

Introduction

According to Bell (2004), Coca Cola is the world's soft drink. Citing the history of Coca Cola, the author says the first Coca Cola did not have bubbles. Dr John Pemberton who was a pharmacist from Atlanta developed the formula for the syrup using coca plant and kola nut. Pemberton took the tonic to the largest pharmacy in Atlanta and it started selling at soda fountains. At that time the Coca Cola was advertised as "Delicious and Refreshing" and that became its first slogan.

The company has been hugely successful over the last century and has become an icon of American culture. Coca Cola is not involved in all the processes that see its products go to the hands of consumers. According to its website, the Company partners with more than 300 bottlers worldwide. The website says, "*Our Company manufactures and sells concentrates, beverage bases and syrups to bottling operations, owns the brands and is responsible for consumer brand marketing initiatives. Our bottling partners manufacture, package, merchandise and distribute the final branded beverages to our customers and vending partners, who then sell our products to consumers.*"

Product Portfolio

Coca Cola is the most dominant company in the world in the beverages sector. Its most popular product is the carbonated drink, but the company has presence across other segments of beverages as well. Over last few years, the company has been developing its portfolio in non carbonated drinks. The thrust is to move towards healthy drinks. This has been achieved through a combination of new house development and acquisitions of other companies. Various sectors in which the company has a presence include:

- Energy drinks: Coca Cola has a number of brands in the energy drinks segment and contain ingredients such as guarana extract, ginseng extract, vitamin B and caffeine.

- Juice drinks: The Company is tapping the market of health conscious consumers with its juice brands. The Company is into both adult and child nutrition products.
- Soft drinks: This is the core segment of the company with its most popular brands such as Coca Cola and Coke being used for various soft drink products.
- Sports Drinks: Electrolytes, carbohydrates and fluids containing products are targeted towards athletes.
- Tea and coffees: Coca Cola's product portfolio has various flavors of bottled teas and coffees and can be conveniently carried everywhere.

The success of the company and the competitive advantage lies in the strong brand equity, marketing strategy and new product innovations.

Inputs for the marketing plan

Coca Cola stands on the four pillars of a strong brand, innovative advertising, product development and glocal strategy. Excelling in these four areas have taken Coca Cola to the place where it is today. These areas are discussed in detail in this section:

Marketing and branding strategy

Coca Cola has been successful in creating brand loyalty among its consumers. This is a result of sustained marketing efforts starting from early 20th century. Coca Cola has adopted innovating marketing techniques right from the times of Candler and Robert Woodruff. Apart from usual advertising through bill boards and newspapers, Coca Cola focused on organizations, universities and colleges and this increased sales while promoting the brand name.

The company introduced the hugely successful marketing strategy of using coke Santa starting from 1931. The whole image of Santa Claus was popularized by Coca Cola. The company invests heavily in marketing through sponsoring various sports activities.

Packaging was used to differentiate Coca Cola brand from others. Many competitors spawned during early 20th century and to differentiate its product, Coca Cola trademarked the contour bottle (Eldred, 2008). Six carton bottle was introduced keeping in mind bulk buyers. In 1978, the two litre bottle was launched and the coke can was launched in 1960. Coca Cola is now planning to introduce a new curved can that is going to be easier to hold.

With the advent of internet and rise of social media, Coca Cola has been quick to jump and connect to customers using this new medium. The company has fan pages on all major networking sites including facebook and twitter. Coca Cola is directly able to engage with customers through these websites. Coca Cola is following a “fan first” approach in its social media campaigns where fans are encouraged to upload, comment on and consume the content that has been uploaded by other fans. Various blogs, comments and photographs help the consumers connect with each other and with the company.

Innovating advertising

The company has used every medium available for advertisement and has been on the edge of technology for it. Use of radio has been one of the oldest medium of advertising and with the advent of television; the company became one of the first major advertisers through the medium.

Coca Cola always presents itself as a pleasurable and refreshing drink. The Company has successfully launched many famous campaigns such as “The Coke adds life” and “Have a coke and smile” in 1970s; “can’t beat the feeling” and “Coke is it!” in 1980s; “can’t beat the real thing” in 1990s and “always life” in 2000s.

The company sponsors major sporting events around the world and hires top sportspersons to promote the brand. The company also hires top models and movie stars as their brand ambassadors. The company always portrays itself as the number one and has the best products available. With the advent of internet, the company has been advertising online to connect with the online population.

Reinvention of Coca Cola

Coca Cola experienced a good growth during first half of the 20th century without any major competitor. The demand for soft drinks was growing and so was the company. But things started changing in 1970s when Pepsi Co started giving Coca Cola competition. Pepsi had control over its bottling network and offered lower prices to consumers and higher margins to retailers. Coca Cola needed a change in its strategy to survive this new competitor. The growth of demand in soft drinks was also beginning to drop in US. According to Wise (1999), The Coca Cola Company adopted the following strategies to survive and counter attack Pepsi’s charge:

- Coca Cola broadened the definition of consumers. The company decided to focus on all non alcoholic beverage drinkers rather than just soft drink consumers. With this, the Company was trying to expand the market of soft drinks by taking away share from juices, coffee, tea, milk etc

- Coca Cola put focus on vending machines and restaurants where fight for price and shelf space was not high. These were high profitability avenues and would serve Coca Cola better. Coca Cola helped in development of several restaurant chains.
- Coca Cola increased its control on the bottling industry. The Company bought the stake in various bottling companies and provided the bottling companies with capital and expertise to improve operations and set up vending machines. Coca Cola also spun out Coca Cola Enterprises.

These three moves allowed Coca Cola to manage the complete value chain. Also, the company increased the profits of bottlers by improving their efficiency and by targeting more profitable customers. As a result, the profitability of Coca Cola increased as well.

Coca Cola's glocal strategy

Coca Cola is a very big global brand and has had two choices to introduce its brand in new markets. The first is a global strategy where it could have introduced the product in the market using common marketing strategy and promoting the same message that is used everywhere. This can lead to a strong brand image, but might backfire if messages and images are interpreted differently in the local market. The second marketing strategy, which is the local strategy, would have seen Coca Cola promoting its product as suitable to the local needs. While this would have addressed the local requirements better, Coca Cola would have lost the advantage of a strong global brand. A consumer with access to the global media would be confused with the conflicting messages.

Coca Cola overcame this problem by adopting a “glocal” strategy. Gay et.al. (2007, pp. 339) define “glocal” as *globalization strategy of adapting global brands to local conditions*. The tagline that Coca Cola uses is – Think globally, but act locally”. This is a middle path wherein Coca Cola maintained the strong global brand while introducing the local elements in the marketing to make sure that the product image is in harmony with the local culture. The brand name is common across the world, but the images promoting the brand are different for each country. In some countries the image is of young and trendy people, while community activities

are promoted in other countries. While family values and gatherings are used in many countries, youth and rebelliousness are promoted in others.

For example, on Chinese website community initiatives are strongly advertised. Various education initiatives are shown and other social responsibility activities promoted in order to align itself with communist principles. This is a great example of a glocal approach. This glocal strategy has played a big part in making Coca Cola one of the leading brands in China.

New Product Introductions: Out to in approach

Coca Cola has always tried to keep up with the current trends as is evident from the introduction of various new products over decades. The company has followed the strategy of being world leader in non alcoholic beverages and is quick to understand consumer preferences. Coca Cola has always preferred taking note of customer preferences and designing its products according to them, instead of taking an internal approach – the process of taking stock of internal assets and expertise and using them to produce something that customers would buy.

Based on these, the company either introduces a new product or acquires a company producing the suitable product. This was essential to survive in the changing market and to change the product portfolio according to customer requirements. Some examples are:

- Coca Cola realized the importance of a diet soft drink for calorie conscious consumers and introduced a diet drink Tab as early as 1963. Later Diet Coke was launched in the same category and it became hugely successful.
- Following consumer preference for healthy drinks, Coca Cola launched several brands of non carbonated drinks during 1990s. This included Powerade (sports beverage), Minute Maid (Juices), Dasani (water), Fruitopia (fruit drink) and Nestea (flavored tea with Nestle as joint venture). With these launches Coca Cola ensured its presence in every segment of non alcoholic beverages.
- Coca Cola launched C2 Cola in 2004 to take advantage of increasing popularity of low calorie drinks. C2 had much less calories than classic Coca Cola but with the same taste. Though the product did not do well, it demonstrates Coca Cola's willingness to try new products according to popular demand.

- Coca Cola introduced a green tea drink called Enviga in 2006 to further ride the health bandwagon.
- Coca Cola bought Glaceau in 2007. Glaceau made energy drinks, flavored water and vitamin enhanced drinks.
- Coca Cola tried buying the Chinese juice company China Huiyuan Juice Group, but was blocked by the government. The company tried capturing the growing juice market in China with this acquisition.

This out to in approach requires flexibility and Coca Cola has shown that flexibility with multiple product introductions and other innovations.

Holistic Marketing at Coca Cola

Coca Cola is essentially a marketing company as it relies on marketing to drive its sales as well as to develop new products. Bottling operations are done by partners or the associated company. Hence, the responsibility of the primary company is to develop and execute marketing plans along with ensuring that the distribution channel is healthy. As is evident from the above discussion, the company engages in marketing through all channels. Holistic marketing comprises of Internal, Integrated, Performance and Relationship marketing (Holistic Marketing, 2011). Coca Cola's marketing steps discussed in the previous section covers all the major aspects of the business and show that the company takes holistic marketing approach. This is discussed in detail below:

- **Integrated marketing:** Integrated marketing approach is evident from the product development cycle at Coca Cola. Also, the consistency of global and local marketing campaigns shows that the entire process is integrated. Coca Cola makes sure that the message passed on to customers through various channels is the same and complimentary.
- **Performance Marketing:** The Company makes sure that it engages in performance marketing by putting emphasis on develop brand and customer equity. Brand has been

developed by years of sustained marketing efforts and customer equity is developed by engaging in various developmental and environmental activities.

- Relationship marketing: Coca Cola is heavily engaged with the bottling partners and include them in a lot of marketing activities discussed in the previous section. They also keep the customers engaged with various activities through social network, sponsorships and promotions.
- Internal marketing: Coca Cola employs around 139,600 associates around the world (Coca Cola SEC filing, 2011). Internal marketing in the form of communication and engagement with employees is difficult in such a large organization. However, the company is trying to bridge the communication gap with the help of better intranet and integration. Coca Cola is making efforts to make employees understand the company values and its mission. Efforts by Coca Cola to reach out to customers have increased in last few years (Hobson, 2006)

Mission and Vision of Coca Cola and its link with Holistic and Internal Marketing

Mission of Coca Cola is stated as follows on the website (The Coca Cola Company: Mission, Vision & Values, 2011)

- *To refresh the world...*
- *To inspire moments of optimism and happiness...*
- *To create value and make a difference.*

The company uses the holistic marketing to achieve its mission. As discussed in the previous section, the company keeps evolving its product and develops new products according to the taste of the customers, thereby fulfilling its “refreshing” objective. Various marketing activities play a big role in the process. The other objectives of creating value and happiness are for customers as well as employees an internal marketing play a big role with the employees, who are engaged in various ways.

The vision stated on the website puts emphasis on every aspect of business and what needs to be accomplished. Following are the ways holistic marketing and internal marketing contribute to these different parts

- People: Coca Cola aims to be a great place to work for and internal marketing plays a big role in engaging employees. The company conducts periodic employee surveys and involves employees in many marketing and CSR activities. Coca Cola has used webcasts to preview its marketing plans for employees as well as bottling partners. Many times employees get T-shirts when a new slogan is introduced or a major campaign is launched.
- Portfolio: As discussed above, Coca Cola keeps evolving its portfolio with the help of integrated marketing to satisfy needs and taste of people.
- Partners: Marketing campaigns involve suppliers and customers are engaged through relationship marketing in order to create a healthy and trusted network with suppliers and customers.
- Planet: Performance marketing is used for various environmental and developmental activities and these activities are well publicized.

Internal Marketing by Competitors

PepsiCo is the only real competitor of Coca Cola and has been involved in many internal marketing campaigns. PepsiCo is a step ahead in this area as it has launched bigger and better campaigns than Coca Cola. Before PepsiCo launched the refresh campaign in 2009, it introduced the campaign at its headquarters with tall billboards new logo and a flag (Kenneth, 2009). The company made sure that all the employees were on board with the new image, new logo and new campaign. The company organized a rally day which was attended by 4000 employees in person and through internet. Brand strategy for the company was laid during this event. The company has been engaged in similar internal marketing at a smaller scale for a long time. The company conducts regular webinars in order to reach out to employees and promote marketing campaigns to them. The scale of these campaigns is higher than the ones conducted at Coca Cola.

Steps to incorporate Holistic Marketing

To incorporate holistic marketing into the activities of the company, all the marketing activities need to be seen together rather than as separate entities. Since Coca Cola has a global presence, it needs to make sure that apart from various types of marketing activities, the activities in various geographies are in sync. Following steps should be taken in order to achieve this:

- All the marketing activities should pass on the same message to the customers. The identity and message of the Company needs to be expressed through slogans, colors, symbols, employee behavior, events and atmosphere, apart from advertisements and promotions.
- Different marketing activities achieve different objectives. The company should form teams for different type of marketing activities and appoint a marketing head to make sure that all the teams work together. Marketing campaigns should be designed jointly by these teams.
- The Company should take steps to engage employees and make sure that they believe in the mission and vision of the company. Employee engagement should be ensured and various events should be organized in order to reach them. Coca Cola, being an MNC should make sure that their knowledge management is well developed and allow people to attend events through webinars. Apart from employees, distributors and dealers should be engaged and trained to serve customers well. These players should be incorporated into company philosophy.
- There should be regular meetings among different arms of the marketing function and ideas should be exchanged. Also, coordination among marketing teams of different geographies should be ensured so that the learning from one market can be used in another and best practices are followed.

Environmental Factors

PEST Analysis

This analysis would give a good overview of the external environment in which Coca Cola operates and how the different variables would affect the company.

Political Analysis

Coca Cola falls under the food category and is hence subjected to strict rules to meet certain standards. There is a little chance of governmental laws changing the way in which Coca Cola is produced and sold. Still, there are various factors that can adversely impact the company

- The company can be impacted by environmental protection laws in various countries since there are reports of the company's manufacturing units having negative impact on the environment. The company would need to make its processes more efficient and reduce the wastage activities to overcome this problem.
- The political conditions in international markets such as military takeover, government changes and civil unrest can cause negative impact on the business
- Penetrating into new markets depends a lot on the political conditions. Coke for a long time did not go into Israel since it was concerned about much larger market of Arab countries

Economic Analysis

Economic variables affect every industry and Coca Cola's is no exception.

- Economic slump in any country is going to affect the sales of Coca Cola in that market. It would also impact production negatively.
- Inflation in any country would impact the production of Coca Cola adversely.

During a downturn, non essential items like soft drinks are heavily impacted as consumers look to reduce their spending and these products are amongst the first to go from the shopping list.

Social Analysis

The following social variables impact The Coca Cola Company

- People are becoming more health conscious and this trend is hurting the growth of Coca Cola. At the same time, this provides an opportunity for the Company to increase its presence in non carbonated drinks and take advantage of the expanding market.
- Environmental issues are always in question around the manufacturing plants set up by the company. The company is accused of degrading the environment. This negative publicity is detrimental for Coca Cola and it has tried to address this during the last few years by engaging in various environmental protection schemes around the world.
- Social structure of a country has a big impact on what types of products would sell in the country. This impact is more for food items since food habits depend on local culture.

Technological Analysis

Technology is involved right from the manufacturing of syrup to storing the bottles in cold storage at the retail outlets. Following factors can potentially impact the company

- Coca Cola is known as a marketing company and marketing has been its strength for a century. New medium of advertisement has come up from time to time such as radio, television and now internet. It is essential for the company to keep advertising through different mediums.
- Introduction of different type of packaging has helped the company increase its sales. Cans and plastic bottles have made it much easier to transport and store the drink.
- Technology plays a big part in manufacturing plants. As new technology is introduced, the process becomes more efficient. This allows the company to produce in more quantity and with better quality.
- It is essential to have cold storage for consuming the drinks. Hence, the usage of Coca Cola is limited to the places that have the capacity to refrigerate the Coca Cola bottles.

Porter's Five Force Analysis

This analysis would give us a good idea of the competitive environment that the company operates in. The following factors define the competitive landscape for Coca Cola

Competition

The largest competitor for Coca Cola is Pepsi Co. They compete in almost all the markets worldwide. Coca Cola has higher sales worldwide, though Pepsi Co dominates the US market. There are other players in various beverages category, but none of them as large as Coca Cola or Pepsi Co. The new competition in the industry is to increase the product portfolio and introduce new variants of carbonated drinks and non-carbonated drinks.

Threat of new Entrants

Threat of new entrants is very low in this industry and the following factors are responsible:

- **Brand name:** It has taken these companies decades to build their brand and it's not easy for a new company to emulate that.
- **Distribution channel:** The two existing companies have wide distribution channel across the world and it's difficult to match up to that.
- **Huge initial investment:** The high cost of setting up manufacturing plants, transportation channel and distribution channel is a big barrier for new entrants.
- **Economies of scale:** Both the existing companies enjoy large economies of scale that help in keeping the costs down. A new entrant would not be able to match the cost of the biggies and would be forced out of the business.

Threat of substitute products

The threat of substitution is high for soft drink industry with products like bottled water, juices, tea and coffee readily available. To take care of this, The Coca Cola Company has increased its presence in these sectors as well. For people who take soft drinks for its caffeine, tea and coffee can be easy substitutes. In some cases, alcoholic beverages such as beer can be a substitute as well. It costs nothing for a customer to substitute a soft drink with another drink and hence there

is a high threat of substitution. Many people are moving towards healthier drinks and substituting soft drinks with juices etc.

Supplier power

Supplier power is low in case of Coca Cola. Following are the suppliers for the company:

- Raw materials such as sugar and water are standard and the suppliers can be easily replaced without any problems.
- Bottling equipment manufacturers are suppliers for Coca Cola since the company owns stake in many bottling units. These equipments can be supplied by many companies and hence they have low bargaining power.
- Other factors such as labor, power etc would not be a problem for the company.

For all the inputs, Coca Cola has higher bargaining power since it enjoys economies of scale and orders in huge quantities from the suppliers.

Buyer Power

In case of The Coca Cola Company, the bottling units are the buyers since the company sells the syrup to them and rest of the activities are undertaken by them independently. But the company owns many of the bottling plants and in such a case, buyers are the retail outlets.

- Bottling partners have low degree of bargaining power with Coca Cola. Though the company is dependent on bottlers for selling their product to the end consumers, they can replace the bottling partners. To start the business, the bottling company has to invest a lot and this creates a lock in for them, reducing their power.
- The power of mass retailers is moderate. On one hand, the brand of Coca Cola is very strong and the retailers have to store the product to satisfy the customers. On the other hand, the retailers can switch to other drinks without any cost and stop storing the products of Coca Cola.

Key Areas of focus

Key areas of focus of the marketing managers at Coca Cola should be

- Social factors: Customer tastes keep evolving and marketing department at Coca Cola has to make sure that it is aware of these changing tastes and preferences. It also has to interact with the R&D team to ensure that the products being developed are according to the market demand.
- Environmental issues and CSR: Portraying a positive image of the company has become essential especially because of the negative publicity garnered by the company in last few years regarding human rights (Mercer, 2006) and environmental issues (Srivastava, 2008). Marketing team should make sure that the efforts of the company in these areas are well publicized and that the company takes necessary steps to mitigate the effects of negative publicity.
- Technological factors: Marketing department should determine the best way to advertise and promote products. Internet is fast becoming popular in many regions and social media is gaining importance. At the same time, internet reach is not high in many parts of the world. Marketing managers should identify the optimal mix of various channels available and design campaigns according to that.

Various Environmental Factors affecting the company

This section discusses the issues of globalization, technology and environmental and societal concerns with regards to Coca Cola and their impact on the company.

Globalization

Expansion of Coca Cola is considered to be a sign of globalization (Shenkar and Luo, 2008) and has the highest brand recognition in the world. Globalization is happening at a fast rate and Coca Cola is at the forefront of this change. The company derives a lot of value from the international operations with only 30% of the revenues coming from the home country – USA. The general trend around the world is to reduce the trade barriers and increase business across countries. Coca Cola is going to benefit immensely from this. Coca Cola develops products according to local tastes and hence globalization has a big impact on the products available. Globalization has

also led to R&D facilities set up at key locations around the world, directly impacting the final products. Product mix being offered by the company also depends on the market.

However, at several places around the world, globalization is the reason why people resist Coca Cola. Sandikci and Ekici (2008, pp5) give example of some customers from Turkey who said “*It is about American imperialism. I think if I drink Coca Cola I am not drinking it by my own will but because I am forced to do so.*” Since Coca Cola is seen as a symbol of globalization, it faces the ire of anti-globalization groups.

Technology

Everything at Coca Cola from the product development and manufacturing to marketing involves technology, which has been changing with a rapid pace over last few decades. The company is quick to respond to and adapt new technology. Some examples are inbuilt cooling mechanism for drinks (Hannaford, 2007) and touch screen vending machines (Givens, 2009).

Evolving technology has a lot of impact on Coca Cola since it needs to take care of the following factors

- **Advertising and customer feedback:** With technology evolving, preference of people change. More number of people around the world are increasing the time spent on internet and this has become an important channel for advertisement and connect with customers. Customer feedback has direct impact on the R&D and new product development.
- **Product development:** The Company needs to adapt new technology for improving manufacturing efficiencies. There is also a need to keep abreast of the new ingredients for the product. For example, a new sweetener with high sweetening effect and fewer calories might be useful for the company.
- **Distribution:** Distribution is a big part of the overall operations at Coca Cola and is impacted a lot by technology and infrastructure. The beverages need to be cooled before consumption and the products and services offered depend on this infrastructure. Cooling infrastructure has the biggest impact on Coca Cola and beverages cannot be sold at

locations that do not have cooling facility. The company is known to distribute refrigerators to its retailers.

Environmental and Societal Factors

The company has faced various allegations over damaging the environment. In India, the Company was allegedly using contaminated ground water for production and the products contained various toxins. Coca Cola was also blamed for depleting ground water level in various parts of the country. The company faced similar issues in other parts of the world. In 2006, the Company was involved in a controversy in India when government agencies alleged that Coca Cola contains pesticides and is dangerous for health. These issues affect the image of a company and can be detrimental to the sales. Following the allegations of the insecticide contamination, sales of Coca Cola's products fell in India (Krebs, 2003).

Products of the Coca Cola Company are considered to be high in calories and harmful for health. Various groups have advocated healthier drinks over carbonated ones. There is an increase in the number of people opting for health drinks. This changing preference would lead to a change in the type of products being offered by the company. Coca Cola has already introduced many non carbonated beverages over last few years and continues to develop new beverages as well as acquire smaller companies that develop healthier beverages.

Success Factors for Marketing Organization

Marketing is taking a more central role in organizations across the world. Marketing is the contact point between customers and all other functions. As organizations have realized the importance of being customer-centric, the importance of marketing has increased. This has been impacting mission, vision and philosophy of the companies as well as the strategies adopted by them. Following are the factors that would determine the performance of companies in 21st century. The way these factors can be incorporated in the marketing department in particular and organization in general is also discussed.

- **Customer focus:** Emphasis should be on meeting and anticipating customer needs. This means that the organization should be close to the customers and involve them in new product development. Top management should inculcate the culture where functions view each other as internal customers. Relationship marketing is becoming important as the competition is increasing and it's becoming difficult to be heard. Organizations should devise ways to engage in personalized marketing techniques in order to reach customers.
- **Targeting all stakeholders:** Company strategy should focus on value creation for all stakeholders. Apart from customers, the focus should be on satisfaction of employees, shareholders, distributors and suppliers. All these players are responsible for working of an organization and good relations with them is essential for success.
- **Customer Satisfaction:** Customer satisfaction should be the biggest objective. Marketing team should make sure that they measure customer satisfaction and the value created by the company for its customers. This would make sure that organization is aware of how customers perceive it and take corrective measures if there is a need.
- **Integration of marketing department:** Organizations should integrate their marketing functions with other functions since marketing function is the one that interfaces with customers. Cross functional teams should be formed for critical projects and marketing function should be involved for making key decisions such as a new investment or acquisition.
- **Market focused approach:** Focus should be on market or account management, rather than product management. Marketing department should be organized along the lines of

market as much as possible. This would ensure that the organization becomes more market focused.

- **Offerings view of products and services:** Marketing department should consider integrated product and services being offered by the company rather than an individual product. The emphasis should be on the complete customer experience. This approach would plug any gap that might exist in the service and will lead to higher customer satisfaction.
- **Global marketing strategies:** Organizations should develop global marketing strategies in order to increase operations. With increased globalization, barriers of trade are coming down and it might be possible for a company to be highly successful by expanding operations to some other part of the world, or by exporting its products and services.
- **Consistent communication:** Communication from an organization should be consistent across regions. With increase in globalization, customers travel a lot and have access to various markets. Hence, the message given out by an organization should be consistent across various regions. This is essential to build a strong identify as well as increase customer lock-in.
- **Market research:** Market research should be extensively used by marketing department in order to identify market opportunities and forecast trend. Most of the markets are dynamic and a company has to be on its toes in order to be successful. Identifying current preferences is essential to understand and serve customers. At the same time, forecasting is essential in order to identify future demand. This would impact manufacturing capability as well as new product development. Companies have to become responsive to the changing trends in order to be successful in the long run. Organizations should adopt and develop techniques to measure market needs and forecast them.
- **Information technology:** Information technology should be incorporated with marketing strategies. Advanced in information technology allows enormous expansion of the scope of marketing technologies. It can be used for everything from deriving information of customers to actually capturing them. It would also allow companies to engage in relationship marketing and database marketing techniques to focus on key customers.
- **Innovations:** Emphasis should be given on marketing innovations. There should be designated people responsible for innovations in marketing techniques. This is especially

important for global companies as they have to cater to different type of markets and have different type of resources available.

The above steps are being increasingly adopted by successful companies. As the markets evolve in 21st century, these steps will ensure long term success of an organization.

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