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## **SOCIAL MARKETING, SOME RECOMMENDATIONS FROM ALBANIA**

### **Abstract**

Following developments in the Albanian media allows us to raise some issues or make some observations on this form of marketing, which has been proved that is very important field.

Social Marketing is an approach to development, which applies modern marketing techniques for humanitarian purposes. From our research it appears that our country still has such little awareness campaigns, although social problems grow every day. In recent years there are increased efforts of several organizations, mostly non-profit, such as family planning issues, environmental protection, as well as banning the use of drugs by young people.

In this situation the question we raise is: Does this effect marketing method in our country? Does it improve the lives of our citizens? Did the media properly carried out its role in this form of marketing?

To answer I tried to analyze cases of campaigns that have been undertaken to see their concrete effect.

**Keywords:** Social Marketing, Albania

### **Introduction**

The society's awareness on the negative effects of many phenomena remains a difficult issue for the reality of our country. The lack of attention or sensitivity to negative phenomena, the use of incorrect forms of marketing of these issues or non-involvement of the public in flagrant cases that damage our life, makes more difficult the spread of this form of marketing.

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Today we live in a world of rapid developments, dangerous and often feel vulnerable and threatened. Destruction of forests, greenhouse effect that brings global warming, diseases of the century and many other sensitive issues are at the core of the existence of social marketing, which interferes and tries to at least minimize the damage that bring these negative phenomena in human society. Social marketing helps mankind to keep informed about the risks posed by an act without thinking and consequences.

Media in its entirety serves as an impact of this form of marketing. The last two decades our country has known a rapid development of the media in all its forms. This would actually have been a good signal for social marketing, but it seems that it is dominated by commercial marketing.

### ***What is Social Marketing?***

Social Marketing as a discipline was born around 1970, when Kotler and realized that the same marketing principles that are used to sell products to customers can be used to “sell” ideas, behavior and attitudes. Kotler defines social marketing as a form of marketing that is different from common marketing concept, only the objective of the marketer and his organization. Social marketing seeks to influence social behavior, not for the benefit of the marketer, but in order to benefit the target audience and the whole society. This technique is widely used in international health programs, mainly for family planning issues, and mainly found more widespread use in the US on issues such as drug abuse, heart disease and organ donations.

### **4 P's of social marketing**

Even in social marketing focus is the customer, so understanding what people want and need, rather than attracting people to purchase products produced in advance. It is said that social marketing “talks with the customer.” The planning process takes into account the customer, addressing the elements of the marketing mix. This refers to decisions 1) Product Concept 2) Price, 3) Distribution (Place), and 4) Promotion. These are often referred to as the four “P” of marketing. Social marketing also adds some “P” other marketing.

### **Product**

Social marketing product is not necessarily a physical offering. There is a continuum of products, from tangible products, which are the physical products to services. In order to have a sustainable product, people must first understand that they have a problem, and that the product offering is a good solution for this problem. Search role here is to explore the perceptions of consumers about the problems they have and to determine how important it is that they take action to solve these problems.

**Price**

“Price” refers to what the customer needs to do in order to obtain the social marketing product. This cost may be monetary, or may require the customer to give up some invisible elements like time. If the benefits are perceived as greater than their cost, the chances of approval for the product are much larger.

In determining the price, especially for a physical product, such as contraceptives, there are many issues which are taken into consideration. If the product is priced too low or provided free of charge, the consumer may perceive it as poor quality. On the other hand, if the price is too high, some may not be able to afford it. Social marketers must balance these considerations, and frequently result in a fee increase perceptions of quality and give a sense of “dignity” of the transaction. These perceptions of costs and benefits can be determined through research and used in product positioning.

**Place**

“Place” describes how the product reaches the consumer. For a tangible product, this refers to the distribution system. For an intangible product, the place is less clear, but refers to decisions about the channels through which consumers are informed or trained. This may include “doctors’ offices, shopping centers or home demonstrations.

**Promotion**

The last “P” is promotion. Because of its visibility, this element is wrongly thought that constitutes almost all social marketing. However, as can be seen from previous discussions, this is only a part of it. Social marketing is the promotion of the integrated use of advertising, public relations, personal selling and entertainment vehicles. The focus is the creation and maintenance of demand for the product. Research is crucial to determine the most effective and efficient means to reach the target audience and increase demand.

**Extra “Ps” of Social Marketing**

Public - Social Marketers often have different audiences and their programs must be addressed well in order to be more effective. “The public” refers to groups of foreign and domestic included in the program. Foreign public includes the target audience, secondary audiences, policymakers, while domestic audience includes those involved in the adoption or implementation of the program.

Partnership - social and health issues are often so complex that a single agency can not make a dent in itself. You should all come together in a community to be truly effective.

Politics - Social Marketers sometimes do a good job in changing individual behavior, but it is often difficult if the environment does not support. Often, change is necessary and various programs in the media can be a complement to

social marketing.

Money - Most organizations that develop social marketing programs operate through funds provided by sources such as foundations, government grants or donations. This adds another dimension to the development strategy, therefore, where to get the money to create your own program?

### **The role of media in the development of social marketing**

Despite the developments of information technology and the extensive use that has taken recently, still we remain a country that prefer television, which means that this channel of communication remains the due one for cases of sensitization to negative phenomena. From our research I note that no similar studies about this phenomenon even though cases of the use of social marketing have not been scarce. Below we analyze some of the most important cases listed in the Albanian media.

#### **Awareness of drivers motoring**

As part of awareness campaigns to prevent accidents, undertaken by various stakeholders, Albanian media in general it has expressed its readiness to help somehow our awareness of the population. Very active in this mission have been the Ministry of Transport, Ministry of Interior, the Albanian Red Cross and forums set up for this mission. The aim of these campaigns is to sensitize the public on the risks of major accidents on the roads, fatal consequences for life and health.

Implementation of this mission is based on the use of social marketing, which applies to recall promotions for seat belt placement as a way to save lives. But despite increased efforts by the statistical data shows that the number of accidents on the road only has increased and this phenomenon continues to be of concern for our country.

#### **Awareness of environmental protection**

Not a few have been campaigns on environmental protection undertaken by various interest groups. It is worth mentioning campaigns to maintain a clean environment for the protection of forests from massive damage to conservation of river beds from sedimentation, cleaning of beaches, etc.

We can say with certainty that the media in this regard has made efforts to improve the situation, but for some reason which will be reflected in the conclusions, our environment still remains threatened by ourselves.

Another case of successful use of Social Marketing remains the case of “chemical weapons” and through TV and radio spots was achieved massive sensitization and because of strong reaction was prevented this process with consequences for health and the environment.

### **Awareness of family planning**

Numerous campaigns undertaken mainly by humanitarian organizations were supported by Albanian media in the context of family planning. Informing by multiple campaigns through mass media means convey messages useful for improving the quality of life in our country.

From the analysis of the statistics shows that in this case, social marketing has served many humanitarian mission has given positive effects required.

### **Awareness of the damages from the drugs**

Use of drugs emerged as a concern on youth after '90 and as such was very much an argument for raising initiatives, which were intended primarily to inform about the catastrophic consequences of the use of such substances. Many forms of social marketing were used to raise awareness of young people for their failure to recognize and inform parents with addictions that create symptoms and narcotics. In addition to promotional-type "drugs kill" was launched and training programs in schools to educate generations about this phenomenon. In a retrospective look it appears to be sufficient for ending these cases.

### **Awareness turnout**

This case is to make the residents to meet one of their rights such as the expression of their will through the ballot. But it was also observed from the last election, such campaigns are not producing the required results even though policymakers are satisfied with the few Although the percentage point increase in voting participation.

The cases discussed above are more specific and problematic, but not the only ones. Social marketing is part of our media programming, whether appropriately or not and regardless, if they bring the required reaction or not.

The aim is that this form of marketing to serve as a tool to improve our daily life. However I continue to think it is not well known as social marketing concept, even not applied properly.

In a poll conducted by me in connection with the recognition or not social marketing in one of the channels most used social communication, facebook, I notice that not few are those who have no knowledge of this branch of marketing to benefit directly the social welfare.

Results of the survey are as follows:

The analysis of this simple observation to note with concern that a not insignificant percentage do not know though social marketing communication using social networking sites and can often become part of cases of application of social marketigut through these networks.

## **Conclusions**

Until not it is discussed too much about commercial marketing, the importance of international marketing, etc., but we handle very little social marketing. Social marketing is a very broad field of world marketing giant.

- the social problems that today are the topics debated by all of us as environmental protection, AIDS, placing the seat belt and many others that are problems that a good marketing can be prevented and to avoid more damage.

- forms or uses social marketing strategies to sensitize the target audience to change behavior or improve it are numerous.

- form faster to inform a wider audience extent are social media as well as electronic ones. Social media are more accessible to all age groups of society. But the electronic media have a great impact and immediate, but in contrast to social media where the audience can become part of a discussion on electronic media audiences can only receive information without giving her opinion.

- social marketing is not widely recognized or not appropriately applied.

- the impact of the use of media to market for humanitarian purposes has not often been the right one. Apparently it is not applied properly and appropriately.

## **Recommendations**

Some of our recommendations have been given during the writing of the article, which are summarized as follows:

- It is little known about social marketing and we recommend to apply it starting with the inclusion in the curriculum of business schools on social marketing content.

- The media should be more addicted to social responsibility and to serve the seriousness of their country's population in necessary cases.

- Media should raise their voices to the negative phenomena that undermine social welfare, health and life of ours.

- Priority should be given proper social marketing versus commercial.

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