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From General Marketing to the International One

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Abstract: *International marketing designates a set of research activities, designing, production, promotion, distribution and stock post-distribution (international market), aimed at providing consumers (international) of goods to meet their requirements better than do its competitors (international) at the most convenient prices (international market), activities developed in terms of profitability for entrepreneurs and carefully to future generations of the planet.*

The need for knowledge of international marketing occurs when we must search, select and penetrate foreign markets in order to undertake new economic activities or when we want to achieve, to sell and promote goods and services for consumers and users in other countries.

Keywords: *market, national, international, strategy, marketing, particularities, environment*

Introduction

Among the first concerns of the idea of international marketing, prominently are those of Jaques Savar, author of "Le parfait negotiation" (released in 1675). It outlines the role played by middlemen traders within the framework of trade flows depending on their location (in France, in Europe and elsewhere), emphasizing the need to observe the constant sociological development and adjustment of supply to international consumer needs [5, 17].

Along the same lines fall then *the theory of absolute advantage* of Adam Smith (XVIII century) and the theory of comparative advantage, developed by David Ricardo (early nineteenth century) which highlights the role of production specialization in one of the activities in which a country has a comparative advantage (absolute or relative) against another (to develop the import of those goods for which production is overshadowed by the foreign partner). Both theories claim that a country should produce all the goods they need; more important is to develop specialization and trade activities with other countries.

In terms of practical activities, it is considered that the first manifestations of international marketing as the funding trade in Japan during the seventeenth century, carried out under the so-called *sogososha*, some of the most effective alliance established to support interests them not only internally but also external.

Since the literature in the field in the country and abroad abound of international marketing works, a question like this: *Is there an international marketing?* it might seem at first glance simply without no justification. It would be as if we asked (which we can always do) if there is *an industrial marketing, a political marketing, a tourism marketing*, etc. Things change but if it were placed next to each other, like: *Is there a physics (chemistry, astronomy, biology, etc.) internationally?*

We mention from the very beginning the outset that this paper is addressed to both marketers already formed and the emerging ones (but who master basic knowledge in marketing). They know very well that theorists in marketing science have tried over time to argue as possible convincingly that marketing is not just a set of practical, concrete activities facing certain purposes, but, if not an independent science at least a distinct field of science (economic, but not only). If we admit this, then it would not be unreasonable to say that as chemistry (whether and organic) can only be universal (and not national or international), as well as marketing can only be universal. And if that were true, all endeavours of those who passed (and still promotes) international marketing could be considered of no use?

1. Definitions of Marketing

Along its evolution, marketing was substantial defined in different ways (even by the same authors in their reference works in the field – such as Ph. Kotler) according to its level of development. According to the period in which these definitions were formulated, they may be split in two distinct classes. [14, 3-5]

1. The first class contains the definitions given to marketing in the first half of the XX century, that is the period of its consolidation as a new scientific field, when there was registered the transition from the managerial view of sales (which focused on the products to be sold and not on the client) to that of marketing. The basic feature of this class of definition is the fact that marketing was viewed only as *a means of selling and promoting*. At this point is famed the first definition given to marketing by the specialists in the field reunited within the American Association of marketing (according to which this would represent an *assembly of economic activities aiming to conduct the flow of goods and services from the producer to the consumer or user* – s.n.) [1, 15].

2. The definitions of the second class were formulated starting with the second half of the XX century, they were linking marketing with the notion of *client* or *consumer*, in a systemic and interdisciplinary approach, having as general feature the fact that they extend the area of marketing from the economic activities to the social ones, as well as to the political ones. Among these we will refer only to one of them, the one that integrate them synthetically, if not all the others, at least the ones the most important (according to our opinion) Belonging to us, this starts from the idea that a definition is more acceptable when it better illustrates the essence of what it aims and the more concise it is the better it is understood: *marketing designates an assembly of research – projection – production, promotion, distribution and post-distribution activities aiming in principal to make available to the consumers goods which meet their needs better than the competitors can do, at the most convenient prices, activities developed under the circumstances of profitability for entrepreneurs and with a concern for the future generations*. [8, 9-11]

Splitting it into parts, it results that:

- 1) the focus of marketing is the consumers (both actual and potential ones);
- 2) *the origin and the destination in any marketing approach* is to study the consumption *needs* - which actually forms the core concerns of marketing;
- 3) *adapting products* to the needs and requirements of customers (so that they are perceived as having the greatest subjective value) is the main way for marketing its objectives (contributing to the business success of entrepreneurs);
- 4) mentioning not only to the trading and promotion, the *chain of activities* involved in marketing *is very long*, including the *research, design, production, distribution and post-distribution activities*;
- 5) besides customers, *competitors* is the second target marketing efforts, their neglecting could prove to be fatal for business entrepreneurs;
- 6) as alleged efforts by conducting marketing activities are supported by entrepreneurs, they must ensure that their profitability would wish;
- 7) covering at the highest possible level of demanding customers do not have to endangering the *welfare of future generations*.

Very attractive there seemed to us some other definitions of marketing made by some leading theorists in the field (found in the work cited here). Thus, P. Drucker believes *that marketing is the science of knowing so well the customer that the products offered suit them perfectly and sell by itself* [7, 64-65]. A similar view is expressed and E. Hill, which concluded that marketing is a *philosophy that sees the customer satisfaction the key to success in business* [9, 9].

Ph. Kotler, almost unanimously considered to be a kind of patriarch of marketing, said repeatedly that marketing is *the science to achieve profitable customer relationships* [11, 5] or *the science to transform a customer need in a profitable business* [12, 4]. Supporters of the so-called "marketing war", using an army specific language, believe that *marketing is the science of struggle for success in business* [2, 97], *having as battlefield the market, as objective the conquering of consumers and as enemies competitors* [3, 23].

Bringing together the points of view one can lead to other forms also very concise and suggestive that marketing *is the science of how to satisfy customers better than competitors do and getting thus a profit*.

2. The Definition of International Marketing

Giving the appropriate attention to these definitions formulated by the marketing specialists (not only those to which we have referred, but others also), to see how appropriate is the approach of following the definition of international marketing, we shall bring in a first sight some of them.

Thus, Cateora and Hess define the international marketing as *the result of business activities that directs the flow of goods and services of a company to consumers or users from several countries*. The only difference between internal marketing and international, according to this view, it is that the relevant activities of international marketing takes place in several countries, which entails a wide range of issues unfamiliar and a wide variety of strategies needed to the different levels of uncertainty specific to external markets.

Although widely cited specialists, connoisseurs in the field will readily realize that this definition is nothing but a form almost identical to the definition of the American Marketing Association in the sixties (which we have already referred) taking also all its limits.

According to V. Terpstra, international marketing is nothing but marketing abroad, differing from the internal in that passing the borders, changing economic restrictions, politically and legally, this leading to changes in the marketing program of the company. We can talk about it once it occurs "*the carrying of at least one of a firm's marketing activities across borders*".

Professor Victor Danciu considers that international marketing is the idea that economic activities should be oriented in accordance with the requirements and specific of foreign markets in order to meet their current and future needs with maximum efficiency. External marketing involves the development by a company acting indiscriminately in several countries, different strategies for each country, depending on the conditions and characteristics. [6, 18]

This view was taken by the majority of experts who agree that international marketing is a modern concept in the conduct of economic activities according to the requirements and specific foreign markets (national, multinational and global) in order to meet current and future needs of their efficiency. At the same time, it means a combination of practical activities conducted by mobilizing all human, material, financial capabilities enterprises, organizations and institutions, multinational or transnational.

Returning to the definition of marketing (general) preferred by us to others, we may conclude *that international marketing designate a set of research, design, production, promotion, distribution and stock post-distribution (international market), aimed providing consumers (international) with goods to meet their requirements better than do its competitors (international) at prices that are best (international market), activities in terms of profitability for entrepreneurs and carefully to future generations of the planet.*

The conclusion that we detach from the definitions of international marketing presented here as examples (and all other) is that they contain (without exception), entirely, one of the definitions of marketing itself, generally, to which it can be added only the attributes of external or international. Therefore we believe that *all efforts to define international marketing (something distinct than marketing itself) are unnecessary*. As if we would try to define the *marketing of Ferentari* (a poor outskirts of Bucharest) to *the marketing of Bacau town, to the Hungarian marketing*, etc. (i.e. *of the marketing of each market separately*). It would be enough just to recognize the reality that international marketing is nothing but **marketing focused on the international market**. Absolutely all components (all pillars), goals, regularities, principles, methods and general marketing tools are found in the international one. In other words, *international marketing is marketing customized to the international market*. Therefore, at least as a subject (to remove overlaps over *Marketing Basics*), it should only deal with what is specific (particular) to this environment. Something we try to do in this work.

There is a specialist [10, 497-498] who believes that between *internal marketing* (practiced by firms and business oriented exclusively toward the domestic market) and the *international one* (that would be specific to national companies whose production aimed at foreign markets) there would be some "relatives" of the latter, such as:

1. *export marketing*, practiced when companies receive random orders from foreign customers, the bulk of the concerns are related to the internal market;
2. *multinational marketing* specific to multinational corporations carrying out production activities in several countries, elaborating and marketing strategies tailored to each national market;
3. *pan-regional marketing*, focused on one region (like the EU or NAFTA) consists of several integrated country, each region being addressed as a whole;
4. *global marketing*, that the whole world is addressed and treated as a single market (through joint strategies for the entire world, nevertheless maintaining a certain flexibility to adapt to local and national).

The transition from domestic to the international marketing global (integrated) could be approached in the following format [13, 6-9]:

- company meets, in addition to the domestic market, only some sporadic orders from outside;
- company consistently meet foreign orders;
- company makes special efforts to expand foreign market;
- company targets international integrated markets;
- the company adopts a global international strategy.

In connection with the above mentioned a statement should be made (which we consider important): the four "relatives" of marketing are not far, some distinct marketing, but only some *development stages of international marketing (i.e. marketing activities focused on international markets)*.

3. The Elements Specific to International Marketing

One of the first specialists who concentrated on finding and highlighting the main **elements specific to international marketing** (by which it would differ from the internal or national one) was William W. Cain [4]. In his view, they could be synthesized as in Table no. 1.

Table no. 1 Differences between the domestic and the international marketing

Domestic marketing	International marketing
1. Single language and nationality	1. Multiple languages and nationalities, multicultural factors
2. Relatively homogeneous market	2. Diverse and fragmented markets
3. Available data or at least relatively easier to be collected	3. The collecting of data is sometimes difficult, it needs budgets and teams of experimented researchers
4. Relatively unimportant political factors	4. Often the political factors prevail
5. Relatively liberty versus the government intervention	5. Governments imply a lot and influence the business decisions
6. Individual corporations have a reduced impact upon the environment	6. Larger companies have a powerful influence on the environment
7. Chauvinism helps	7. Chauvinism embarrasses
8. A relatively stable business environment	8. Different business environments, some of them instable (but that can be very profitable)
9. Single currency	9. Different foreign currencies from the point of view of the stability and value
10. Diverse regulations, changing and unclear	10. "The rules of the game" in business are mature and well-known
11. Managers accustomed with assuming and delegating responsibilities and with the use of control	11. Very autonomous managers and unfamiliar with the budgets and control

Source: [13, 9]

In a more recent approach, peculiarities of international marketing should consist of the following:

- targeting *more than one national market*;
- imposes a *managerial vision not only global but also different* from one national market to another of those who practice it and shares in a broader perspective;
- involves *the use of different instruments* to address and study the markets;
- some *environmental awareness*, which generates the need to adapt to the marketing environment different from one national market to another;
- *the higher potential* resulting from its use-related instruments in several markets (total effect of which is greater than the sum of partial effects that would get in each market in his absence).

Conclusions

As for us, starting from the definition of marketing for which we have chosen, we could summarize specific aspects of international marketing by its defining elements (shown somewhat before).

1) The *external consumers* (actual or potential), which represent the focus of international marketing, characterized by heterogeneity incomparably higher than the domestic market, being able to distinguish (sometimes substantially) from a country (or region) to another in many respects (*economic, cultural, religious, political, ethnic*, etc.). Therefore, the approach and knowledge in terms of purchasing behaviour and consumer marketing involves a very special effort.

2) As a direct consequence of this heterogeneity, the *study of the consumption needs* of customers in international markets concerned, which is the starting point (and destination) in any marketing approach prove to be *more complex, larger and more expensive* than those of internal marketing.

3) *Adapting products* to the needs, requirements and demands of customers in national markets targeted by the international marketing requires *an effort of research, design and production* more extensive than for internal marketing (the higher as the more pronounced their heterogeneity is and the consumer behaviour involved).

4) *The chain promotion activities, distribution and international markets post-distribution* takes specific forms from one market to another, being incomparably longer.

5) The *strategies regarding prices* of products for international markets are more complex and harder founded, must be based on a number of criteria to be taken into account.

6) *Competition* on international markets is usually *much stronger, more dynamic and more dangerous* than the one in the domestic market, being much harder to combat.

7) The *external environment* on which it is focused the international marketing is also more complex than the internal one and so on

Other specific international marketing issues will be addressed in our future work we intend to publish in the shortest time.

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