



Marketing's Changing Social/Environmental Role

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NEW service and profit opportunities for marketing through the development of a new basis for market segmentation are indicated by articles in this issue. Currently, markets are segmented essentially on demographic and behavioral bases. Market segmentation based on consumers' societal orientation is emerging; markets will be evaluated according to the degree to which consumers accept the consumer-citizen concept and buy as individuals concerned not only with their personal satisfactions, but also with societal well-being. In addition to the changes in marketing brought about by the social/environmental orientation of individual consumers, new markets are developing in such fields as air and water pollution, solid wastes management, public transportation, thermal pollution, and noise control. It is through the analysis of such environmental developments and through new marketing policies that management responds to the pressures and opportunities presented by social/environmental change.

In addition to probing new service and profit opportunities in the social marketplace, this issue of the *JOURNAL OF MARKETING* also explores marketing's role in the processes of social/environmental change. Articles examine marketing's relationship to social marketing and environmental management. These include discussions of how the viewpoint, concepts, and techniques of marketing can be incorporated into the solution of social problems.

The consumer-citizen has made environmental concern one of the pressing social and political issues of our time; one current challenge is for the corporate-citizen to understand, adapt, and contribute to environmental improvement. Specialists in environmental technology approach many of the problems discussed in this issue of the *JOURNAL OF MARKETING* from different perspectives than many businessmen and social scientists. They often do not understand that the skills and capabilities of marketers can be essential to the success of many social programs. Many environmentalists make assumptions about citizen behavior in regard to environmental matters which are based only on ideals or on intuition. They often lack a consumer-citizen orientation and do not understand that citizens must be persuaded to change value structures and buying behavior before significant environmental improvements can be achieved.

The questions considered in this issue are impor-

tant to the marketer in his dual role as citizen-businessman. Just as marketers must now perceive buyers in their dual roles as citizen-consumers, managers must develop a new concept of corporate citizenship appropriate to the social marketplace of the 1970s. Profits will continue to be essential and basic to corporate survival, but the major challenge to business today may be to meet the societal needs of a changing environment.

Environmental deterioration is the social issue which will probably receive the greatest amount of business involvement. Business responsibilities toward improving the environment will become more important because a variety of ecological and social forces are stimulating a long-term national commitment to environmental protection. Firms could be subject to appraisals of their environmental performance and their contributions to social change. Such an environmental audit of corporate performance may become a common practice by the late 1970s.

Marketing does have a contribution to make to environmental management. The following articles provide a specific focus on this and a number of other environmental areas in which marketing can play a significant role. It is hoped these articles will assist readers to understand, adapt, and contribute to the processes of environmental improvement.

In "Social Marketing: An Approach to Planned Social Change," Kotler and Zaltman discuss the manner in which marketing concepts and techniques can be utilized to influence public acceptance of social ideas. They analyze marketing's past contributions to social causes and find that marketing has been utilized in many instances; however, the lack of the managerial concept of integrated marketing has reduced its effect. Planning is required for the integration of the marketing function. Although planning does not guarantee the acceptance of social change, the authors believe that the proper application of social marketing can enhance the prospects of acceptance.

The discussion of social marketing is followed by an application of marketing tools and marketing planning to a social cause. Mindak and Bybee incorporated these concepts into a local fund-raising campaign of a national charity and discuss the process and results in "Marketing's Application to Fund Raising." They found that the bene-

fits achieved from the application of marketing tools outweighed their additional costs to the campaign, and the fund drive experienced its first revenue increase in several years. This is an illustration that marketing technology, properly applied, can achieve the results discussed in the preceding article.

Zaltman and Vertinsky consider a different aspect of environmental marketing in "Health Service Marketing: A Suggested Model." They take marketing out of its traditional realm of business orientation and present a model of the social and psychological considerations and their interactions affecting the success of marketing health programs. However, the contribution of this article transcends the model and its applications. It provides an illustration of the manner in which concepts from the behavioral and social sciences can be combined with the competent application of marketing concepts to achieve socially desirable results outside of the business arena.

Marketing's changing environmental role is further illustrated in "Marketing and Population Problems." Until recently, the idea of applying marketing technology to help solve the world's population problems would not have been considered by marketing scholars and practitioners. Farley and Leavitt note the magnitude of the population problem and discuss the failure of massive programs designed to abate the population explosion. The authors believe that part of this failure can be attributed to the technical personnel responsible for administering these programs by neglecting such critical issues as distribution channels, promotion, and "consumer" attitudes. It is in these areas that the application of marketing technology can effectively be employed to solve the population problem.

"Recycling Solid Wastes: A Channels-of-distribution Problem" illustrates how marketing can be used to provide profit opportunities to firms and to facilitate the accomplishment of societal goals. Zikmund and Stanton consider the recycling of solid wastes to be a channels-of-distribution problem that can be analyzed through applying traditional marketing techniques. This article depicts an area of marketing opportunity as well as a social concern where marketing technology can be effectively applied.

The necessity for marketers to shift emphasis from individual want satisfaction to societal considerations is the theme of "Societal Adaptation: A New Challenge for Marketing." Feldman suggests several ways in which marketing might adapt to

the changed circumstances produced by environmental pressures. He believes that many current environmental problems are caused by consumers' pursuit of individual, rather than societal goals.

Kassarjian provides evidence of the effectiveness of an advertising theme which emphasized societal rather than individual benefits in his article, "Incorporating Ecology into Marketing Strategy: The Case of Air Pollution." He attempted to identify the market segment which would respond to air pollution appeals and found that such a theme appealed to all demographic segments.

The consumer movement reflects an issue which has focused attention on marketing's need for greater involvement in the social environment. The issue which underlies many questions being raised by consumer advocates concerns the extent to which private versus government regulation should be applied to protect consumers. In his article, "Consumer Protection via Self-regulation," Stern examines the difficulties of private and public regulation and suggests means for improving consumer protection. He also questions the ability of self-regulation to deal with social issues.

"Marketing Science in the Age of Aquarius" summarizes and brings into focus the issue's entire theme—the social/environmental role of marketing. Dawson contends that marketing science is in a critical stage. While marketing has an inherent relevance to issues concerning the quality of man's life, a "pseudo-science" of marketing may be developing which avoids involvement in critical societal issues. He cautions marketers that by advancing their discipline to the status of a science a danger may be created in that the essential relevance of marketing may be lost in the process.

January, 1972 Feature

Readers are reminded that the January, 1972 issue will feature research-based articles which take a micro viewpoint of the firm and focus on functional aspects of the internal operation of business enterprises as they relate to marketing.

