

# Honda motorcycles essay sample



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

## Marketing Implementation

Honda motorcycle company which makes and sales motorbikes has a strategic marketing plan which if well implemented will see this company realizing all its short term, long-term goals and any other business objectives. The process of marketing implementation needs to be done systematically and conventionally using a reliable procedure. The details of marketing process as per the plan of the Honda motorbikes company maker and marketer as well as the distributor.

Conducting of a market research is perceived to be the first step towards implementation of the business plan. The Honda company has a very well trained staff who are qualified in field work. To carry out a market research, the staff of needs to be equipped with the correct field work tools and knowledge. This means they shall have to go for a number of field work training sessions or seminars where they can be taught about he key competencies and skills needed for effective field research on market issues. Some of the skills they need to be taught include public relations skills which they will mostly need when interacting with the society during the social survey. They will also need to be taught on the art of asking the right question to stimulate a respondent to give a relevant response. In the field, all sorts of personalities are found. It is likely to find respondents who are cooperate very well and give good responses. Others may be very rude and non cooperative. Others may be nice to approach but not well conversant with the products and services from this company especially because the products and services target those who have money to buy. Therefore, it is important for the field market researchers to have a picture of the kind of

people they may meet and therefore develop a way on how to handle each of them to avoid negative impact of the field challenges on the research results.

Part of the research should include making direct observation like looking at the number of motorcycles that are passing through a certain lane or road, and comparing the total number of motorbikes observed to that of Honda motorbikes to get an idea of the proportion of market which the company has commanded in a certain region. Administration of properly structured questionnaires is crucial because much of the responses and information given in the questionnaires will depend on the kind of questions asked.

Before the actual field work, the team should ensure it has revisited several secondary sources to obtain secondary data which can be very useful during field work. This data gives a person an insight of the kind of situation to be encountered in the field. Some of the relevant secondary information include the total population of an area, the sex ratio, the economic status of the population, their business relevant history, for example the kind of transport means that have been using and other issues of this sort ( Stephen, 1996, p. 49).

Then the actual survey comes to materialize where information collected should concern things like the peoples preferences when buying motor cycles and reasons for that, whether a person has ever owned a motor bike-when and what make, a range of a family's income per annum which can be used to estimate the potentiality of a community to purchase motorbikes if persuaded to do so through advertisements and much more of product and market related information.

The second thing towards business plan implementation is in the analysis of the collected data. The Honda company in the US has staff with all capabilities and with diverse academic and professional backgrounds. Data analysts should take this step. They need to be conversant with data analysis tools such as proficiency in Microsoft Excel and Access analytical packages, good knowledge of the Sociological Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS) and other statistical packages for analysing collected data. They also need to have the skills and competencies for accurately analysing both qualitative and quantitative data.

The next step the company needs is to reformulate its new marketing mix. A standard and complete marketing mix normally comprises of the price of the products and services, the promotion of the products, the place of selling the products and services and the packaging of the product. The company needs to remain in the lead edge in the motor bike production, distribution and marketing. To attain this goal, it should seriously consider the issue of products prices. This is in respect to the motorbikes themselves, the spare parts and the services offered after buying the bikes. Honda motor cycle company is established in the US, in Japan and in India. These markets are faced with a big challenge of steep competition. Our concern is in the US market since Honda company tactfully avoided the competitive condition in Japan to begin a subsidiary business in the United States of America never knowing that it would become so successful. There are however steep competition growing in the US market for motorbikes. One option the company can opt is by strategically reducing their products prices such that they remain slightly below those of its major competitors such as Kawasaki,

Yamaha, Suzuki, Harley Davidson and other makes of motor cycles (Honda, 2008).

However, the pricing policies of a company is determined by other factors of production such as the cost of raw materials, the cost of labor involved, capital for investment and the land factor. However, the company should consider this factor to avoid being eaten and out competed by its business foes. It has been also established that the net value of a product in the long run is determined not only by its cost at the time of purchasing but also by the cost of the charges for servicing and spare parts. If its spare parts are expensively sold as compared to those of its competitors, then the clients may prefer other models and makes considering future costs of maintenance. The company should also consider a no cost after sale service for a certain period of time say like one year. This should not be confused with a warranty which means that the company should be signing a contract with its clients to replace any faulty parts of their products if it they spoil within a certain period of time, Since the chances of a motor cycle to get damaged within a short period since it was purchased are minimal. The company should therefore take this as a tactic for attracting more customers.

The Honda company should also embark on an extensive promotion mission for its products and services. Most companies are already aware of the importance and the potential of carrying out an effective promotion activity to a business. Therefore the Honda company should also do its promotion to cancel out any impact a competitors may have on the clients. It is also important to note here that the promotion is always a cost to to the company

and it works against the business mission if maximising returns on minimum investments. The use of the modern technology like the digital TV which has a very wide coverage and therefore many potential clients are reached, for its promotion may be too expensive and when compared to its impact on the sales volume, it may not be very effective. One of the most effective methods of promotion is the use of raffles either physical or on the Internet such that people who purchase the coupons shall stand a chance of winning a Honda bike. Again, the use of posters and attractive billboards is relatively cheaper but the impacts on the volume of sales is usually very significant (Robert, 1998, p. 359).

A tactic that has worked wonders in the promotion of motor cycles and other auto-motives like cars elsewhere in the world is direct involvement of potential clients and simultaneous TV coverage of the events. This can be explained simply as an approach whereby the chief directors of of the Honda company may decide to make special invitation of chief administrators of companies which utilize motor cycles in their business operations such as couriers and postal services as well as other civilians who have the potential of purchasing motor cycles. Together with this group may include key and well known motor bike riders especially those in sports. The major editors of major newspapers and TV news from various regions should also be invited to this kind of event. What actually should happen is that the company should provide the best motor bikes to all these key and famous personalities and take them for a free ride. It is only after they have felt the perfection in its design, the comfort when riding and the high speed of these

motor bikes that they can really appreciate the goodness of the Honda products especially the motor cycles.

After such a ride, it is highly likely that company directors will recommend the purchase of Honda products the next time their companies needs supply of motor bikes. Also, the potential buyers who took a free ride are also likely to purchase these motor cycles when they get money for such an expense. Most of their colleagues and peers in similar economic status are also likely to be challenged when they see their friends gaining public recognition by riding on very smart and the best motor cycles in the market. Their testimonies when with friends or in business conferences can lead to unbelievable increase in the volume of sales from those who hear those personal experience testimonies. This exercise as it has been noted here above involves key personalities in the country. The company may even decide to involve major celebrities who are renown. This kind of promotion event may lead many people getting interested in the Honda products because most people belief that when certain people associate themselves with certain things, then the products are most likely to be the best. Furthermore, most fans follow and mimic what their heroes and celebrities do. If during this show the celebrities makes such commends as Honda bikes are the best, most of their fans will go for these best motor bikes.

The company may not believe what such kind of a promotion may do to the company's sales output. The presence of key riders during the motor sports may contribute to convincing companies that sponsor these games that the Honda bikes are the best for their sponsored candidates in the races. It is also important to note that this event should involve key editors of major TV

programs and newspapers in every region where the event shall take place. It is likely that the editors will make the Honda story appear as news headlines and positively comment on the goodness of these bikes. When they tell about their personal experience on a Honda, most people are likely to believe the truth and come for their motor cycles in the nearest Honda show rooms next to them. What is a key point to realize here is the best selling newspapers and most watched TV stations giving a full coverage of the event. The recognition and reputation the Honda company is likely to receive in the US society is so much that they make huge sales in the next fiscal year and even in the long run unless a competitor also exploits the same strategy or a bad thing happens in the Honda company such that the confidence the society had on Honda's products is all gone, similarly to the prior acquired reputation.

The next component of the marketing mix is the place. The choice of locating industries, distribution centres and location of dealer businesses should be carefully chosen. It should be strategic in terms of distance from suppliers of raw material to minimize costs before the actual process of production begins. However, the location of dealers should be areas with potential buyers such as in most populated towns such as New York, Washington and others. They should be prepared to face steep competition from dealers of other companies' products.

The way the motor cycles are packaged also matters a lot. A product may have the best quality and design characteristics but if it is not packaged well, it may be ignored by clients. Most customers like neat and good looking products. The body design should be impressive. The company should



consider using the customer's preferences in terms of the color and appearance. This can be attained by designing a software and placing it on the Internet such that a customer is able to customize the way he would like his or her ordered motor bike. The client should be able to choose the color of various parts of the outside body. This is a good strategy because even if the customers are not allowed to select their preferred colors, the company will still have to incur some costs in trying to package the products in a way that they will attract most clients. Letting the client choose for himself or herself is a way of attracting them (AHC, 1999, p. 98).

#### Evaluation and Control

Before the execution of the marketing plan, it is important for the Honda company to have a good way of ensuring formal control of the process of implementation of the activities that will lead to the realization of the company goals. First, this Honda company will have to consider the control of inputs . For prosperity of any company, there is need to have plans on how to expand. This calls for input of more financial resources to purchase new assets, purchase of raw materials, employment of new employees and other running expenses for the newly opened branches and plants.

The company may opt to go for an investment loan or trade in the stock market to raise the required financial resources. Taking a loan should be well evaluated because the loan shall be charged some interest and this comes as a direct expense to the company. It may accumulate to large sum of money if the new company branches do not pick up well or if they encounter a major challenge during establishment which may lead to a prolonged

period before the repayment of the loan is began. Additional expenditure in the form of capital will be incurred when purchasing new land or location sites for show rooms and new vehicles for the transport of company staff and executives. The Honda company also has to control the way additional research is conducted and the kind of development expenditures that are needed to attain the desired goals.

The success of a company is directly determined by the core competencies of its employees, be it the top managers or the production chain managers or the casual workers in the factory. Honda should realise the potential its human resources has in shaping the future of the company. Proper development of the skills and capabilities of the company engineers, its human resources workforce, marketing team and all subordinate and other support staff is crucial for business plan to be implemented according to the wish of the company directors. The first step towards getting competent employees is the selection of the best qualified persons when job vacancies are announced. Although most companies have adopted the culture of taking fresh graduates from any field for as long as they have the passion of serving in the company and provided that they are trainable, the Honda motor cycle company is strongly advised to take take fresh engineers for vacancies in the design and engineering department, graduates in human resource for the human resource department, business managers for top management vacancies in the corporate and high school level for casual workers. It is also highly recommended that if possible, Honda company should outsource for human resource services in key positions that require optimum competencies (Honda, 1998).

To build the capacity of various employees, the human resource department of this company should organise several training programs for the various categories of employees. The aspect of training employees in skills needed in various departments is also encouraged because it promotes the company's desire and goal to build strong team work among its workers. This will also prove to be useful in times when employees who are trained in say for example customer care and reception get sick, the company shall not have to go without a receptionist or a customer relations officer because a person will be picked from another department and will sufficiently serve this capacity and the needs of clients shall be continuously met.

There is also need to have business controls that are management focussed (Robert, 1998, p. 248). The managers in a company are the determiners of the course a company will take. The organizational chart should be rechecked. The assignment of titles should not be designed to give prestige but to suggest what a person does to the company. Although it may not be welcomed, it is possible to nickname people based on the good works they do for the company. The lines of authority within the administration should be altered such that every employee is answerable to himself. The point here is that it is possible to make the company employees honest and responsible. If for example there are some who do not do their work properly. For example in the packaging of the products, the managers can request that each employee sticks a label of his ID number to each product they package so that it would be easier for the managers to identify those who are carelessly doing their jobs (Stephen, 1996, pp. 48-49).

Control also need to focus and address the issues of employees. Evaluation of employees should be conducted from time to time. In cases where employees have to work in risky environments, they should be insured and necessary compensations should be made. The Honda company should also ensure its employees are fully empowered and their rights are respected. All their entitlements should be paid as they occur. This needs to be implemented using the approach of scientific management by Henry Ford where by the goals of a company and the needs of employees are directly correlated. The success of a company depends on the level of satisfaction of employees needs. Employees who are well motivated can work to the optimum of their capabilities and capacities. Such determined ten employees can do the work of about fifteen workers who are not motivated and their needs are not being met.

Control should be exercised on the out put from the company. The standards of its performance should be in line with its goals and vision. The company should have a way of ensuring its sales volume is increased, it has a good command in the market, and should have a control method of maximizing its profitability. Customer satisfaction is a factor determined by the company's ability to control its internal operations that are related to customer care (Paul, 1994, p. 87).

Control of market prices of its products can be ensured by strategic pricing policies that are made in consideration of the product prices from its competitors. It also has to reconsider its distribution standards currently in use and whether there are better means of distribution which cab bring impact to the company, for example, improvement of the distribution

system, integration of distribution and marketing, direct or out-sourcing for distribution services.

Periodic conducting of auditing to establish the loop holes in the business systems are necessary control methods. Honda needs to set specific time based profit targets that can be used to monitor the success or failure of its marketing activities. Auditing should be conducted by external auditors although internal audit reports can serve as a guide to what is expected (Thomas &Hunger, 1998, pp. 248-259).

There are also possible control methods of informal marketing that are appropriate for the Honda company. The level of employee satisfaction and commitment should be checked to ensure it is sufficient to for implementing the Honda company marketing plan. The company should find appropriate ways of increasing employee satisfaction and commitment if it finds they are not satisfied.

Honda motor cycles company should exercise social control such that all employees share the company's values and norms during team works. Finally, a control of the organization's culture should be exercised to ensure it is in support of the marketing plan. It should identify what new components of culture need to be adopted and which ones need to be dropped (AHC, 1999, p. 58).

## References

American Honda Company (AHC). (1999). *A Subsidiary's Success'*, Detroit: Wards Communication.

Honda motorcycles in America. Retrieved on 3/07/2008 from:

[www.honda.com](http://www.honda.com)

Paul, I. (1994). *Comeback* . N. Y: Simon and Schuster.

Robert, L. (1998). *The Success Story of Honda* . N. Y: Prentice Hall.

Stephen, K. (1996). ' Honda in a Hurry.' *Time* 8 September. 48-49.

Thomas, L. and Hunger, D. (1998). *Business Policy and Management Strategies*. N. Y: Addison Wesley.