

# Societal Marketing

**SUBMITTED BY:** Leya Matthew

**SUBJECT(S):** Marketing

**GRADE LEVEL(S):** 9, 10, 11, 12

## ≡ OVERVIEW:

Societal Marketing is the new epoch of marketing and we increasingly understand its importance. Marketing is not just about customers and profits any more, it is also about ethics, sustainability and about building a better society for all of us. This lesson focuses on the societal marketing orientation that was introduced and briefly explored in the last lesson. The current debate and lawsuits against McDonald’s are used in this lesson.

## ≡ NBEA STANDARD(S):

- Marketing, I. Foundations of Marketing

## ≡ WHARTON GLOBAL YOUTH PROGRAM ARTICLE:

- [“Companies Respond to the Tide Pod Challenge”](#)

## Common Core Standard(s):

1. CCR Standard for Reading: Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and make logical inferences from it.
2. CCR Standards for Listening: Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on each other’s ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively. Evaluate a speaker’s point of view, reasoning and use of evidence and rhetoric.

3. CCR Standards for Speaking: Present information, findings and supporting evidence in such a way that listeners can follow the line of reasoning, and the organization, development and style are appropriate to the task, purpose and audience.

**Objectives/Purpose:** Students will analyze the impact of marketing activities on society. In this lesson, students will (1) analyze the impact of food marketing strategies on society and (2) design what they deem to be corrective measures.

**Knowledge@Wharton Article:** ["Food Fight: Obesity Raises Difficult Marketing Questions"](#)

**Other Resources/Materials:** Internet access

### Activity:

#### 1. Introductory activity (10 mins)

The teacher begins the class by screening the introduction to the film *Super Size Me*, a documentary that looks at the lawsuits filed against fast food giant McDonald's. The lawsuits claim that McDonald's caused obesity in two teenagers. The film clip can be accessed at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V168xofxgu0>. The film clip raises the question about whether it is the individual's responsibility, the responsibility of the parents, or that of the companies.

You could also show students other examples like the cheerios games at <http://honeydefender.millsberry.com/>, which runs the disclaimer "Hey kids, this is advertising" or the example of the feeding bottles with advertisements of soft drink companies like Coke and Pepsi.

The teacher leads a class discussion on food marketing and the ethics of marketing practices when it comes to junk foods that target young children. Students are asked to talk about their food habits and what they think should be the responsibility of companies. After setting the background with the specific example, you could move on to the next activity.

#### 2. Work with the Knowledge@Wharton article (10 mins)

The teacher now distributes copies of the article "Food fight: Obesity raises difficult marketing questions" and asks students to scan the article to get an idea of the debate surrounding food

marketing. They are then asked to pair up with another student to find out as much about the food market as possible from the article since they have to design a marketing orientation for McDonald's 2015 in the next activity. The article talks about how McDonald's is slowly changing its menu and discusses the complexities involved— including profitability, customer perception, customer demand and advertising targeted at children.

### 3. Small group activity (10 mins)

The teacher now asks the students to form small groups and design the McDonald's marketing strategy for 2015. Students are also asked to look at the current promotional strategies. You may pull up the McDonald's menu at <http://www.mcdonalds.com/us/en/food.html> and run through the various options currently available.

To successfully complete this activity, the students require an understanding of the marketing mix — product design, price, place and promotions. You could do an extended analysis of the marketing mix of McDonald's as it stands now so that students can design their strategy in greater detail.

They are also reminded of the marketing orientations that was introduced to them in the previous lesson and asked to move McDonald's from its current marketing orientation to a societal marketing orientation in this activity.

### 4. Presentations and feedback (10 mins)

The groups are asked to present their designs. Other groups are encouraged to provide constructive criticism — What was insightful about the design? Was there anything about the design that you felt was unethical or misleading?

### 5. Wrap-up discussion

The teacher recaps the concept of societal marketing that was introduced in the previous lesson (Marketing Orientations) and summarizes the complexities involved.

**Tying It All together:** Companies are becoming more interested in societal marketing and also in leveraging their societal marketing activities for brand building. This interest can, in turn, be leveraged to increase the contact between consumers and businesses for a greater participation from both sections. Students are also encouraged to delve deep into the “messiness” of real businesses to appreciate the challenges involved in adhering to societal marketing orientations.

**Practice Outside of the Classroom:** If there are marketing issues that are relevant to students in your class, this lesson could be extended to a project so that students could conduct greater analysis. They could also be asked to write an essay about their research findings and to reflect on how marketing affects them individually.

**What Worked and What I Would Do Differently:** It is possible that students may limit themselves to the ideas covered in the article. You may need to encourage students to be more creative with their marketing strategies.

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