

# Marketing cars effectively by knowing your customers well

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Brand new cars are usually attractive to a certain demographic market: better income generating men and women with urban lifestyles and parents, especially fathers. People purchase products or services for three basic reasons: to satisfy basic needs, to solve problems and to make them selves feel good (Guille, 2007).

One of the basic needs that a car would be able to answer is of course is the necessity of transportation. Another need it answers is the need to belong which is an intrinsic motivation to affiliate with others and be socially accepted. (Van Wagner, 2007)

If one would surf the pages of the website of Toyota, this basic need is met by the selling points that car manufacturers give. “ Buy a Camry Hybrid now, and you may be eligible for Federal Tax Benefits. Plus, several states now allow single-occupant use of the carpool lane for Camry Hybrid.” (Toyota Motors Sales, 2007) is Toyota’s way of showing that if one purchases a Camry, he or she will be socially accepted enough to have tax benefits and permission to use the carpool lane.

People with disability have a great need to be socially accepted and General Motors addresses this issue by providing the GM Mobility Reimbursement Program that says, “ General Motors is committed to helping persons with disabilities equip their vehicles for easier and safer travel” (General Motors Corporation, 2007). Targeting the male population is what Volvo does best by showing how the Volvo Your Concept car was conceptualized: “ If you meet the expectations of women, you exceed the expectations of me. – Marti Barletta, Gender Trend specialist. (Volvo Car Corporation, 2007).

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People, especially parents, are always concerned about safety and car manufacturers recognize this need with the establishment of certain accessories to their products. Some of Toyota's safety features for the Camry are airbags, Front and rear crumple zones and side-impact door beams and Vehicle Stability Control (VSC) [20] with Traction Control (TRAC) that ensures less danger when the roads are slippery.

General Motors has the OnStar facility that provides a built in phone that a driver can use hands free. Also, when the airbags are deployed, these send signals to GMC so that if the driver cannot call emergency, OnStar staff would be able to detect where the accident happened and rescue will thus be sent. Volvo's Safety Concept Car has Cue transparent window pillars, infra-red night vision and seats, controls and pedals that move to ensure the driver is at the best possible position.

Toyota has been able to avoid nuances of forgetting to turn off interior lights by a battery-saver that deactivates these after 20 minutes. General Motors has the remote door unlock, wherein people who have mistakenly left the car keys inside their automatic locking cars can be helped.

Car manufacturers are great in showing how owning their cars can be a source of pride. Toyota uses phrases like "comfortable interior modifies to your changing life," and "Bigger. Wider. More powerful" to coax a customer's self-esteem. General Motors on the other hand, offers GM: OnStar vehicle diagnostics which makes the owner feel like a boss by getting instant and regular reports on how to maintain the car. Volvo is the best among

them in fueling pride by putting very comfortable accessories like a trunk containing chilled and heated compartment and the ability to connect to your entertainment library at home.

Car manufacturers like Toyota, General Motors and Volvo have done their marketing assignments well by completely fulfilling the needs of their target markets and this ensures their leading positions in their industry.

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