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## Marketing in Sustainability Aspect as a New Culture of Marketing Activity of Companies

**Abstract:** The essence of this work is a new and rapidly growing trend in the area of marketing science called sustainable marketing. The introduction highlights the changes in the concept of marketing in the past decades, ranging from marketing sales through marketing focused on the needs and expectations of customers, to new marketing orientation called *sustainability marketing*. The first section of the article presents the evolution of marketing according to P. Kotler classified by the author as *Marketing 1.0, 2.0* and *3.0*. The second chapter presents the content related to the nature and importance of sustainable marketing, which as a new marketing concept, can be a source of competitive advantage of businesses. This part includes the definitions and concepts of sustainable marketing by different authors. The final part of the article indicates the main areas of sustainable marketing performed in businesses. The work is concluded with remarks.

**Keywords:** sustainability marketing, sustainable marketing, enterprise

### Introduction

The development of modern world economy contributes to increased competition in many areas of economic and market areas. Competing for customers and increase of the market share of the company is forcing managers to seek for new competitive advantages. Marketing of companies, whose main idea is listening and proper recognition of customer needs, and their effective satisfying, slowly begins to lose its importance. Marketing concentrated on a client, as the key market participant, successfully dominated the concept of sales marketing, whose main task was to produce and then to sell the product. The changing marketing

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environment creates a situation where the customer satisfaction becomes a secondary task of manufacturing and service organizations. New challenge faced by today's businesses is to achieve financial goals while respecting the environment and taking into account the social aspects. The presented marketing approach is included in the so-called sustainable marketing, whose activities can be a source of competitive advantage of businesses.

Sustainable marketing is a new trend of knowledge derived from the concept of sustainable development. A literature review of sustainable marketing shows a small number of studies in this area of knowledge. The main authors dealing with the issues of sustainable marketing include, inter alia, F. Belz and K. Peattie, D. Martin and J. Schouten, D. Kadirov, K. Leitner and D. Fuller. From the group of Polish authors two names should be mentioned: A. Pabian, W. Grudzewski and T. Trojanowski.

### **Chapter 1. Evolution of marketing concepts**

The concepts of marketing over the last sixty years have constantly evolved. Marketing was focused mainly on three areas - product management, customer management and brand management. The period of the fifties and sixties of the last century in marketing, was characterised by the product management. The seventies and eighties of the twentieth century focused on the management of the client. The next period of evolution of the marketing concerns the nineties and the first decade of the twenty-first century. During this time the main area was marketing brand management. [Kotler, Kartajaya, Setiawan, 2010, p. 41]

Table 1 shows the periods and effecting changes the perception of marketing over the decade.

Table 1 presents the changes in marketing concept from the 50s of the last century, and ending with the first years after 2000. Last concept, that times of financial pressure attributable to the beginning of the twenty-first century are characterised by a richness of forms of marketing.

P. Kotler, H. Kartajaya, I. Setiawan classify marketing by three levels, namely, *Marketing 1.0*, *2.0* and *3.0*. *Marketing 1.0* is the first concept of marketing, representing the industrial era. The purpose of the *Marketing 1.0* was selling products manufactured in the factory. Manufactured products were common and did not stand out of the ordinary. Were usually offered to a mass audience. The aim of the production was to standardise the products with a focus on reduction of production costs, which would translate into a low price product, and by this reaching a wide range of buyers. *Marketing 1.0* is the period of concentration on the product.

**Table 1. Variability of marketing concepts**

The fifties. The post-war times	The sixties. The economy development times.	The seventies. Time of turbulences	The eighties. The time of uncertainty	The nineties. The times of social contacts	After 2000. The time of financial pressure
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- mix marketing</li> <li>- life cycle of a product</li> <li>- brand image</li> <li>- segmentation of market</li> <li>- marketing concept</li> <li>- marketing audit</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the four P</li> <li>- short-sightedness marketing</li> <li>- marketing targeted to a variety of life styles</li> <li>- extended conception of marketing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- targeting</li> <li>- positioning</li> <li>- strategic marketing</li> <li>- marketing of services</li> <li>- social marketing</li> <li>- socially committed marketing</li> <li>- macro marketing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- war marketing</li> <li>- global marketing</li> <li>- local marketing</li> <li>- mega marketing</li> <li>- direct marketing</li> <li>- marketing of relationships with customer</li> <li>- internal marketing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- emotional marketing</li> <li>- marketing of experiences</li> <li>- internet marketing and e-business</li> <li>- sponsoring marketing</li> <li>- marketing ethics</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- marketing focusing on ROI (return on investment)</li> <li>- marketing based on brand value</li> <li>- marketing based on customer value</li> <li>- marketing socially responsible</li> <li>- more power and impact of a customer</li> <li>- marketing using social media</li> <li>- tribalism</li> <li>- marketing authenticity</li> <li>- marketing set to co creation</li> </ul>

**Source: own research on the basis of P. Kotler, H. Kartajaya, I. Setiawan, Marketing 3.0, MT Biznes, Warszawa 2010, p. 44.**

The next stage in the evolution of marketing is *Marketing 2.0*, which is a result of the development of information technology. Technical and technological progress has made clients become well informed about the offers proposed to them, they also possessed the ability to quickly compare several offers at once. Due to the diversity of consumer preferences, market was divided into groups of customers, to

which relevant product offers were addressed. The focus was given to the customer. *Marketing 2.0* means customer oriented marketing.

Kotler, H. Kartajaya, I. Setiawan propose a third approach to marketing, namely *Marketing 3.0*. According to the authors in the centre of attention of companies is the man, who in addition to satisfying the functional and emotional needs through product or service, is expected to meet the spiritual needs. *Marketing 3.0* raises issues concerning human aspirations, their values and spirit. Version 3.0 assumes that you should not neglect any human's needs and hopes. *Marketing 3.0* like its previous version also seeks to meet the needs of consumers. [Kotler, Kartajaya, Setiawan, 2010, pp. 17-19]

Reflections on the evolution of marketing concepts are summarised and presented in Table 2.

**Table 2. Marketing Concepts 1.0, 2.0 and 3.0**

	Marketing 1.0 Focus on the product	Marketing 2.0 Focus on the consumer	Marketing 3.0 Focus on the values
Aim	To sell the product	Satisfy the expectations of a consumer and to keep him	To make world better
Favourable trends	Industrial revolution	Information technology	Technology of new wave
How companies see the market	Mass clients with necessities relating to physical nature of product.	Intelligent consumers guided by their mind and heart	The man in the full meaning of this word, having the mind, heart and spirit.
The key marketing concept	Development of a product	Distinction on the market	Values
Marketing guidelines	Product specificity	Positioning of the product and the company	Mission, vision and corporations
Values offer	Functional	Functional and emotional	Functional, emotional and spiritual
Interaction with the consumer	Transaction one - with - many	Relation one – with - many	Cooperation many – with –many

**Source: P. Kotler, H. Kartajaya, I. Setiawan, Marketing 3.0, MT Biznes, Warszawa 2010, p. 21.**

The evolution of marketing concepts finished with the 3.0 concept presented by the Authors provides a basis for further studies on the variability of this important and exciting area of knowledge which is marketing. Noteworthy is the sustainability marketing, new trend of marketing research that takes into account environmental and social aspects of business, while setting at achieving the economic objectives of enterprise.

## Chapter 2. The essence and meaning of sustainable marketing

Sustainable marketing is a new and developing area of science, which is derived from a sustainable development. A special role in the development of sustainable marketing plays sustainable development. B. Emery believes that if the societies will live in accordance with the idea of sustainable development, they will experience some kind of change, particularly as consumers. The acceptance of the concept of sustainable development by companies will be crucial for them in the next decade. The author further claims that marketing cannot ignore the challenges posed by the ideas of sustainable development. According to the author, some still think that marketing is in conflict with sustainable development. It is quite common to assume that marketing and sustainable development are facing a conflict of interest due to the fact that the marketing refers to the sale, and the idea of sustainable development concerns lower consumption.

According to the author sustainable marketing is not a new type of marketing or its derivative. Marketing in the sustainable concept has to become a new marketing trend, because the traditional marketing does not have anything else to offer and does not have alternatives. [Emery, 2012, p. 5] B. Emery believes that sustainable marketing is a holistic approach whose aim is to ensure that marketing strategies and tactics are specifically designed to secure a socially equitable, environmentally friendly and economically fair and viable business for the benefit of current and future generations of customers, employees and society as a whole. [Emery, 2012, p. 24]

A lot of interest in the sustainable marketing issues show D. Martin i J. Schouten. According to the authors sustainable marketing is the process of creating, communicating, and delivering value to customers in such a way that both natural and human capital are preserved or enhanced throughout. [Martin, Schouten, 2012, p. 10]

Marketing in the opinion of the authors plays an essential and unique role in creating more sustainable society. It is through the marketing systems that most human and psychological needs are satisfied. Marketing drives the global economy and leaves a big footprint in both, the environment and society. Marketing has two tasks. The first is to sell sustainably, which means to make all marketing functions performed in such a way as to maintain or increase the good health of the natural environment and humanity for a reasonable income. The second task is to sell sustainable development, which means to use the power of the impact and to influence the market infrastructure in order to promote the culture of sustainable development.

Sustainable marketing provides the necessary tools to optimise every marketing decision taking into account the profits of the enterprise, the environment and the welfare of society.

When reviewing the literature there can be found, inter alia, the definition of sustainable marketing proposed by G. Armstrong and P. Kotler, who claim that it is “socially responsible marketing, carried out with respect for the environment, that meets the current needs of consumers and enterprises, while maintaining or even improving the ability of future generations to meet their needs in the future” [Armstrong, Kotler, 2012, p. 709]

Expanded definition of sustainable marketing presents D. Fuller. The author gives a slightly different view on the nature and importance of sustainable marketing. According to the Author sustainable marketing is defined as the process of planning, implementing, and controlling the development, pricing, promotion, and distribution of products in a manner that satisfies the following three criteria:[Fuller, 1999, p. 4]

- a) customer needs are met,
- b) organizational goals are attained,
- c) the process is compatible with ecosystems.

Presented definition indicates that the author focuses on the elements of the marketing mix, on the product, price, distribution and promotion.

Among the authors involved in the area of sustainable marketing we should include F. Belz. The author argues that sustainable marketing is designed to meet the needs and expectations of customers with respect to social and environmental criteria and objectives of the organisation. This means building and maintaining sustainable relationships with customers, social environment and environmental surroundings. [Belz, 2006, pp.139 – 144]

Considerations about the nature and importance of sustainable marketing in addition to foreign thinkers are undertaken also by the Polish authors. A. Pabian as one of the few Polish authors devotes a lot of space to the issues of sustainable marketing. The author believes that “sustainable marketing should not be equated only with macro marketing, which refers to the entire economic system of the country. First of all, it should be present in the micro-scale and by that in the individual economic organisations”. [Pabian, 2010, p. 46] According to the author term *sustainable marketing* means “discovering and meeting the needs of the market, which takes into account the long-term view of the economic, ecological and social development of future generations. This concept can be translated as balanced and sustainable marketing, self-sustaining marketing or marketing of sustainability. “[Pabian, 2012, p 128]

Due to the small number of definitions of sustainable marketing proposed in the marketing literature, the author attempts to formulate this concept in the following way: sustainable marketing means the functioning of the business in such a way as to meet the needs of customers while taking into account social, environmental and financial organisations in order to create equal opportunities for the development of future generations. [Trojanowski, 2013, p 146]

### Chapter 3. Sustainable marketing companies

The continuing evolution of marketing in manufacturing and service organisations forces to explore new solutions in the field of management, marketing, or providing funding for current and future business activities. Marketing is not just sales, advertising and promotion. New, growing trend of marketing science called sustainable marketing involves four main areas: sustainable research and analysis of the marketing environment, sustainable selection of target markets, sustainable marketing mix and sustainable management of marketing activities. [Pabian, 2012, p. 128] Rationally run business activity should begin from study and analysis of the environment in which the organisation intends to operate. Sustainable marketing companies cannot ignore the important stage of carrying out the sustainable marketing research, which enable a diagnosis of the situation in the marketing environment. Sustainable marketing research can help managers make the right decision and provide information about the needs and expectations of consumers. Marketing research carried out among market participants assume the integration of environmental aspects and environmental issues. Referring to the issues of ecosystem and the social problems gives evidence of sustainable nature of marketing researches.

The second important stage in the implementation of sustainable marketing is the sustainable choice of target markets. Important action in this phase is to carry out a sustainable market segmentation. It involves dividing the market according to pre-defined criteria. Sustainable market segmentation organises clients into groups of buyers with relatively homogeneous needs, which are not indifferent to social and environmental problems, and next, the business tries to meet the identified needs of consumers through its sustainable product or services range.

Sustainable marketing mix is another important block of sustainable marketing. It includes sustainable marketing instruments of influencing the market, namely the product, pricing, distribution and sustainable promotion mix. In order to the sustainable marketing mix could occur, all four elements of the marketing mix in terms of environmental and social aspect, should be considered together. The selective action focusing for example on sustainable product development through pure product development and pure production as a result of which a safe environment for customers and products are created, bypassing in the distribution processes the use of sustainable methods of transport, such as hybrid vehicles, cannot be regarded as sustainable performance in the marketing mix. On the one hand, the manufacturer makes every effort to produce a sustainable product, and the other uses obsolete, fuel transport emitting large amounts of pollution into the atmosphere. [Kadirov, 2010, pp. 55-57]

The fourth stage of sustainable marketing of businesses is the sustainable management of marketing activities. This stage consists of sustainable planning,

organising, leadership and motivation of personnel committed in economic activities of the business and control of marketing activities. These classic management functions can be adapted for a smooth and effective functioning of the business in the context of sustainability [Trojanowski, 2013, ss. 146-147].

Referring to the sustainable planning of marketing activities it should be emphasised that at this stage the purpose is determined and the mission of the business in the sphere of sustainable marketing is defined. The objective should be precisely formulated, and must be assigned its priority, which is the degree of validity.

The starting point and condition for effective implementation of sustainable business marketing is giving the appropriate organisational form. By identifying the organisational structure it is known what are the duties, powers and responsibilities of each employee. The organisational structure defines the official subordination, it indicates who is who and who is has the managerial functions.

Managing sustainable marketing activities will not run properly without the proper motivation of its staff members. The essence of the motivation is to cause employees to engage more strongly in the performance of their work by what, they contribute to the achievement of objectives by the company.

The last function of management of sustainable marketing is the control. It consists on establishing best practices, and then confronting them with actually performed work. In case of identifying errors in proceedings, the negative trends should be corrected, and at the same time the positive trends in the implementation of sustainable marketing activities should be strengthened [Pabian, 2011, pp. 257-260].

## **Conclusion**

Increasing globalisation of societies and the rapid economic, technical and technological development contributes to increased consumption. Increased demand for products, in turn, results in increased exploitation of mineral raw materials, fuel, energy, water and other materials needed to produce a particular good. The observed condition adversely affects the environment and the health of societies. The role of sustainable marketing of production companies, is balancing the level of production and sales with consumer needs while caring for the environment and society. It could be argued that companies that achieve a sustainable level of economic activity will be preferably seen by buyers and other participants in the market in which they operate. The economic and financial success of organisations in the coming years largely depends on the change of companies management policy. Companies that are able to balance marketing efforts will achieve a competitive advantage, and this will certainly help the company to achieve market leadership.



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