satisfactions.

From the marketing point of view, the issues of the consumers' behaviour – in multidisciplinary vision – have serious implications in the transition from the product psychology to the sociology of the economic good – the product.

For the social marketing the economy of the activities could contribute to the improvement of the methods of the market segments and consumers, putting at hand additional criteria.

Proud of his own origins or jealous on the “neighbour” who has a bigger Intern Brut Product, the European figure is a jovial one and at the same way weird and very pleasant. In opinion of Toader (2005) the community citizen should be:

- Skilled chef as an Englishman;
- Nice as a Finn;
- Talkative as a German;
- Good driver as a French;
- Technical as a Portuguese;
- Agile as a Swede;
- Handsome as a Luxembourg Man;
- Patient as an Austrian;
- Calm as an Italian;
- Awake as an Irish;
- Modest as a Spanish;
- Generous as a Dutchman;
- Organized as a Greek.

Inside the unique European Market, in order to have success in business, companies should know deeply the European consumer and especially the consumer from this community space.

The aimed consumers represent “the target” of the local, national and regional markets or from the unique European market. In case of a multinational or transnational company “the target consumers” join the global market (Adăscăliței, 2004).

The globalization is an irreversible process which affects the consumers at the same time and in equal measures. “To be a local in a globalized world it's a sign of social inadequacy and degradation” (Bauman, 2005).

The globalization phenomenon has profound effects, appointing the complex transformation of the human conditions parameters and the phenomenon is in full development. Using the globalization concept the human practices related to “the material changes” and the quality of “the surrounding world” are explained. The globalization divides and unites at the same time and the division causes are the same with the ones which promote the uniformity from the globe. The business development, the informational commerce, as an ample process has as a result the initiation and

development effect of another product of “space localization”. Between these two processes there is a tight and permanent communication which determines the difference between the life standards of the consumers at a planetary level and the differences of their inside segments. The mobility and liberty of movement promoted the stratification produces at a planetary level during the post modern era.

Once the information expanded to a planetary level it was created a cybernetic space, on the top of the fabrication, territorial/urban/architectural space. The elements of the cybernetic space don't have spatial dimensions. People are not separated anymore of physical obstacles or temporal distances. The differences from here to there lost their sense (Bauman, 2005).

The behaviour of a consumption society is radically different than the consumers from the other known societies.

The expressions “we work to live” or “we live to work”, dilemma heard in present refers to: we need to consume in order to live or we live to consume? Therefore, the question refers to the fact that we only feel the need to separate life from the consumption (Bauman, 2005).

In present, because of the time mobility and the consumer space, we see everyday a custom decrement, except the meta-custom, “the custom of changing the customs”.

The traditional relation between needs and their satisfaction is backwards: the promise and the hope of satisfaction ante cede the need of the promised satisfaction and it will always be more intense and attractive than the existing needs (Bauman, 2005).

In a world of economic, political and social changes, the consumers have new attractions and at the same time they are satisfied quickly and the development of the society according to the consumption pattern of the market is ready to change its attractions extremely fast (consumption goods, services, etc.). „The travel represents for the consumer's life a bigger pleasure than reaching the destination” (Bauman, 2005).

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