

THE WINE CUSTOMER'S BEHAVIOUR VS MARKETING STRATEGIES

COMPORTAMENTUL CONSUMATORULUI DE PRODUSE VINICOLE VS POLITICI DE MARKETING

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Abstract. *In the economic environment, profit acts as success barometer, and its premise lies in meeting the customer's demands. In order to run a successful business one must thoroughly understand customer's behaviour by simply providing answers to the following questions: 'Who buys wine-derived products?', 'How does he buy them?', 'When and where does he buy them from?', 'Why does he buy them for?', 'Which are his most favourite ones?'. Understanding and identifying the customer's reactions to the different traits of a peculiar product, alongside its price policy and marketing strategy turns into a real advantage for those companies that hold answers to such questions. Successful marketing policies depend upon the results of market and customer's response surveys. Thus, it is but necessary for any company to master both the market target segment aspect, and it must also provide answer to the problem of how strong its need to purchase that particular product is. If there is little demand on the part of the consumer one has to identify and analyse those aspects that can modify the whole state of affairs, such as the form, price, labelling and advertising strategy of the given product.*

Rezumat. *In domeniul economic, barometrul succesului este profitul iar premisa acestuia consta in satisfacerea consumatorului. În asigurarea unei afaceri de succes trebuie înțeles cât mai bine comportamentul consumatorului prin găsirea răspunsului la următoarele întrebări: Cine cumpără produse viticole? Cum cumpără? Când și unde cumpără? De ce cumpără? Care sunt produsele cele mai preferate? Înțelegerea și depistarea reacțiilor consumatorului la caracteristicile diferite ale produsului, la preț și campania publicitară constituie un avantaj pentru firmele ce dețin aceste răspunsuri. Fundamentarea oricaror politici de marketing se bazează pe rezultatele cercetarilor efectuate asupra piete și comportamentului consumatorilor. De aceea este necesar a se cunoaște următoarele aspecte : care este categoria de consumatori careia sunt adresate produsele și cat de puternică este dorința lor pentru produsele respective. In cazul in care nu exista o cerere puternică trebuie depistate și analizate aspectele care o pot modifica , cum ar fi forma produsului, pretul, ambalajul, publicitatea.*

Specialty studies lay a strong accent on the dual character of marketing, namely that of art and science. In practice marketing becomes the science of making money, the art of attracting and keeping those customers that bring profit. Through marketing the aimed target is maximising the profit by means of massive sales, increasing the numbers of clients and dominating the market in terms of

product quality. Consumers' orientation towards a certain brand may be determined by a change in preferences, low cost price in comparison with other type.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Thus, one has to analyse the overall picture of any business in horticulture as often as required in order to identify the factors responsible for increasing production, sales and revenues, implicitly. Success in marketing and especially in capitalizing horticultural products is the result of consumers' preferences and it is for this reason that special attention has to be given to studying consumers' behaviour.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The consumer is the central pillar of the economic circuit – production – distribution – consumption – production. The barometer of production is given by the consumption level. In market economy, preferences, suggestions and dissatisfactions of customers must turn into the starting point of any production process.

In order to sell one must 'read' the mind, preferences and tastes of people.

In order to be able to promote a successful business one has to thoroughly understand the consumer's behaviour by finding answers to the following questions: Who buys horticultural products? How does he /she buy them? Why does he/she buy? When and where does he/she buy them from? Which are the favourite products, most frequently purchased? Understanding and identifying the reactions of the consumers to the different features of a product, price and marketing campaign turn into a real advantage for the companies that hold answers. Some producers believe that obtaining success depends on the orientation of production towards certain classes and social groups. When it comes to wines, besides the 4 stimuli, consumers' preferences are influenced by social, cultural, personal and psychological factors that lay their mark on the very behaviour of the consumers. Tradition and culture stand for those factors that influence the behaviour. If tradition appreciates wine consumption, thence a certain area will host a safe market, but if there are religious impediments in what alcoholic beverages consumption is concerned, then it is but impossible to talk about creating a market there.

In what social classes are concerned, one may state that, generally, producers direct their products towards superior types, when people with high-incomes constitute their market. Otherwise, producers focus their production almost exclusively on cheap wines, destined to people with low incomes, for whom form and modality do not count much. The behaviour of the consumer is also influenced by social factors, such as the small groups he/she belongs to.

The groups that have direct influence on the consumer are the main groups, such as family, friends, colleagues, neighbours, and the secondary groups such as professional associations, union trades. On the wine market one has to identify those groups towards various subjects tend to long for, since they may influence

another group by another life style, influencing consumers' choices towards purchasing certain wine types and brands.

In Europe, wine has a good image among consumers that has to do with a multitude of perceptions, behaviours that vary according to the factors that originate the purchase and consumption act itself. The image of the wine encourages the consumption at home, with friends and family, shaping the social status, personal taste of the buyer, his/her will to choose something else, to discover something new. In order to better understand the specific phenomena of wine image, it is but necessary to classify the main consumption countries in four categories:

- the Latin model (Spain, France, Italy) that characterizes wine as a part of any 'ordinary' meal; the preferred type is the red wine, and this model is characterized as a 'simple purchasing act';

- the Northern Europe model (Denmark, Sweden), with a significant percentage of non-consumers, and with an occasional consumption mainly oriented towards red wines;

- the British, Dutch and Belgian model (Great Britain, the Netherlands, Belgium) is characterized by a large number of non-consumers, with occasional consumption episodes, mainly oriented towards red/white wines. Purchases are mainly carried out by female consumers that perceive wine as a relaxing beverage to be consumed at home, during the holidays;

- the German model, characterized by the following: few non-absolute consumers, but frequently oriented towards occasional consumption, in which white wines play the dominant part. Wines are mainly to be consumed at Easter time, and the purchase is directly from the producer (more than 32%).

The European consumption models will acquire new values in time with the appearance of a new consumer profile that will trigger the decrease of the demand for common wines.

In the countries of the Far East, wine market experiences a real expansion.

The studies made by the French Centre of Foreign Trade, among Japanese consumers, help to a better understanding of the factors that influence wine consumption. In Japan, wine takes the fifth position among other alcoholic beverages, in terms of consumption. There is a preference for relatively sweet, white wines, produced locally, and mainly consumed at home..The production of alcohol-free wines opens new possibilities of penetrating the Islamic markets that forbidden by law the production and consumption of alcoholic beverages.

Due to the different models of behaviour, the CEOs of those wine-producing companies that wish to hold an advantage over the competition, should formulate their strategies starting from the very understanding of the reaction attitude of the consumer towards the different characteristics of the product, price and advertising campaign, since the consumption model is, in fact, the response of the buyer to market stimuli. A recent survey carried out on a sample of wine consumers of the main 200 towns of Romania, has highlighted the fact that 57%

of 1,500 buyers have purchased a certain wine type, being influenced by other persons .

Generally, the purchase decision is influenced by income of the buyer, his/her social status. High-quality products are purchased by people enjoying a certain level of social status, for whom price is the last factor to consider when purchasing a bottle of wine. This thing constitutes an advantage for the producer who wishes to conquer the market of high-income people, accustomed to consume little, but of exquisite quality. Special attention has to be given to those people of medium and low-income that allocate a considerable part of their budget to purchasing wine at a low price. Regarding the life style, the personality and self-opinion of the consumer is to be taken into account exclusively when top-notch quality wines are concerned.

Psychological factors lay their mark on the behaviour of wine consumers. The people that prefer medalled wines try to satisfy their need of self-esteem. They can afford to purchase collection wines, proving them selves knowledgeable in what wines are concerned. They purchase wine in order to fulfil a social need, but they cannot appreciate its qualities. In order not to be mistaken, they purchase it from renowned off-licence shops, or they go for a wine brand that has been authenticated by some advertising campaign.

The second step a wine producer has to take after performing the analysis of the factors that has determined the consumption is the understanding of the way in which the future buyers will take the purchasing decisions.

Thus, answers to these questions have to be provided:

- who has a leading role in taking the decision regarding twine purchasing;
- which are the factors and stages that have to be taken towards reaching a final decision.

CONCLUSIONS

Knowing the needs of the consumers and the purchasing process itself is the foundation of any successful business. Understanding the way in which consumers know their needs, search for information, assess the variants, take decisions, behave after the purchasing process has come to an end, constitute the starting point of an approach whose aim is to identify forms and means of satisfying the customers, alongside trying to find ways of capitalising the products, and, why not, elaborating an efficient programme of successfully launching new wine offers on the market.

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