

Example of marketing: tamagotchi case study

[Business](#), [Marketing](#)



- What is the difference between a fad and an enduring product?

A fad is a trend that is wildly popular, but short-lived. Bergman (n. d) defines a fad as “ irrational imitative behavior”. The Hula Hoop, which gained massive popularity sometime after its commercialization, is a good example of a fad. According to Talwar (2013), cultural, social, individual, and psychological reasons influence consumer purchases. The combination of these issues fuels fads. There are several characteristics of a fad. A fad has descriptive and “ career” traits (Bergman n. d). In terms of descriptive traits, a fad should be homogenous, novel, and odd (Bergman, n. d). In terms of the development of the fad, it is sudden, spreads rapidly, gets quick acceptance, and it is short lived.

There are numerous examples of fads especially in video games, social activities, and fashion. Video games such as Flappy Bird, Candy Crush Saga, Farmville, and Angry Birds are some of the best examples of fads in recent times (nirandfar. com, 2014).

An enduring product is one that lasts and retains popularity for a long time. For instance, the wristwatch is an enduring product because it has maintained its popularity and usage over a long period. When it first appeared, many people considered them silly novelties. The pocket watch and chain that men suspended from their waistcoats was a crucial element of male attire (ucpress. edu). However, the wristwatch gained popularity and has maintained that aspect since then. Other examples of enduring products are certain types of fashion such as caps, mobile phones, hair extensions among others are enduring products. Although some products such as artificial hair gained popularity soon after their invention, they have

maintained if not grown in popularity for very long periods.

Some great fashionable products, TV shows, movies, and toys ought to make a return as enduring products. The popular Facebook game Farmville should make a comeback. Zynga, the makers of the game had managed to come up with a game that had an average of 83.8 million active users monthly (nirandfar.com, 2014). By March 2012, Zynga had successfully managed to lure more people to games related to Farmville such as Cheville, Cityville, Frontierville among others. However, by November the same year, Zynga's stock declined by more than 80% (nirandfar.com, 2014). People discovered that the new games were not new at all and that they were all like Farmville. Users lost interest and investors pulled out.

Farmville should remedy its mistakes and make a comeback. Zynga should come up with new games related to Farmville or unique but not recycling of re-skinning the old game. The company should also continue to use the Facebook platform and venture out to other popular social networking sites such as twitter, which are still very popular. These moves will appeal to a new generation of consumers. In addition, the strategies can prolong the life of the game in order to take advantage of fads.

The marketing of fads and enduring products differs in terms of the 4ps of marketing (product, promotion, place, and price) as well as consumer behaviors. When fads are popular they appeal to many people, and this brings several marketing advantages and adds value to the product development literature (Lilly & Nelson, 2003). In terms of pricing, manufacturers or business people can comfortably and wisely exaggerate or increase the prices of the products and services that are in high demand.

The dissatisfaction that people feel when they are not part of the group enjoying a certain product compels such people to purchase the products with minimal consideration of the pricing. Enduring goods, on the other hand, are valued ordinarily without exaggerations since sellers stand to make reasonable and sustainable profits.

When marketing, producers target to have products that will have vibrant growth and maturity phases. The invention of Cheville by Zynga was an attempt to improve the growth and maturity phases in order to improve profitability. Enduring products have a gradual growth rate, which upon reaching maturity it stays vibrant and popular for lengthy periods.

In terms of place, fads target to set up sales points at places where the demand is growing, and there is a sizeable target market. Although enduring products also follow a similar pattern, they often tend to open places out of strategies such as expectations for future growth.

Many fads conduct intense promotions in order to influence people to buy the products during its popularity. They can also rely on word-of-mouth for promotion of their products and save on the advertising costs.

- What has made Tamagotchi so successful worldwide?

When introduced as a new product, the digital toy, Tamagotchi was a raging success. The digital toy was successful because it appealed to many people because it brought a lot of reality and nature to people especially the urban dwellers. The owning and caring of pets fulfilled an emotional void experienced by the modern city dweller (Bergman, nd). The game focused on many psychological issues, which could be guided to promote good behavior and promote ethics among users.

A new product or innovation is one that is completely new to the users. The Tamagotchi was continuous innovations since there have been video games developed in closely related manners. However, the uniqueness of the product was getting users to become attached both emotionally and psychologically to the new product.

The product had several issues that appealed to many people in the local Asian population. The color green, which dominated the toy games, is used to show “cuteness” in the real world. The small size of the toys also fitted well with the market, and so did the name given to the product. There was considerable success of the Tamagotchi because it broke the gender barrier and appealed to all genders almost equally. The portability of the product, its style of play, the physical aesthetics, and the purposeful design around the nurturing all profited the development of an innovative product with global appeal (Frendo n. d).

- Using the product life cycle concept as the basis for the discussion, discuss why the Pet Rock was short lived compared to the Tamagotchi.

The Pet Rock, which was a popular fad product in the 1970s, was short-lived as compared to the Tamagotchi because of the expectations on realism that people had on the rock. Many people, especially the Yorkshiremen, had held rocks in high esteem (one17design. com). The men traditionally liked their rocks to move. As such, when a pet rock was brought to the scene, their expectations of a rock that could move were heightened. The pet rock’s failure to move and act as a living thing saddened the buyers and the product’s users leading to declined market demand in a very short period. The Tamagotchi, on the other hand, did not deal with a tangible pet but

rather a virtual one in the game. The fact that people can clearly tell that the pet they were raising was not real, psychologically influenced them to place fewer demands and expectations on their pets. As such, people felt “less cheated” and, therefore, they could continue to purchase and use the product.

The pet rock was less engaging as compared to the Tamagotchi. In the Tamagotchi, one could see the pet grow, become sick, happy, become playful among other issues as compared to the pet rock. As such, the Tamagotchi was more purposeful, fun, and engaging.

The product Life Cycle refers to the phases that a product goes through from its inception to the time it saturates the market (Steffens, 2002). The first phase is the innovation or the design phase, then the lag phase, the growth phase during which a product gets gradual and then the exponential acceptance in the market (Steffens, 2002). The next stage is the plateau or the maturity stage when the sales volumes remain largely unchanged. The next stage is the decline when people start to lose interest in something leading to its declining sales. The last stage is the dissolution phase when the product exits the market.

The pet rocks came to the market in 1970s. Gary Dahl introduced the pet rock in 1975 in order to “solve” the problems of feeding, grooming, walking, among others that live pets demand (Milwaukee journal). Dahl bought some stones and packaged them into boxes with instructional manuals. He sold about 1.5 million pet rocks with the fad lasting about six months up to December 1975 (Associated press). The instructional manual was a “real product” because it was full of puns, gags, and jokes.

The Tamagotchi had a considerably appreciable PLC. Bandai introduced the virtual pet game to the Japanese toy market in 1996 (Frendo, n. d). It was interesting and psychologically provocative, and many people liked it instantly. The product gained popularity and by 2010, it had sold about 80 million pieces (Thornhill, 2013). Since the Tamagotchi appealed to peoples' psychological needs, it had a lengthy PLC as compared to the pet rock. There was also substantial market research and product development that improved the PLC of the Tamagotchi as compared to that of the pet rock.

References

- Steffens, P. R. (2002) " The Product Life Cycle Concept: Buried or Resurrected by the Diffusion Literature?" Academy of Management Conference, Technology and Innovation Management Division, Denver.
- Frendo D. Tamagotchi: The World's First Virtual Pet.
- " Pet rock millionaire offers a new method to getting stoned". The Miami News. Associated Press. 1977-02-07. pp. 2A. Retrieved 26 Oct 2014.
- " Between Pet Rock and a hard place". The Milwaukee Journal. 1988-11-15. pp. 2A. Retrieved 26 Oct 2014
- The Illusion of Diffusion. Retrieved 26 Oct 2014 from <http://www.ucpress.edu/content/chapters/10506.ch01.pdf>
- This Month: Back to the future. Retrieved 26 Oct 2014 from <http://www.one17design.com/newsletters/Mar09.pdf>
- Bergman, M. (nd) When a Fad Ends: An Agent-Based Model of Imitative Behavior. University of Houston, 204 McElhinney Hall, 4800 Calhoun, Houston, TX 77204-5019.
- Lilly, B., & Nelson, T. R. (2003). Fads: segmenting the fad-buyer market. <https://assignbuster.com/example-of-marketing-tamagotchi-case-study/>

Journal of Consumer Marketing, 20(3), 252-265.

Why Do Fads Fade? The Inevitable Death of Flappy Bird | Nir and Far. (n. d.). Nir and Far. Retrieved October 25, 2014, from <http://www.nirandfar.com/2014/02/why-do-fads-fade.html>

Talwar, A. (2013) Principles of marketing. Undergraduate study in Economics, Management, Finance and the social sciences. The London School of Economics and Political Science.

Thornhill, T. (2013, November 26). The Tamagotchi is BACK: Addictive 1990s toy gets a 21st-century makeover (but not in the graphics department). Mail Online. Retrieved October 27, 2014, from <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/sciencetech/article-2513237/The-Tamagotchi-BACK-Addictive-1990s-toy-gets-21st-century-makeover-graphics-department.html>