

# The components of a firms image



The components of a firm's image are its target-market characteristics, retail positioning, store location, merchandise assortment, price levels, physical facilities, customer services, mass advertising and publicity, personal selling, and sales promotion. The retail strategy gives the retail firm its overall direction.

### Retail Positioning

Retail Positioning creates an image in the consumer's mind relative to competitors by developing and emphasizing unique benefits. The act of positioning is a core element of a successful marketing strategy. The goal is to manufacture product differentiation where no inherent distinctions exist. Retail positioning creates a value of "who you are" in the market.

### Store Image

Store Image is the positioning of a store in terms of its branding, product selection, interior and exterior design, fixtures and fittings, lighting and other elements affecting the visual outlook of a retail store. Store atmosphere affects merchandise quality inferences, in turn affecting store image. Often, a consumer's first impression of a store is based on what can be seen or heard from outside the store. This may include the displays, the lighting, the music, the color scheme, and the arrangement of space.

### Merchandise Assortment

Merchandise Assortment is necessary to increase profitability which is the key driver for any business. Effective merchandising assortment and planning results in maximising sales potential and minimising losses from mark-downs and stock-outs. Effective merchandise planning and assortment effectively controls the two major areas of profit leakage in retail, which are the loss of sales due to stock shortage, and the forced margin reductions due

to excess stock.

### Computer Aided Direct Marketing

The essence of computer aided direct marketing is that it aids in telemarketing; that is, selling over the telephone. It assists in the selling process by helping the salesperson who almost always uses the telephone as a means of reaching the customer to facilitate delivery of the basic message about the product or service, handle customer questions and objections, and record sales. Computer-aided direct marketing also helps the manager obtain information that, in the manual mode, he or she either could not get at all, or only could get with a great deal of difficulty. Analyses of such information often lead the manager to a broader understanding of the marketing forces operating in a given environment.

On the negative side, technological barriers usually manifest as a combination of incompatibilities in software, hardware, and/or networks, and the need for these three systems to be synchronized. Human barriers arise from psychological factors that occur on either the individual, intra-group, or inter-group level and are especially apparent in a period of significant change.

### Email Marketing

Targeted emailing is an increasingly popular method of direct marketing. Most companies benefit from this relatively low-cost method of marketing. Prospective customers may well be targeted through this direct marketing method.

On the negative side, many constantly changing government regulations must be abided by in order to conduct such marketing activity. Further, this method may appear irritating to many people and may result in marketed

emails to be caught in spam filters. Hence the target audience may never be reached through this method.