

PN - APH - 612

ISN 70880

SOCIAL MARKETING:

ITS POTENTIAL CONTRIBUTION TO CHILD SURVIVAL

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Sponsored by the
Office of Health and Office of Education
Bureau for Science and Technology
United States Agency for International Development
Academy for Educational Development

University of Pennsylvania, Applied Communications Technology, Needham Porter Novelli, and PATH

September 1988

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
FOREWORD	1
INTRODUCTION	3
GENERIC MARKETING	5
SOCIAL MARKETING	6
THE DOMAIN OF SOCIAL MARKETING	6
BASIC TENETS OF SOCIAL MARKETING	7
THE SOCIAL MARKETING PHILOSOPHY	8
PROCESS AND CONCEPTS	11
DIFFERENCES IN SOCIAL MARKETING	17
MARKETING'S DIFFERENTIAL ADVANTAGE	21
RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER DISCIPLINES	23
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	27
REFERENCES	29

FOREWORD

HEALTHCOM is a research and development project sponsored by the U.S. Agency for International Development and carried out by the Academy for Educational Development, based in Washington, D.C. The HEALTHCOM Project fosters an understanding of how best to promote child survival around the world. Daily, millions of children die from vaccine-preventable diseases, acute respiratory infections, diarrheal dehydration, and malnutrition while tens of millions more suffer needlessly from vitamin A deficiency, growth retardation, and polio.

It is within reach to save many of these children. Oral rehydration therapy, expanded programs of immunization, and growth monitoring are only three primary health care techniques which offer real hope to millions. But each of these technologies requires that caretakers learn and practice a set of new child care behaviors, such as correct administration of oral rehydration salts, regular vaccination and weighing, and so on.

Each of these new behaviors represents a significant new cost in time, energy, and often money to families around the world. Certainly, these technologies challenge the way millions of parents now understand the care of their young children.

HEALTHCOM's special challenge is to develop a methodology that will help promote correct implementation of these new health technologies to an audience of millions: a methodology flexible enough to adapt to the needs of a variety of cultures in all regions of the world. An approach has emerged known as "public health communication." It combines insights from two disciplines--social marketing and behavioral science--and includes important contributions from other social sciences such as anthropology, health education, and communication research.

The central organizing principle, however, is social marketing. This paper by Dr. Alan Andreasen attempts to define social marketing and specify its role in contributing to changing key health care behavior. Dr. Andreasen is co-author with Dr. Philip Kotler of the recent book, Strategic Marketing for Nonprofit Organizations. He has worked extensively with social marketing in cancer prevention and treatment and family planning and serves as a senior consultant to HEALTHCOM.

In this paper, Dr. Andreasen goes beyond a definition of social marketing and reflects briefly on how social marketing can best contribute to behavior change regarding

Oral Rehydration Salts (ORS), Extended Program on Immunization (EPI), vitamin A, and growth monitoring programs where each involves fundamentally different behaviors.

Social marketing is a controversial--even volatile--issue in some sectors of the international health community. Some critics see it as manipulative, gimmicky, and shallow. Of course, it can be all these things--but it need not be any of them! Perhaps the most damning, and least accurate, criticism is that social marketing is "American--it is just the way you Americans do things." But marketing is not uniquely American. Some would say that in the auto industry, some of its best practitioners are Japanese, in electronics the Korean, in international air travel the Scandinavians, in high fashion clothing the French, and in "country marketing" the Australians!

We believe that the principles outlined here can offer real guidance in saving millions of lives needlessly lost to disease. In this battle, we cannot afford the luxury of excluding any opportunities just because they have been misused or associated with a particular society. If it works, we need it. And social marketing works.

William A. Smith, Ed.D.
Executive Vice President
Academy for Educational Development

INTRODUCTION

Social marketing is a concept drawn from the private sector which has wide application to a rapidly growing array of problems in the public and nonprofit worlds [1,2]. When carefully thought out and professionally implemented, marketing has proven to be an immensely powerful tool for effecting mass behavior change. In the U.S., successes of such companies as Apple Computer, Pepsi-Cola, and Marriott Hotels attest to that power in the private sector. Seat belt campaigns, nutrition education, and cancer detection programs are public sector examples.

Marketing has proven equally effective in the public sector in a number of developing countries as well. Reductions in infant mortality from diarrheal dehydration are linked to marketing campaigns in Egypt and Honduras. Family planning products and services are more accessible than ever in such countries as Mexico, the Dominican Republic, Thailand, Ghana, and Bangladesh as a result of successful marketing.

Despite wide evidence of success, many public policy-makers and managers are still uncertain as to what extent marketing should be encouraged and implemented outside of its traditional private sector boundaries [5,6]. Unfortunately, consideration of the proper role of what has come to be called "social marketing" is hampered by great confusion about what the term really means, what social marketing can do and what it ought to do. This paper addresses these issues, and has the following objectives:

- to define social marketing and distinguish it from other approaches to social change such as education and propaganda;
- to outline the philosophy and process that good marketers use to achieve social change;
- to define the outer boundaries for the application of marketing to various types of social change;
- to indicate how social marketing is similar to and different from the marketing of private sector products and services;
- to indicate the relationship of social marketing to four other closely related social science disciplines;

- to indicate the steps that should be taken to insure that, when it is implemented, social marketing lives up to its full potential.

Social marketing is a useful new approach to bring about social change and, often, a superior way of doing so. Once its role and potential are understood, there should be few occasions for arbitrarily rejecting it. On the other hand, social marketing is neither a panacea nor entirely riskfree. It has advantages in many applications and disadvantages in others. However, it is only when careful attention is paid to implementing social marketing in situations for which it is especially appropriate and to implementing it with the proper philosophy and systems that this promising technique will occupy its rightful niche in the arsenal of effective social change methodologies.

GENERIC MARKETING

Social marketing is simply the application of generic private sector marketing to a specific class of problems. In this sense, it is similar to **retail** marketing, **political** marketing, or **industrial** marketing. Generic marketing can be defined in two ways: descriptively as merely another activity, such as voting and learning, that members of a society do -- or prescriptively as something those members ought to do to achieve certain ends. It is the latter perspective that is appropriate here.

When someone seeks to apply generic marketing to the achievement of an end, the role he or she has adopted is of a marketing manager. Marketing management has been defined as:

the analysis, planning, implementation, and control of programs designed to create, build, and maintain beneficial exchanges and relationships with target audiences for the purposes of achieving [the marketer's] objectives [1, p.14].

The key feature of this definition is that it focuses on exchanges. Marketers are in the "business" of creating, building, and maintaining exchanges. For example, I give you 79 cents and you give me a bar of sweet smelling soap ... or I walk two hours, wait three more hours, worry that my house and children are being neglected, and you give my baby an immunization which protects her from measles. Because exchanges only take place when a target audience member takes an action, the ultimate objective of generic marketing is to influence behavior.

This definition permits us to distinguish generic marketing from several things it is not. Marketing's objectives **per se** are not ultimately either to educate or to change values or attitudes, although this may occur as sequellae. It may seek to do so as a means of influencing behavior. However, if someone has as the final goal the imparting of information or knowledge, that person is an educator rather than a marketer. Further, if someone has as a final goal changing attitudes or values, that person may be described as a propagandist, a lobbyist, or perhaps an artist, but not a marketer. While marketing may use the tools of the educator or the propagandist, its critical distinguishing feature is that its ultimate goal is to influence behavior (either changing it or keeping it the same in the face of other pressures).

Further, just as marketing should not be confused with these other related disciplines, neither should it be confused with the tools it uses to influence behavior. Marketing is not merely promotion (i.e., advertising, direct mail, or personal selling). It uses these tools to achieve its goals but it may also seek to achieve its goals by redesigning the basic product or service offering, minimize the costs of the transaction, or arrange for better delivery of the necessary goods or services. Marketing is a set of tools coordinated under a basic core strategy to effect specific changes in a carefully identified target audience.

SOCIAL MARKETING

What then distinguishes social marketing from other types of marketing? Social marketing differs from other areas of marketing only with respect to the objectives of the marketer and his or her organization. As Kotler and Andreasen note, social marketing seeks to influence behaviors not to benefit the marketer but to benefit the target audience and the general society [1, p. 434]. Social marketing programs, then, by definition are generic marketing programs carried out in the individual's or society's interests, as determined by the change agent.

Social marketing can be carried out by anyone--individuals, informal groups, or formal organizations. It can be carried out by nonprofits and for-profits. The true test is essentially in the mind of the marketer: is the beneficiary of the behavior change primarily the target audience or the society or is it really the marketer? In both cases, the same principles apply. It is only the ends that differ.

THE DOMAIN OF SOCIAL MARKETING

Given these defining characteristics, it is clear that the outer bounds of social marketing's legitimate domain are potentially extremely broad. They comprise any planned effort to influence any human behavior where the change agent's motives are on balance more selfless than selfish.

Social marketing can involve influencing individuals to use products or services such as condoms and vasectomies through contraceptive social marketing programs. Or it can simply try to change behavior itself, for example, in current attempts to influence mothers to practice birth spacing, recognize signs of dehydration, and keep track of immunization records [2].

Social marketing can obviously involve sales and profits. Many social marketing efforts -- such as government organizations in developing countries selling packets of oral rehydration salts, vitamin A capsules, or condoms -- are designed to serve ultimately selfless objectives. Indeed, in early stages in the life of the typical social marketing organization, the majority of its activities may involve fundraising and sales campaigns that make the organization seem little different from a private sector counterpart. The real test, of course, is where the organization is headed, not necessarily on what it currently appears to focus.

Thus, the domain of potential applications of social marketing is very broad. In practical terms, at any point the real potential domain is only where members of society will sanction its application. At the present time, for example, in the United States most private sector physicians, many lawyers, and even a few politicians do not feel it is "appropriate" for them to use marketing techniques. Some U.S. states still feel they should not sponsor lotteries even though these help to fund education or other programs for the state's underprivileged [7].

To some extent, overcoming these reservations becomes a social marketing task in itself. Only when social marketing is implemented where it has a clear differential advantage and implemented with the appropriate philosophy, structure, and systems will it come to be seen in its proper role as one of many potentially effective social change techniques.

To understand what the conditions are for appropriate and effective use of social marketing, it is necessary to appreciate its basic tenets.

BASIC TENETS OF SOCIAL MARKETING

Social marketing is, in essence, three things:

- a philosophy or way of thinking about how to influence behavior;
- a process whereby a program is put in place and implemented; and
- a set of key concepts and tools which marketers use in designing and carrying out their behavior change programs.

THE SOCIAL MARKETING PHILOSOPHY

In the private sector, one finds three major alternative philosophies of marketing. Two are somewhat myopic and outdated but still find favor among a wide range of practitioners. The third approach is that adopted by the most sophisticated marketers and the one that forms the core of the best social marketing practice.

The two antiquated approaches have been labeled, respectively, the "product" and "selling" orientations. Managers with a product orientation believe that the best marketing is that which focuses on developing superior products and services which will swamp less creative or efficient competitors. This "build-a-better-mousetrap" orientation makes strategic sense only as long as the product or service has a clear differential advantage and little competition. Some firms, indeed, adopt a strategy they often call "sticking to your knitting" and do quite well at it [8].

But sticking to a product orientation when it is no longer appropriate is a mistake far too many companies make. It is an orientation that pervades industries where inventor-founders continue to run the companies they started. A good example is the American personal computer industry in its earliest days. Started, in most cases, by self-confessed computer fanatics, the early PC makers such as Apple believed that what they offered was so advanced, so useful, so amazing in what it could do that one need only make PCs widely available, tell the world about them, and wait for the sales to roll in. In the beginning, they did. But they represented largely sales to other computer fanatics, a market soon satiated. PC makers were disappointed--perhaps shocked--that there were not more takers and, as fitted their mindset, persisted in tinkering with their machines hoping the new and improved models would find more markets. Those who did not wake up to the inherent limitations of this product orientation simply expired when out-marketed by competitors who made the transition to a more sophisticated approach.

The selling orientation is usually adopted when the preceding conditions do not apply, i.e., the product or service has little differential advantage and a great deal of competition. The selling orientation views marketing as basically a powerful tool of persuasion that must convince reluctant consumers that the organization's offering is infinitely superior to those of competitors. In its ugliest manifestations, the selling orientation is associated with high pressure sales tactics, gimmicky advertising, and a willingness to promote trivial differences aggressively to make a sale.

It is organizations that are dominated by a selling orientation which are principally responsible for the poor reputation marketing has acquired among many social

change specialists. But the point to be made here is that the selling orientation and the product orientation are not preferred marketing approaches today. The latter is based on a simple operational premise ignored by other marketers. Marketers with a product or selling orientation conceive of the customer as the target whose behavior is to be shaped to fit the organization's goals.

Modern marketers have realized that this approach has the exchange "equation" entirely backward. An organization is only successful if customers agree to the exchange. This means that the target audience is really the one in control of the transaction. If this is the case, the only way the organization can be successful in the long run is if it develops its strategy beginning with what the target audience needs and wants, not with what the organization needs and wants [9]. Under the modern customer orientation, the organization is led by its customers and does not hold as its central objective trying to make customers serve the organization's purposes. This orientation, of course, is particularly appropriate for social marketing organizations.

Unfortunately, many of those who claim they are carrying out social marketing are really operating under outmoded product or selling orientations. Since outside observers are in danger of drawing conclusions about the strengths and weaknesses of social marketing from organizations that are operating under the wrong philosophy, it is important to point out clues that can tell the careful observer when an erroneous orientation prevails. These clues to an inappropriate product or selling orientation are the following [10].

- The organization's mission is seen as inherently good. The wrong-headed social marketer cannot imagine why anyone would not wear seat belts, practice birth control, or give up smoking.
- When the social marketer's level of success is less than expected, the problem is seen to be due to the ignorance or apathy of target customers. Customers simply do not appreciate the (obvious) inherent worth of the behavior or, if they do, are too lazy or unmotivated to act. In this aberrant view, the customer is the enemy standing in the way of program success.
- If research is to be done, it is really only necessary to delimit the extent of the aforementioned ignorance or apathy.

- To improve the situation, the marketer believes that he or she has only two tasks: to reduce target audience ignorance about the inherent desirability of the behavior and/or to motivate them to take the necessary action. Under this frame of mind, marketing is seen as almost entirely synonymous with promotion, i.e., media advertising, posters, packaging, direct mail messages, and/or the use of "salespeople" (e.g., change agents).
- Since the problem is seen as relatively straightforward, social marketers with a selling orientation tend to treat customers as a mass, that is, to "want to reach everyone with our program," or to divide them into two or three elementary segments (e.g., men and women, rural and urban, young and old) and treat them essentially all alike with what might be called "the one best approach."
- Marketers who have difficulty imagining why someone would not undertake the action being promoted seldom are able to conceptualize competition broadly. They are less likely to be sensitive to (or even think about) other direct or generic competition for the customer's attention and behavior. In many rural cultures, for example, immunization is competing against traditional beliefs about the inevitability of measles and its lack of seriousness. Dehydration is a concept not easily linked to the belief in a "sack of worms" as the cause of diarrhea [cf. 11].
- To implement social marketing programs, selling-oriented managers tend to choose staffers who are good at communicating. For some, this means appointing someone who really knows the "product" well. Thus, a nurse is put in charge of hospital marketing or a public health administrator is put in charge of a national health change program. Alternatively, some managers think that they need to do a better job of "getting their story out." This is likely to lead them to put an advertising or public relations specialist or a journalist in a key role [12,13].

A true consumer-oriented social marketing approach starts from very different premises, evolves a very different strategy, and tends to employ for its implementation individuals with a very different orientation.

PROCESS AND CONCEPTS

Good social marketing begins with a philosophy deeply rooted in a consumer or audience orientation. However, when developing specific programs and strategies based on this philosophy, a social marketer brings to bear a number of central concepts and processes that further differentiate their specific orientation. Among these are the following.

1. Exchange is Accorded a Central Role

As noted earlier, marketing management involves influencing exchanges. Marketers conceive of decisions consumers make as choices among alternative behaviors which vary in the benefits they will provide and the costs they will extract. For each alternative, the individual is contemplating giving up, i.e., exchanging, benefits for costs. The question "what's the competition" is central to the marketing approach [14,15]. The marketer's task is "simply" to figure out some way to make the exchange he or she is advocating more favorable than other alternatives (including the status quo).

Marketers plan their strategies around three key features of consumers' evaluations of alternative exchanges: that the exchanges are complex, personal, and anticipatory.

a. Exchanges are Complex

Exchanges are seldom between one cost and one benefit. Even when thinking about something as simple as which restaurant to choose for lunch, consumers typically evaluate such characteristics as cost, speed of service, distance and parking, menu selection, staff friendliness, and so on. Some of these characteristics are costs, some are benefits. Their choice is between alternatives possessing different bundles of costs and bundles of benefits.

b. Exchanges are Personal

Each consumer weighs the bundles of costs and benefits mentally, either consciously or unconsciously, before acting. This weighing may be instantaneous or, more typically, take place over a long period of time and be buffeted by expected and unexpected outside stimuli. At any point, what is crucial is not the true costs and benefits but what customers perceive them to be [16].

c. Exchanges are Anticipatory

When considering a behavior, a consumer must evaluate the costs and benefits of that behavior before the fact. That is, he or she must estimate and weigh the likely consequences of that behavior. The consumer's overall judgment about relative consequences is then mentally compared to alternative actions or to doing nothing to come up with a "decision" as to whether to go ahead with what the marketer wants. Because it is the anticipated consequences that "drive" behavior, we must learn which consequences are important to each target audience and what they think the consequences really will be if they do what we want them to do [17].

Given this view of the exchange process, the practicing marketer recognizes how essential it is to begin any attempt to develop a marketing strategy with a deep understanding of how target customers perceive the likely consequences of the proposed behavior and of major alternatives. The marketer's challenge with respect to the behavior he or she is advocating then is to:

- reduce the perceived cost of important negative outcomes;
- increase the perceived benefits of important positive outcomes; and/or
- add new, preferably important, benefits to the proposed behavior.

2. **There is a Willingness to Change the Offer**

A consumer-oriented marketer, while convinced of the desirability of the behavior being promoted, is totally open to the possibility that many customers may not agree. The social marketer realizes that the behavior being promoted, the "offer," is not an objective reality but what the customer thinks it is. Changing the "offer" to the marketer then means changing these perceptions [18].

Sometimes the perceptions of reluctant or antagonistic consumers are deadly accurate and changing the offer requires that the marketer make fundamental, real changes. If seat belts really are uncomfortable and consumers are not just using this as an excuse for personal bravado, then seatbelts must be redesigned. If ORS cannot safely be prepared in the typical household in one liter volumes, then ORS packets must be modified to accommodate the best local measure available (e.g., a soft drink bottle). Efforts to convince consumers that their perceptions are wrong will be ill-considered.

There are also times when consumer perceptions do not reflect reality and it is the marketer's challenge to understand what has led to the misconception and how to alter it. Many mothers still feel ORS can induce vomiting or that two spoonfuls are enough for a small sick child.

It should be noted that good social marketers do not assume that it is the mother's ignorance or apathy that is "at fault" when she does not take action. They do not see their problem as just having to convince the target audience that they are wrong and that the behavior promoted is really highly desirable. Rather, they assume that it is more likely that the marketer has inadequately understood the target market's perceptions and their needs and wants. Mothers want to avoid any chance of vomiting, so marketers must make it clear that ORS must be given slowly with a spoon. Mothers believe two spoonfuls are enough because they've been told that ORS is a "medicine." If marketers "repositioned" it as a "tonic," perhaps this would change mothers' understanding of the product and its benefits and, ultimately, their behavior. In some instances, it may be more appropriate for marketers to change their own behavior than to try to change the target consumer.

3. **There is a Focus on Coordinated Programs**

Target consumers often fail to respond to a marketer's program because they see too few benefits or too many costs. Usually, the truth is a complex mixture. Effective marketing therefore requires a coordinated approach to all of the major benefits and costs. McCarthy has labeled the elements of such a coordinated strategy as "the four Ps" [19]:

- Product: making sure that the offer is basically designed to be as appealing as possible;
- Price: recognizing and minimizing all the major costs to the behavior including psychological and sociological as well as economic costs;
- Place: making sure that there are no barriers in bringing together target consumers and any needed goods and services (often called "distribution");
- Promotion: making sure that the positive realities of the offer are well understood and consumers are encouraged to undertake the desired action

through extensive use of mass media, personal interaction, and print materials.

More recently, Kotler has added two other "Ps" that are especially important to social marketers [11]:

- Politics: making sure that the legal and regulatory environment is understood and either adapted to or modified to facilitate the marketer's goals;
- Public Relations: making sure that all significant publics other than consumers understand what the organization is doing and are supportive of it.

Skilled marketers realize that, if they are not careful about coordination, different elements of the mix may be out of phase or work at cross purposes. Nothing is more frustrating than mounting an effective promotion campaign to induce trial only to find the product is not in stock or explanatory brochures are not yet conveniently available. Equally frustrating is to find that a positioning strategy to make the behavior socially acceptable is being systematically undercut by cooperating intermediaries who continue to promulgate other modes of thought.

4. Market Research is Given a Central Role

Placing consumer needs and wants at the center of marketing strategy puts a heavy reliance on marketing research. Good marketers recognize that such research must be carried out at the very start of the strategy development process to find out where the target audience is "coming from" and then, as program elements are put in place (e.g., specific positioning platforms, packaging, advertising, and so forth) must continue to verify these with target audience members. Since the challenge in high-involvement behaviors is to influence perceptions, research must constantly check what those perceptions are and how they are being affected [cf.20,21].

A number of formative, or qualitative research techniques have proven to be beneficial and easily employed both in the U.S. and in developing countries. Surveys, in-depth interviews, and focus groups each address a different function in the process of researching consumer practices and preferences. Which technique to use with what

audience needs to be carefully considered in designing this important phase of a social marketing intervention.

Simultaneously, marketers recognize the need for research to make sure other elements of the marketing mix are working well. This can mean audits of intermediaries to see that they are playing their roles, package testing to make sure products are easy to use, checks on the attitudes of significant outside "publics" to insure they understand and support the program, and so on. They also recognize the need in many instances to keep abreast through research with changes in environmental conditions and the nature and effectiveness of competitors' programs.

5. There is a Predilection for Segmentation

Marketers who constantly keep attuned to their target audience are confronted again and again by the market's diversity. As a consequence, they assume markets almost always must be segmented with strategies fine-tuned to the needs and wants of each subpopulation. Closeness to consumers also leads to recognition that traditional demographic approaches are seldom adequate to capture the rich diversity in target audience's needs, wants, lifestyles, perceptions and preferences. Over the years, marketers have developed highly sophisticated segmentation approaches designed to help managers divide up the market and make decisions with respect to (1) how much resources to direct at each segment (if any); (2) how to use those resources in each segment; and (3) when to approach them [22,23].

6. There is a Bottom-line Orientation

Good marketers are constantly mindful that their goal is to influence behavior. They also recognize that they have limited resources to do so. These two features give them a sometimes brutal yardstick against which to evaluate many of the things they and others would like to do: that yardstick is cost effectiveness. They ask: does this research study, this advertising campaign, or this cooperative project with another group help me do a better job of influencing behavior and is it a good way to expend our limited economic, personnel, and intellectual resources? This bottom-line approach means constant attention to the efficiency and effectiveness of everything they do.

Good marketers are seldom likely to conduct research simply because "it may be helpful." They do not educate for education's sake. They do not try to change values if

this will not lead to some foreseeable change in behavior. And, even then, they will not act if they can be shown that there is another more efficient way to achieve the same end.

7. **There is a Commitment to Planning**

As part of their sense of responsibility for "the bottom line," good marketers believe very strongly in the need to take reasoned action. This encourages them to think systematically through major steps they undertake, both in determining long-range strategy and in making specific tactical decisions [24,25].

This, of course, does not differentiate marketers from those in education or propaganda who also make plans. However, both the contents and objectives of their plans will be very different. For example, the marketer's plans will have detailed evaluations of competition, will incorporate extensive consumer research before moving forward, will require frequent field checks of tactical effectiveness after implementation, and will emphasize careful coordination of all elements of the "four Ps."

8. **There is a Willingness to Take "Reasoned Risks"**

Marketers recognize that they are operating in a competitive environment for target audiences' thinking. And, while they attempt to use research as much as possible to understand where that thinking is now and/or how it might respond to a course of action under consideration, they recognize that an individual's mind is imperfectly knowable. This is especially so when one is dealing with important social behaviors about which consumers have complex, sometimes guilty feelings.

This recognition has two consequences. First, marketers realize that some proportion of their actions will fail. Good marketers are rarely immobilized by that prospect unlike those less accustomed to living with day-to-day risk. Marketers routinely take "reasoned risks," often incorporating some formal calculation of inherent risk into their decision-making processes.

Second, because they know their environment is in many ways unknowable or at least unpredictable, good marketers are by nature experimental. They do not always go ahead and make major irrevocable commitments to "one best strategy." When they do select a course of action, their bottom-line and research orientations makes them vigilant for any signs of failure. And, because they have anticipated this risk, good

marketers will have designed contingency plans. Regarding ORT, for example, sugar-salt solutions may need to be promoted along with ORS packets if national health policy so dictates.

DIFFERENCES IN SOCIAL MARKETING

We have argued above that generic marketing has the potential to bring a unique and proven approach to the challenges facing social change agencies. However, social marketing is not exactly the same as generic marketing. If one is to understand marketing's potential, one must understand the principal ways in which generic and social marketing are different [26, 27].

1. Public Scrutiny

Since social marketers have as their goal the improvement of the target audience's or general society's welfare, it is typical that some form of formal or informal public scrutiny is accorded the social marketer's performance. This scrutiny may be by the government, a funding source, and/or the general public as represented by the press or academic researcher/critics. This scrutiny, among other effects, makes risk-taking more difficult in social marketing and increases the importance of "politics" and "public relations" in the social marketing mix.

2. Extravagant Expectations

In the private sector, marketers are often given responsibility for improving market shares a few percentage points or launching a new product or brand that will yield a firm a reasonable return on investment. In social marketing, the challenges may be for complete eradication of a problem or the universal adoption of some desirable behavior. Generic marketers must spend at least some of their time reducing the expectations of key oversight publics.

3. Negative Demand

It is rare for a marketer in the private sector to be asked to market a product or service for which the target audience has a clear distaste. Yet, as Kotler and Andreasen

note: "[Social marketers] must try to entice 'macho men' into wearing seat belts, timid souls into giving blood or taking medication around which swirl rumors about devastating effects on sexual potency, or aging citizens to finally admit they are infirm or otherwise need assistance [1]." In the context of the Third World, a mother must be convinced to immunize a healthy child who may then have side effects, or to limit family size when culture dictates that "more is better." Within these behavioral domains, marketers must be especially careful not to exaggerate their potential contributions.

4. Highly Sensitive Issues

Most of the behaviors that social marketers are asked to influence are much more highly involving than most of those found in the private sector. Asking parents to begin to regulate family size or a rural mother in a developing country to regularly weigh her child is much more serious than asking Western consumers to buy a new car or gadget. One consequence of this very high level of involvement is that it often makes it very hard for social marketers to carry out the consumer research which they stress is essential to their approach. As Bloom and Novelli have noted: "While people are generally willing to be interviewed about these [social marketing] topics, they are more likely to give inaccurate, self-serving, or socially desirable answers to such questions than to questions about cake mixes, soft drinks, or cereals [26]."

5. Invisible Benefits

Whereas in the private sector, it is usually relatively clear what benefits one is likely to accrue, social marketers are often encouraging behaviors where nothing appears to happen (or something negative occurs). Immunization is supposed to prevent disease "in the future," but may cause uncomfortable side effects briefly in the present. Vomiting may accompany the administration of ORT. Birth spacing might incur social disfavor. With the exception of unwanted pregnancy, the consumer has difficulty knowing whether the behavior worked! Often the consumer who undertakes the behavior has the nagging feeling that the same outcome would have occurred if he or she hadn't taken the recommended course of action. It is much harder to market behaviors without visible consequences than behaviors with them.

6. Benefits to Third Parties

Some behaviors advocated by social marketers have payoffs for third parties such as poor people or society in general and not to the persons undertaking the behaviors. This is the case, for example, for energy conservation. In such cases, most individuals consider appropriate actions to be personal inconveniences but many will still carry them out because they feel they are in the society's interests [28]. It is much more difficult to motivate people to take actions when they do not seem to benefit (even invisibly) than when they or their immediate families are the direct beneficiaries.

7. Intangibles that are Difficult to Portray

Because the consequences of social behavior change often are invisible, long-term, and/or apply only to others, they are much more difficult to portray in promotional messages. Marketers must be highly creative to develop advertising indicating the benefits of family planning or growth monitoring to families and the country. Because symbols in communication become highly central to success, there is often a risk of sending the wrong signals, as when rural consumers in developing countries are alienated by promotions that seem too "western."

8. Long-Term Changes Central

Because many of the proposed behavior changes are highly involving and/or entail changing individual's positions from negative to positive demand, the process for achieving behavior change can take a very long time. This is because: (a) often very large amounts of basic information will have to be communicated; (b) basic values will necessarily change; and (c) a great many outside opinion leaders and/or support agencies will have to be "brought on board." For example, to bring about widespread use of oral rehydration therapy (ORT), target consumers must learn that dehydration *per se* is life-threatening, that "modern" remedies can support folk remedies and can be trusted, and that packaged, branded products are safe and reliable. Simultaneously, physicians, pharmacists, and other public health workers must be educated about the problem and given/sold supplies to distribute. Marketers used to shorter term objectives such as those found in consumer packaged goods markets can find the extent of complications and length of time involved in social marketing very frustrating.

9. Fewer Opportunities to Modify Products

If consumers want a sweeter soft drink, Coca-Cola creates "New Coke." If a commercial marketer can't satisfy a customer with one product, he simply creates another. But if women want a diarrhea remedy that stops the diarrhea as well as prevents dehydration, this does not exist. Years of research are needed to develop such a product. The responsiveness of many social marketers to consumer demand are limited by science. Products such as ORS, which meet important public health criteria for effectiveness, must be "marketed" despite inherent disadvantages or obstacles from the consumer's point of view.

10. Severely Limited Budgets

Private sector marketers are used to working with relatively generous budgets to meet a given challenge (although they do not always think so) or to being able to convince superiors of the justice of enlarged budgets or of the need to take economic risks to achieve clearly defined goals. Social marketers typically have severely restricted budgets, in part because there is not enough to go around and sometimes in part because of an implicit understanding that a project that is too well funded is somehow not being frugal with donated or taxpayers' money. As a consequence, social marketers must spend much time and effort leveraging their meager budgets by adding the assistance of distributors, advertising agencies, broadcast or print media, business firms, unions, and so forth to carry out their programs.

This need for ongoing assistance has three major effects. First, it increases the need to market not only to target consumers but also to those who are giving assistance, thus increasing the burden of overworked managers. Second, it means that critical parts of the marketing program will not be under the marketer's direct control [29]. And, third, it means that the goals of other organizations and individuals will have to be factored into strategic decisions where in less cluttered programs only one or two key players need be consulted.

11. Need to Work with Those with a Suspicion of Marketing

Social marketers almost always work with those trained in other disciplines. It is not uncommon for such individuals to have a mistrust of marketing and, often, of the "business mentality" in general. As Andreasen and Manning have noted, there is often a

"cultural conflict" between two opposing sides in such organizations [30]. On one side are those with a "corporate" orientation, an interest in action, efficiency, and the bottom line when implementing social marketing programs. Pitted against them are organization members with a "social service" orientation. These individuals tend to see their mission more as a cause to which they have a strong emotional commitment. In their enthusiasm they are suspicious of others who they believe have lost sight of the cause and worry about costs, quantitative measures of achievement, and carefully defined accountability. Conflict between these rival orientations often causes stress for social marketers and requires attention to internal as much as external marketing.

MARKETING'S DIFFERENTIAL ADVANTAGE

Since social marketing is, at base, a borrowing of an approach from the private sector, it is important to recognize that a major differential advantage such programs have in bringing about social change is the finely honed set of technical skills that commercial marketers can bring with them from the private sector. There are seven technical areas in which marketers are probably more experienced than any other type of change agent:

- o Marketing research: Marketers have developed an extremely wide array of expensive and inexpensive techniques to probe the minds of large numbers of target consumers. They use surveys, focus groups, observation, in-depth interviews, and central point intercepts to gather rich lodes of data and then apply highly sophisticated techniques to extract very subtle meaning from seemingly bland databases. They have pioneered such analytic concepts as lifestyle [31] and trade-off [32] analysis, multidimensional attitude modeling [33], and panel analysis [34]. They know when to use research and when not to. The better marketers have learned to take very few steps without it.
- o Creation, positioning, and enhancement of brands: Marketers have been responsible for many of the brand name artifacts of our daily lives. They have been able to associate qualities, even personalities, with simple words. They have done it for products, services, and some would say, political candidates. They know how to create a brand and how to change it when it needs changing. Brands like Coca-Cola and Kleenex have been continuing, powerful market influences internationally for over 100 years [35].

- o Packaging: Marketers recognize that how an offer looks is often as important as what it actually is. Over the years, they have become highly imaginative in package design as well as in their use of diverse materials to make them. Packaging concepts have even been extended to services, where they are labeled "atmospherics" or "image management."
- o Distribution: Marketers are extremely effective at bringing masses of merchandise to remote locations of even the poorest countries. They know how to store, warehouse, and transport goods efficiently and how to motivate retailers and wholesalers through incentives to help them achieve their distribution goals.
- o Promotion: Marketers know better than most how to use other techniques than advertising to market to mass audiences or large market segments. They are extremely adept at direct mail, telemarketing, the use of contests, coupons and giveaways, the use of point-of-sale materials and secondary literature like brochures and package inserts. They are effective users of trade and trade advertising to get others to participate in their marketing programs [36].
- o Creation and placement of advertising: The private sector advertising industry now produces over U.S. \$200 billion in billings yearly worldwide. Advertisers are extremely skilled at designing television and radio commercials, print ads, posters, and billboards that sell. Because they must be profitable, private sector marketers must design messages that work. They are therefore not only highly creative and technically efficient in producing ads but are also thoroughly trained to keep their eye on the impact of those ads. This extends not just to the creation of the ads but in placing them accurately and at the lowest possible cost in front of key target audiences.
- o Global Marketing: The major marketing organizations are now global enterprises. They and their staffs have now accumulated extensive experience in what works and what does not in many highly diverse cultural settings. They know how to study and adapt to local markets. They know

when and how to obtain economies by duplicating strategies in multiple settings. More importantly perhaps, they also know when not to standardize programs when that approach will have serious negative effects on the overall performance of a strategy [37,38].

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER DISCIPLINES

The tools that social marketers use to achieve their ends are adapted from, and integrated with, a wide range of other social science disciplines. One way to conceive social marketing is as applied social science in the same sense that engineering may be considered applied physics.

Among the many fields from which social marketing adopts its tools, four have been found to be particularly helpful. These are: social anthropology, education, mass communication, and behavioral psychology. Each of these disciplines has a specific role to play at different stages of the social marketing process.

1. **Social Anthropology**

As suggested throughout this paper, the hallmark of a modern social marketing program is that it is fully centered on a clear understanding of the consumers it strives to influence. In the private sector, the level of subtlety this understanding must achieve is, in most cases, more limited in that behaviors to be influenced are relatively less consequential. In social marketing, one often changes fundamental values, beliefs, and patterns of family and social interaction. The level of understanding that one must achieve, therefore, is exceptionally deep and discriminating. The concepts and tools of social anthropology are particularly valuable in achieving this more profound level of understanding.

Social anthropologists can help social marketers to anticipate the resistance they will face and to tailor programs as closely as possible to the customs, norms, and values of the culture or subculture they seek to influence. The insights of the trained social anthropologist can also help social marketers in the design of effective child survival programs in other ways by:

- helping to identify likely "early adopters" of specific new behaviors [39];
- learning how behavior change can best be constructed to maximize adoption (as when oral rehydration programs in The Gambia were designed around the use of readily available soft drink bottles and bottle caps);
- showing what words, phrases, and images are appropriate to describe the behavior change so that its benefits are clearly understood and the change advocated is as non-threatening as possible;
- helping select and train change agents who can be most empathetic and effective in a given culture.

2. Education and Mass Communication

Once the cultural context is understood in depth, the next two tasks facing the social marketer involve (a) creating a supportive climate with respect to values and beliefs that make it "O.K." for individuals to change behavior, and (b) to facilitate behavior change for specific individuals and households in specific ways. These tasks can be seen as overcoming four problems:

- The new behavior must be seen as socially desirable ("for people like us"); this is the value-change problem;
- The new behavior must be seen as personally desirable ("for our family"); this is the motivation problem;
- The new behavior must be understood; this is the education problem;
- The new behavior must be practiced (i.e., begun and repeated); this is the behavior modification problem.

Mass communication and education techniques are particularly relevant to the first three of these problems. Mass communication principles can be used to inculcate new values and show large numbers of target consumers how the new behavior can improve their lives or the lives of their children. Mass media, such as radio and simple posters, can be used to modify the general climate and to explain and legitimize the new behavior. In many developing countries, a major accomplishment of the public advertising campaigns in contraceptive social marketing programs has been to

demythologize contraception and to make it "O.K." for couples, teachers, and public figures to talk about it and about individual contraceptive methods. Until this is accomplished, any social marketing efforts devoted to personal motivation and behavior change will prove largely fruitless.

Mass communication and education can also be helpful in the motivation phase if marketers choose to focus on a persuasion strategy of behavior change. This approach rests upon the assumption that the best (perhaps, only) way to get someone to change behavior in the long run is to convince him or her that this is a good thing to do. This obviously requires that, for example, mothers (a) understand the role vitamins play in their children's diet or how immunization helps prevent disease (an education problem); (b) agree that the new behavior is something that is good to do (a motivation problem); and (c) know where to go and what to do to actually begin the new practice (another education problem). The fundamental assumption here is that a properly informed consumer will act in his or her (or the child's) best interests.

If the persuasion approach is adopted, mass communication and education concepts can help to:

- develop relevant and memorable themes for promotion campaigns;
- select credible sources for mass education and advertising campaigns;
- employ integrated channels of communication (mass media, print, interpersonal contacts) to reach the target audience;
- develop appropriate curricula materials, including effective audiovisual aids; and
- develop instructive, motivational, and participatory presentations for face-to-face interactions.

3. Behavioral Analysis

An alternative to the persuasion approach may be called the behavioral approach. This approach is based on the assumption that people act in certain ways because they appreciate the rewards such actions produce. To secure behavior change

from this perspective, then, requires that the social marketer understand the behavior systems to be modified and then restructure these systems to bring about the desired new behaviors. With the behaviorist approach, less attention is paid to convincing people that the new actions are a good thing. Rather, the focus is on antecedents and consequences of a behavior, insuring effective reinforcement of desired behavior [40].

In Honduras, for example, behavioral reinforcement was considered crucial to the success of a tuberculosis treatment program. Implementers found that many patients stopped treatment because their families and communities were not supportive, treating patients as outcasts. As a result, the social marketing program was designed in part to teach family members about tuberculosis and about their crucial role in encouraging the patient to complete the necessary treatment. At the same time, radio was used to praise tuberculosis patients who had completed their treatments.

4. **Marketing's Coordinating Role**

As an eclectic, applied discipline, marketing seeks to employ whatever tools are most appropriate to a given change issue. Social marketers have no vested interest in any one of the four approaches described above. They blend anthropology, education, mass communication, and behavior modification approaches as appropriate, usually shifting both their content and role as the intervention progresses. Social marketers' commitment to market research assures that there is continual, careful monitoring of each program element. Particular attention is paid to making program adjustments, both major and minor, in the relative emphasis on persuasion and behavior modification strategies as the campaign progresses.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

As noted at the outset, the prospect of applying generic marketing to social problems is often met with mixed emotions and usually with a certain amount of suspicion by those who must sponsor or carry out such programs. This is partly the result of misunderstanding what social marketing is and partly a result of evaluating it on the basis of how it has been done, not on how it should be done. For social marketing to be effective, its practitioners must adhere to a number of important principles. In many cases, this may require major changes in the way organizations think, are structured, and carry out their day to day activities.

Major requirements for a sound social marketing program include the following:

- Those managing and overseeing the marketing program must understand fully and accept deeply the consumer-oriented approach to marketing. In part, this implies constant vigilance for telltale signs of relapse into a "selling" or "product" orientation.
- Managers of a social marketing program must have extensive training in modern marketing methods and/or have at their disposal advisory counsels or consultants who will provide indepth experience.
- Information systems must be put in place to:
 - Provide extensive information on target consumers for (a) strategic planning, (b) pretesting marketing programs and tactics, and (c) post-testing implemented programs;
 - Tracking program costs and performance over time frequently enough to permit (a) ongoing assessment of overall success or failure and (b) rapid adjustment of program elements in the face of either poor or demonstrably superior performance;
 - Tracking competing strategies and tactics (where relevant) to permit rapid response to changes in this uncontrollable aspect of the marketplace [41,42].

- Recognition must be constantly given to the need to market to all publics including intermediaries, staff, crucial opinion leaders, and outside advisors and facilitators (e.g., the media).

- Finally, oversight should be appropriately enforced to insure that the programs are truly social marketing, i.e., that their long-term objectives are, in fact and in deed, selfless.

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