

Promotional Mix Lesson 2: Sponsorship and Publicity

SUBMITTED BY: Leya Matthew

SUBJECT(S): Marketing

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

≡ OVERVIEW:

Marketing professionals have long used below the line promotions to augment customer awareness, knowledge, liking, preference and sales of products and brands. Unlike advertising (which customers know is directly trying to influence their purchase decisions), sponsorship and publicity work subtly, and sometimes even more powerfully than advertising. Newspaper articles, TV talk show spots, write-ups and placed testimonials create a supplementary communication chain that seems to provide authentic, objective information. In this lesson, sponsorship and publicity are analyzed as two elements of the promotional mix.

≡ NBEA STANDARD(S):

- Marketing, IV. The Marketing Mix

≡ RELATED ARTICLES:

- [“Super Bowl Advertising and Corporate America’s Message on Diversity”](#)
- [“Stories of High School Enterprise and Opportunity from Baseball’s World Series”](#)
- [“Crowdfunding, Creativity and Kickflips Inside a Church in Spain”](#)

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 publicity strategies of a product/service and design a publicity campaign for a product launch.

Knowledge@Wharton Articles:

- [“Creating the Buzz Behind Bill’s Blockbuster”](#)
- [“Secrets of Successful Ad Campaigns: Lessons from Absolut, Nike and NASCAR “](#)

Other Resources/Materials: Internet access

Activity:

1. Class/Large Group Activity (8-10 mins)

As students come in, they are asked to name their favorite sports stars. The teacher compiles a list of all the names that are suggested along with the names of the students who made the suggestion. The teacher now pulls up images of these stars, choosing pictures where they are wearing sports jerseys with sponsor logos.

The teacher follows this activity with a discussion about sponsorship as a promotional strategy. I would begin by asking the students who gave the initial suggestions, some of the following questions. Other students are encouraged to contribute too.

- *What ideas/emotions do you associate with this brand?*
- *What products do you know of this brand?*
- *Do you use/would you like to use any of these products?*

- *How does sponsorship of this sports star affect your perception of this brand and its products?*
- *What advertisements of this brand/product do you remember?*
- *What is the difference between sponsorship and advertisement?*
- *How does sponsorship achieve the objectives of advertising (create awareness, inform, remind, etc.)?*

The teacher reminds the class that sponsorship is not limited to sports activities. A brand/product may also sponsor college events like cultural shows, sports activities, conferences, or cause-related events. The teacher asks students for examples of such sponsorship activities. You may also ask them to analyze their perception of the brand and its products based on such sponsorship. It would be a good idea to wrap up this discussion with questions that point to the importance of sponsorship for marketing promotion like: *Why do companies use sponsorship to promote their brand/product? How do these activities impact product sales?*

2. Class/Large Group Activity (5-8 mins)

The teacher now screens a publicity video like the Whopper Freak-out or the Taco Liberty Bell episode. These are available at:

- http://www.museumofhoaxes.com/hoax/Hoaxipedia/Taco_Liberty_Bell/
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IhF6Kr4ITNQ>

3. Group Discussion (5-8 mins)

The teacher asks the class for their opinions on the publicity stunts viewed.

- *Why did these companies design and implement these events? What was the objective behind each event?*
- *How does this objective compare with the objectives of advertisements we discussed a little while ago (remind, create awareness)?*
- *What about publicity materials that are less sensational like news articles, TV talk shows, placement in movies, etc? What is the advantage of such materials over advertising?*
- *What is the difference between advertising and these promotional activities?*

The teacher synthesizes the student responses to recap the importance of sponsorship and publicity for a promotional plan. *Advertising is a useful tool but marketing also uses complementary tools like sponsorship and public relations. Often products leverage brand awareness for product sales. For example, Nike, which spends a huge portion of its marketing budget on sponsorship, counts on this element of the promotional mix as much as, or even more than, advertising particular products. Additionally, many companies use Public Relations activities like newspaper articles, etc., to remind consumers of their market presence.*

4. Small Group Activity (10 mins)

The class is now divided into small groups. In this section, the teacher asks the groups to analyze any one case study from the two alternatives that are presented. The case studies are drawn from two Knowledge@Wharton articles:

- Public Relations — “Creating the Buzz Behind Bill’s Blockbuster”
- Sponsorship — “Secrets of Successful Ad Campaigns: Lessons from Absolut, Nike and NASCAR”

The first describes the publicity campaign for a book and the second is drawn from the section that describes Nike’s sponsorship strategy. Both descriptions are of the larger marketing strategy but with special emphasis on the two elements discussed in this lesson.

Students are briefed on what is expected of their analysis:

- (1) Analysis of current situation: What opportunities were present?
- (2) Objectives of the campaign
- (3) The campaign as an element of a larger promotional mix
- (4) The design of the campaign
- (5) The target customer
- (6) The impact of the campaign on sales/profit

Students are given 8 minutes to conduct their analysis. They are told that they will each be given 3-5 minutes to present their analysis and that other groups may provide suggestions, comment,

or ask questions during the 3 minute feedback time allotted to each group. No written submission is expected, only an oral presentation.

5. Presentation and Feedback (10-12 mins)

The groups are asked to present their analysis. Other groups are encouraged to provide constructive criticism — *What was insightful about the analysis? Do you have anything to add to this analysis? Was there anything about the analysis you felt was erroneous?*

5. Wrap-up

The teacher asks students about what they learned about the objectives and impacts of sponsorship and publicity.

Tying It All Together: Sponsorship and publicity are two elements of the promotional mix that have been used extensively and successfully by many companies to achieve marketing objectives. In this lesson, students analyze case studies and discuss the potential and impact of sponsorship and publicity. The other elements of the promotional mix form the rest of the module.

Practice Outside of the Classroom: The next time you read/view “objective” reports about products and brands, consider how this could/may have been part of a promotional campaign.

What Worked and What I Would Do Differently: If you are using Google as a search engine, it might be prudent to conduct your searches on the “everything” tab rather than on the “images” tabs. The “images” tab has greater likelihood of pulling up inappropriate material. If inappropriate material is accidentally displayed, be upfront and frank about the issues of using Internet in the classroom, and maybe also ask students about problems they face while using Internet to conduct secondary or preliminary research. You could also briefly discuss the problem of information overload and difficulties in information processing.

If all the groups want to analyze the same case study, you could ask for written submissions instead of oral presentations. Oral presentations are preferred only if each group has something new to add to the previous presentations. If there is the danger of repetition, it is preferable to opt for written submissions. Alternatively, you could provide additional case studies and have each group present a different analysis. If the class strength does not permit all the presentations in this class, all the groups could be asked to present in the next class. That way, they also get additional preparation time.

