

INTRODUCTION

Our aim in the marketing communications plan should be to establish a shared meaning among the company and its customers. It would be a challenge in finding effective ways to convey our thoughts and meanings to individuals.

We are determined to use most of the tools offered by marketing communications, in order to facilitate the idea of new service and turn “Habit” into a need. All efforts should be concentrated in the area of Thessaloniki.

It is worthy to mention that except the passengers, the participating companies could be considered as our potential customers too. Since we are acting as liaisons in a private network where we manage to bring two entities together, we should adopt an analogous marketing plan for the traders as well. Actually these are the people that will pay the service. After all, we focus in generating sales and contacts for them through the use of the passengers, but still revenues for us will come from this circle of contacting.

Our strategy, whichever this will be, it should include and imply the participation of the traders in the service. Without their presence, the service considered non-existent.

In any case, main strategy is that all tools should be applied in combination and in parallel. This technique is expected to increase the awareness and the information to potential customers, while tend to affect their psychological attitudes through building a relationship with them and shaping their behavior. The primary concept should be to ensure the synergy and coordination of all marketing communication tools, and get advantage of it.

Market Segmentation

The market pool is all passengers that use the transportation network. This is the overall market of “Habit”. Although everyone could have access to the new service, we do not consider them all, as our target market. Therefore, we will try first to identify and then separate the target market into distinctive groups based on a number of characteristics and evaluating their profiles.

Identify bases for segmenting the market

Since “Habit” is a hi-tech innovative service, we identify as main parameters for making the segmentation the following:

- (a) If potential customers have a friendly relationship or not with technology and their mobile phones;
- (b) Whether they have a dynamic way of living (intensive working days, etc);
- (c) If they prefer to follow innovative models of interaction and communication;
- (d) If they have a certain minimum of income that allow them to spend and are willing to do so.

Our criteria should be social, demographic and economic. We will segment the market according to these criteria in order to define their profile.

Develop Segment Profiles

Further to the above mentioned, the target market could be segmented in four major groups;

- (a) the teenagers, (b) the university students, (c) the active working youths, (d) the middle-aged and (e) the elder people.

	Needs	Characteristics/ Preferences	Behavior/Purchasing attitude
Group A: Teenagers (age 14-18)	They want interaction, they search for a different attitude, they try to imitate	Quick learners	Very impulsive, easily attracted by new and innovative products or services
Group B: University students (age 18-25)	Communication	Quick learners, less money to spend	Looking for the best in the cheapest price
Group C: Active working youths (age 25-40)	Save time	They have their own income	Be modern, attractive
Group D: Middle-aged (age 41-55)	They are dominant and need to be effective, do more in less time, enjoy their status, increase self esteem and social awareness about them	They have money to spend	They look for the unique and different
Group E: Elder people age (55+)	Feel secure and nice	Not so familiar with technology, avoid new methods of communication, anything new may be odd and seems unfamiliar to them	Follow old-fashion ways, keep doing things in the safe side

The above table will help us to identify the attributes of each target group. Based on each profile we will develop a customized strategy for the promotion of our new service. We will focus all effort in the most effective way.

Market Targeting

We aim to approach passengers that: (a) have a friendly relationship with technology and their mobile phones; (b) they have a dynamic way of living; (c) they prefer to follow innovative models of interaction; (d) they have an adequate amount of money to spend and are willing to do so.

Therefore, we are focusing mostly on young and middle-aged energetic people, who like technology, follow modern lifestyle and have satisfied income. We expect that this kind of users will be attracted and will be willing to participate.

In result, the target market is consisted of groups B, C and D.

Our marketing efforts should be based in the above segmentation and we will adopt different messages for each group (segment marketing). This will be the first technique to apply while throughout the operation of the service it would be advisable to adopt a more customized approach. Due to the nature of our service we could have access to needs, preferences and behavior of our clients. Moreover, having the means of technology, it would be an advantage to apply individual marketing practices (individual marketing).

“Habit” is dynamic service which can offer different set of options to different customers. Through interaction and direct communication, we can implement a platform of personalized marketing adapted to each customer’s needs and expectations.

Besides the target market as defined above, we should include in our efforts the approach to companies. This is an additional but separate target market for us, which covers the other side of our service.

Advertising Strategy

Setting the objectives

Who: Our target audience is consisting of 3 groups; (a) University students – age 18-25, (b) Young working adults – age 25-40 and (c) Middle-aged people – age 41-55.

What: We expect to accomplish two goals, (a) to raise awareness and (b) attract the potential customers to try the service. Awareness and trial during the first year of operation are expected to reach 50% and 60% accordingly. According to our initial plan we are expecting to reach a 21% of the market during the first year of operation.

When: The advertising strategy will start one month before the launch of the service and will continue during the first year of operation. Therefore, the total duration is estimated in approximately one year.

Budget

The initial amount dedicated to the advertising strategy has been calculated to 650,000 euro. This amount is expected to cover the costs during the first year of operation. Advertising strategy will continue though during the next years. As it was explained in the financial analysis, on chapter 10, the planning is for 5 years. Within the unit cost, which is 0.04 euro, has been included a 25% for advertising purposes. Therefore as we have already incorporated this expense for future use we will continue the strategy during the 5-year plan.

Creating Messages

- (1) “Habit” turn your bore into action with interaction
- (2) Sometimes it’s good to have a “habit”
- (3) At this moment...in a store near you... something interesting is happening...
You can “habit” it

Selecting the Advertising media

The media tools to be used will be:

- **Personal selling**, through the establishment of information kiosks within city, aiming to demonstrate and educate people about what is the service and how it works. It is well accepted that the oldest sales technique, this of personal communication gives value and create the conditions for better results. In these kiosks, there will be also established artworks with the simulation of the service and demo applications on the spot.
- **Media advertising**, through the use of local TV channels, local radio stations, local newspapers and the internet, mostly in portals that offer local information. The selection will be discrete and based in the popularity of each medium. This tool will create brand awareness and will prepare the target groups to accept or decline the new service.
- **Place advertising**, through transit ads that will be placed in all buses. Moreover, posters will be placed in transportation hubs.
- **Direct response**, through direct mailing that will be sent to companies, associations, and professional organizations. In the web site of the organization (www.oasth.gr) will be incorporated a special forum to discuss directly with passengers and traders any relevant issue and get immediate feedback.
- **Trade and Consumer oriented promotions**, through pre-arranged on-line meetings between traders and passengers using the new service and our network. Nobody is paying anything at these promotional actions. We just want to prove how strong our network is and facilitate “Habit” as a common scheme. Such a marketing communication tool is directed both to wholesalers, retailers and to the final users.
- **Event Marketing & Sponsorship**, through the participation in hi-tech events (cultural, scientific, professional, artistic) of the city. We will try to join and sponsor events, conferences and related activities. We expect to acquire incrementally the image of pure technological organization.
- **Public Relations & Publicity**, through the distribution of press releases and articles in local papers and magazines.
- **Point-of Purchase Communications**, through internal changes in buses. Buses at this case are the points of sales. We will establish in-bus digital displays as well as other technical internal interventions in order to attract the attention of customers.

Creative Strategy

Step 1: Specify the key fact

Turn bore into action with interaction.

Use “Habit” for free.

“Habit” the facts.

These are single minded statements that are expected to explain why passengers will join the service. In addition, this key fact could be translated positively by the traders as well, since it could be a challenge for them participating in the network and interact with potential customers for them.

Step 2: State the primary marketing problem

The problem is to communicate effectively the new service to customers. We should be clear and precise in what exactly this service is, and what its benefits are. This is the primary concern while in a second level we should be careful in increasing the awareness to the predefined 50%.

Step 3: State the communications objective

We expect the advertising to surprise and stimulate the target market. We focus in attitude and behavior of current passengers. The use of different advertising tools, which will be applied in parallel and in combination, will persuade potential customers to use the service (trial).

Step 4: Implement the creative message strategy

The positioning statement which will support the creative platform will point out that the service is unique, easy and free. We intend to stand in our customer’s mind as a habit, the free service that can transform their daily bureaucratic, demanding, stressing day to a game.

Step 5: Establish mandatory requirements

Our aim is not to create a revenue machine. We want to establish the new service as a need which adds value to the local community and all the participating entities.

This should be clear and this philosophy should place the lines for our communication framework with others. In any advertising event, we should use the messages and the pre-defined logo which has not been decided yet.

CONCLUSIONS

This is actually a preliminary communication plan based on our vision about the new service and how this should be promoted.

Further study should be done for a certain period of time, in cooperation with the marketing experts to investigate any other possibilities in order to establish a successful image.

We have revised the target groups in this individual section, by adding one more, as deeper consideration drove us in the conclusion that it would be crucial to include the group of middle-age passengers.

In addition, we have made a small artwork in our effort to illustrate the idea and how this works which we intend to present it in the project's presentation as supportive material.