

Course Learning Outcomes for Unit II

Upon completion of this unit, students should be able to:

1. Explore the management of marketing implementation and control processes for organizations to predict business outcomes.
 - 1.1 Relate the political, economic, social, and technological (PEST) analysis to the implementation of marketing strategies.
2. Synthesize the use of marketing research and demand forecasting to predict business outcomes, and contrast the influence of micro and macro environmental factors on marketing strategies.
 - 2.1 Recommend marketing research tools for an organization.
 - 2.2 Compile a PEST analysis.
 - 2.3 Evaluate the external environment of an organization using the PEST analysis tool.

Course/Unit Learning Outcomes	Learning Activity
1	Marketing Plan; Chapters 3 and 4
1.1	Marketing Plan; Chapters 3 and 4
2	Marketing Plan; Chapters 3 and 4
2.1	Marketing Plan; Chapters 3 and 4
2.2	Marketing Plan; Chapters 3 and 4
2.3	Marketing Plan; Chapters 3 and 4

Reading Assignment

Chapter 3: Collecting Information and Forecasting Demand

Chapter 4: Conducting Marketing Research

Additional Reading Assignments:

In order to access the following resources, click on the links below:

On a related topic, the article below reveals that 76% of millennials shop at discount stores, and they spend 4 out of 10 dollars in discount retailers. Take a look, and think about how this will impact brick-and-mortar retailers.

Bucher, L. (2016). 25 ways millennials will change the grocery industry forever. *Canadian Grocer*, 130(8), 21–24. Retrieved from <http://search.proquest.com.libraryresources.columbiasouthern.edu/docview/1833129421?accountid=33337>

The following article discusses how a typical grocery store can utilize market research to make the in-store experience more engaging. In today's online purchasing world, this is extremely relevant.

Powell, C. (2016). Common sense. *Canadian Grocer*, 130(8), 16–17. Retrieved from <http://search.proquest.com.libraryresources.columbiasouthern.edu/docview/1833129379?accountid=33337>

Unit Lesson

If you were going to put together a start-up company, think about the external factors that would impact your company. Both from a domestic as well as an international perspective, these external factors have a significant impact on your company. The underlying impact is substantial as the business owner does not have control of these external factors. Developing an understanding of how these factors impact the overall organization will enable the manager to effectively manage these changing factors. A tool used by marketing managers, as well as other management disciplines, is the political, economic, social, and technological (PEST) analysis. This tool analyzes how changes in the political and legal environment impact the organization. It also analyzes how changes in the economic environment impact the organization. Additionally, it analyzes how changes in the sociocultural environment impact the organization. Finally, it analyzes how changes in the technological environment impact the organization. Click the link below to access a video, which demonstrates how the use of advanced technology solved a problem in Rwanda. The solution discussed in the following video impacts inventory cost, cost of lost sales, and transportation costs for companies attempting to deliver medical products in Rwanda.

Zipline. (2016, May 13). *Zipline in Rwanda* [Video file]. Retrieved from <https://youtu.be/OnDpE8uSb7M>

Click [here](#) to view a transcript of this video.

Within this unit's marketing plan submission, you will be compiling a PEST analysis as well as examining the impact of these environmental changes on your start-up organization. The PEST analysis enables the researcher and the stakeholders within an organization to understand external factors that will impact the organization. While these factors are absolutely not controllable, the goal is to develop an understanding and to make changes within the organization to minimize the negative impact of these external changes.

Click [here](#) to access a PEST analysis, which provides an example of components that might be included in a PEST analysis.

Beyond the external factors associated with the PEST analysis, there are several other considerations when analyzing the external environment. Industry health as well as competitive pressures will also impact the overall operation of the business. These will be discussed in greater detail in subsequent units.

In developing an understanding of the external as well as the internal environment of an organization, the execution of a strategic marketing research plan is key. The world changes at an incredibly fast pace, which supports the need for a continuous research plan. Kotler and Keller (2016) refer to this as a marketing information system. A *marketing information system* allows a company to track changes and modify product/service offerings, distribution plans, pricing strategies, or even the methods used to communicate the benefits of the product/service to the target market (promotion).

Please click [here](#) to learn more about market research.

Click [here](#) to access the transcript for the market research presentation.

Market research is the application of the scientific method in identifying patterns or other areas of impact. This includes the identification of how to solve problems as discussed earlier but also the identification of new and innovative product/service ideas (Babin & Zikmund, 2016). Marketing research can be conducted using a variety of methods. Click the link below to view a video that demonstrates how the National Basketball Association (NBA) uses marketing analytics and marketing research to grow their brand.

SAS Software. (2014, November 18). *Analytics proves perfect assist for NBA team* [Video file]. Retrieved from <https://youtu.be/G3DiLefLBbs>

Click [here](#) to view a transcript of this video.

At its very basic form, the marketing research process can be viewed through a series of steps as described below.

1. Define the problem: The researcher identifies the objectives of the research.
2. Analyze the situation: The researcher identifies the information that has already been assembled.

3. Gather the data: The researcher identifies the methods by which the data will be gathered through observation or surveying.
4. Interpret the data: Once the data have been gathered, the researcher needs to understand how the data interrelate and exactly what it means.
5. Solve the problem: This is when the application of the data results are used to affect change within the organization and/or to solve the identified problem.

As the researcher moves through these steps, the methods to gather the research must be determined. The first decision is whether to conduct a focus group, a survey, or behavioral research. Focus group research suggests that the researcher gathers 8–10 carefully selected individuals with the designated purpose of acquiring their opinions on a topic through a discussion forum. Survey research offers the respondents a series of questions either in paper form or electronically. These responses are then tabulated, and conclusions are drawn. Behavioral research draws conclusions based upon the buying behaviors of consumers. This research is typically gathered based upon observations or the accumulation of buying records such as cash register records. A survey is one of the most widely used research methods today as this is one of the most cost-effective methods of gathering large amounts of data. Survey types include telephone interviews, U.S. mail surveys, e-mail surveys, or the use of popular online survey methods such as Survey Monkey. Researchers need to understand that consumers today are “time poor,” and they really have little time to respond to questionnaires. With that in mind, the survey needs to be organized to allow respondents to finish the survey quickly. As one might imagine, gathering data from consumers is not always an easy feat. Click the link below to view a video that shows how American Airlines conducted research using a hack-a-thon to gather ideas on how to improve the flying experience.

McCartney, S. (2014, July 16). *This cross-country flight is the future of flying: American Airlines invites techies to a 'hack-a-thon' at 36,000 feet* [Video file]. Retrieved from <http://www.wsj.com/articles/this-cross-country-flight-is-the-future-of-flying-1405552471>

Click [here](#) to view a transcript of this video.

Through these steps, the market researcher attempts to gather research, perform the statistical analysis, and solve the problem within the organization. The data are stored in a database, which has expanded to including significant quantities of data. With today's technology, we can not only store these vast amounts of data but also can review them cumulatively, which allows marketers to understand the relevance between different areas of the data. This collection of *big data* is considered to be incredibly valuable by market researchers. The final step in the process is for the researcher to be able to communicate the research results. This must be done at the appropriate levels within the organization and, in many cases, to multiple stakeholders.

A recent challenge for marketers is the use of ad blockers by consumers to avoid advertisers. Take a look at how companies are using embedded messages, viral events, and games, which all utilize data and analytics in order to create content that is more appealing to the consumer by clicking the link below.

Wall Street Journal. (2016, June 21). *Advertisers use new tactics to grab consumers* [Video file]. Retrieved from <https://youtu.be/GG1bWdxnQYw>

Click [here](#) to view a transcript of this video.

The aforementioned video is an excellent example of how proactive use of market research can impact change and increase overall effectiveness of a company's marketing and advertising campaigns.

Marketing Plan: Part I

Throughout this course, you will be compiling a marketing plan for a fictional company. This will be a comprehensive marketing plan that you will compile in Units II, IV, and VII. While this is a cumulative plan, each part should be submitted separately as described in the assignment instructions.

References

- Babin, B., & Zikmund, W. (2016). *Essentials of marketing research* (6th ed.). Boston, MA: Cengage.
- Kotler, P., & Keller, K. L. (2016). *Marketing management* [VitalSource Bookshelf version] (15th ed.). Retrieved from <https://online.vitalsource.com/#/books/9781323591512>