

Suggested answers

- 1. The promotion variable of the marketing mix relates to activities used to inform individuals or groups about the organisation and its products. In your view, has the promotional strategy for the 'Double Down Sandwich' in the KFC promotion been successful? Explain your answer.**

The KFC 'Double Down Sandwich' promotion has enabled KFC to get its brand name 'out there'. It has also enabled a greater presence for the company on social media sites, which contributes to increased exposure. The outrage from the nutritionists and women's groups has enhanced the exposure to the KFC brand, but none of the outraged groups appear to fall within the target market demographic of 18–25 year old males, so it is possible to suggest that the promotion has been successful.

However it is interesting that since this promotion the more recent campaign has been toward 'Chicken Littles'. In this campaign, it could be said, that KFC has taken CSR toward smaller portions. This could be as a result of feedback obtained through social media in relation to the 'Double Down Buns' marketing promotion.

- 2. The National Organization for Women President Terry O'Neill told 'USA Today' that KFC should really be focusing its marketing promotions more towards women, who make more than half the decisions regarding food for dinner. Should KFC shift the marketing focus more towards women?**

No, KFC should not shift its promotional focus more toward women for this particular 'Double Down Sandwich' campaign. KFC have evaluated the market and its strategy, to target the promotional campaign at 18–25 year old males, appears to be most appropriate. However, it is very important for KFC to take into account feedback received from its customers through blogs and other interactive media such as Facebook. Consumers who are in tune with the various media identified through the 'Conversation Prism' will provide constructive feedback.

Notwithstanding the specific targeting of the 'Double Down Sandwich' promotion mentioned above, research shows that food represents one of the largest marketing opportunities and women are responsible for the majority of the grocery shopping and meal preparation. Food is the most important budget item, and can be adjusted but never eliminated. To underestimate the female consumer would be foolish. However, this 'Double Down Sandwich' promotional campaign did not target grocery shopping or meal preparation.

3. Could the promotional strategy for the 'Double Down Bun' be used globally?

No, this promotion could not be used globally. Global advertising and promotion is only effective if the global consumers have common values. Standardised global promotional and advertising campaigns are not equally effective in all markets due to the consumers' values, beliefs and behaviours varying across cultures. Such promotional campaigns may be totally wasted when consumer values vary from the values in the promotional campaign.

Saatchi & Saatchi, which was KFC's first advertising agency to embrace the concept of global advertising, later changed its opinion. Kevin Roberts, Worldwide CEO of Saatchi & Saatchi, stated in 2002 that 'Anyone who wants to go global has to understand the local—their own local and the locals of all their customers. People live in the local. I've never met a global consumer, I never expect to. We define ourselves by our differences. It's called identity—self, family, and nation'.^[28]

4. If you were the marketing manager for KFC, would you consider gender issues an important part of your promotional campaign?

Yes, gender is an important issue. You omit vital information when you ignore the gender of a person and maintaining a customer focus ensures that you deliver products

that match their needs. The first step in the customer focus process is to identify who is making the purchasing decisions and define them as thoroughly as possible. Traditionally, scant attention has been paid to gender in market research, rather defining the customer in terms of their age, social class and geographical location.[14]

It is the corporate social responsibility (CSR) of companies such as KFC to take into account not only gender issues within its specific marketplace, but other important issues such as obesity and their responsibility towards their consumers' health.

5. There was a variety of new online marketing tools for promotion of KFC to the students, including Facebook and blogs. Explain the importance of each of these. What are some of the potential advantages and limitations associated with the use of each?

The case introduces a number of new marketing (promotional and advertising) forms that are available on the internet. Without listing them all here, it is possible to discuss their advantages and disadvantages, as these apply consistently to all of them. There will no doubt be more to add to these lists of new forms of marketing over time.

The primary advantage of these forms lies in the fact that they are consumer-driven—that is, they can be accessed by the receiver wherever and whenever they want. The consumer can access KFC's Facebook site or post a blog in response to an advertisement that has appeared earlier in the day, yesterday, or at some other time when and where they want. Likewise, access to a blog and the information provided therein is also up to the receiver.

These new forms of electronic media for getting a message across are also useful in reaching younger consumers, many of whom are less tuned in to traditional media forms. The penetration of electronic media among younger age groups makes the information provided to this market segment very easily available at any time.

All of these forms also provide information and insights that may not be available through traditional media. For example, blogs or Facebook and YouTube may carry information not known to some media, or provide very different perspectives on a subject such as the 'Double Down Buns'. Additional insights and credibility (maybe!) are additional advantages offered through these media. Blogs—if credible—can offer the consumer's point of view on products and services, not just the view of advertisers. At the same time, there are some problems associated with these media. One is the issue of credibility: there can be an assumption that if the information appears on a blog it is credible, yet blogs are often not monitored and, to date, not regulated. Thus the information that appears there may not always be correct or unbiased. Some companies—like McDonald's—have been accused of creating blogs for purely advertising purposes, without identifying the fact that they are the sponsors. Many other companies do create blogs talking about the great aspects of their products, when in fact they are nothing more than advertising messages.

There is also concern about large companies monitoring blogs for research purposes. While blogs are supposedly an expression of free speech, and companies such as KFC can learn a lot about what people think about them and their products, they can also plant writers on the blogs and denigrate their competition. To date, these new advertising forms have shown great promise. The number of people participating in the use of forms like Facebook and blogs is still relatively small, but surely on the increase.