RESEARCH REGARDING THE PERCEPTIONS AND ATTITUDES OF MANAGERS IN POST CRISIS ROMANIA, TOWARDS MARKETING

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Abstract: The present paper focuses on evaluating the impact and implications of the economic crisis on the behavior of managers in Romania towards marketing. For this a field research was applied. The research method was the survey, and the instrument used was the questionnaire. The questionnaire development was centered on the research objectives and hypotheses. The pretest phase was conducted on a sample of 15 respondents. After this stage, the final structure of the questionnaire was obtained. The survey was done on a sample of 100 subjects, managers in Romania.

Keywords: development, questionnaire, economic, managers

INTRODUCTION

Given the profound recession that characterized post crisis Romania, the question regarding the importance and correct use of marketing is up for debate and serious concern. Not many managers in Romania fully understand the complete potential of marketing and how to use it properly. Thus they are blinded by misconceptions they shape they incorrect view on what should marketing be.

Does marketing truly serve its purpose today? Within this highly important question the word “purpose” is quintessential because it underlines the very problem of marketing as a practice, thus what should (and should not) marketing do? Here is the real case, for one can easily spot an increasingly growing number of CEOs (belonging to different companies) that are vividly complaining about the fact that their marketing isn’t working as expected. So, the role of marketing in today’s post-crisis era is put into question. Apart from the fact that marketer’s mistakes are definitely a source of marketing failure, another source comes directly from the misunderstanding and misuse of marketing.

In one of his noteworthy books (Kotler, Keller, 2008), Philip Kotler identifies the main sources of error that inhibit the development of a healthy marketing.

In the rows below are presented some of the most common misconceptions towards marketing:

A) Growth - Growth itself mustn’t become a companies’ objective, because this doesn’t necessarily translate into higher profits (not even on the long run); thus, a companies’ objective must be profitable growth (Kotler, 2008). In this respect, marketing plays a key role in identifying, evaluating and choosing the right marketing strategies in order to obtain a dominant position on the selected markets.

B) Equalizing marketing with sales - As Philip Kotler remarks (Kotler, 2008), equalizing marketing with sales is a noteworthy mistake that a significant part of entrepreneurs make. We already know from Peter Drucker that the true purpose
of marketing is to make the sale super flu; this tells us that marketing should discover new opportunities regarding uncovered necessities and meet those with satisfying solutions. Another reason for which one cannot equalize marketing with sales is the fact that marketing should start before we even have a product. Here, marketing ante product research is fundamental in order to evaluate present and (possible) future necessities. But the sale occurs (in most cases) after the product is done. Also, marketing continues to put its touch on the product’s live cycle. This is being accomplished by continuously trying to find new customers, improve products performances and attractiveness.

C) **Considering marketing as being just another department within the company** - this would mean a severe misconception about what the marketing activity should really be. Thus, marketing encompasses all the companies departments if it is to be successful.

Given the burden of marketing misconceptions, a survey meant to highlight the perceptions and attitudes of managers in post-crisis Romania, towards marketing, was undertaken.

**MATERIAL AND METHOD**

The research method was the survey, and the instrument used was the questionnaire. The questionnaire development was centered on the research objectives and hypotheses. The pretest phase was conducted on a sample of 15 respondents. After this stage, the final structure of the questionnaire was obtained. The survey was done on a sample of 100 subjects, managers in Romania. It focuses of identifying the perceptions, experiences and attitudes of managers in Romania towards marketing. The research is based on a nonrandomized method, thus sampling was based on accessibility.

Next will be mentioned only the objectives consistent with the expose results. Thus, the main objectives are mentioned below.

**Objectives:**

- Finding out if managers in Romania are willing to continue to invest substantial sums in marketing;
- Finding out if managers in Romania consider marketing as being indispensable for a company’s success;
- Finding out if managers in Romania consider marketing as being the most important factor in achieving success on the market;
- Finding out if managers in Romania view marketing as being directly linked to ethics, or whether it transcends it.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

In the rows below it is presented a part of the results of the research (due to limitations regarding the content).

1. Regarding the question that concerns the issue whether if managers in Romania still believe in marketing and thus are willing to continue to invest substantial sums in marketing, 75% of the investigated subjects have answered that they will continue to invest substantial sums in marketing (see Fig. 1.).

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2. Când răspundau la întrebarea dacă managerii din România consideră că marketingul este esențial pentru succesul unei companii, 85% dintre subiecții investigației răspunză că consideră marketingul este esențial pentru succesul unei companii (vezi Fig. 2.).

3. Când managerii din România răspunzau dacă consideră că marketingul este factorul de succes mai important al unei companii pe piață, 65% dintre subiecții investigației răspunză că consideră marketingul este factorul de succes mai important al unei companii pe piață (vezi Fig. 3.).
4. Regarding the question that concerns the issue whether if managers in Romania view marketing as being directly linked to ethics, or whether it transcends it, only 40% of the investigated subjects view marketing as being directly linked to ethics, while 60% consider that marketing transcends ethics (see Fig. 4.).

![Fig. 4. Managers who consider marketing as being directly linked to ethics](image)

**CONCLUSIONS**

The fact that only 85% of the investigated managers consider marketing as being indispensable for a company’s success shows that in our country there is a lack of knowledge and understanding regarding the importance of marketing. Thus, marketing is not fully appreciated by managers in Romania. This ill conceived view is reinforced by the very low score of only 65% of the investigated subjects have answered that they consider marketing as being the most important factor in achieving success on the market.

The ethical problem is one still highly debated not only in Romania, but also worldwide. The fact that most of the investigated subjects (60%) consider that marketing transcends ethics, thus ethics is often a barrier in the path of a company’s success. This is a serious reason for concern among customers who are highly exposed to a complex, sophisticated system that aims at predetermining customer behavior (Naghiu, Bacali, 2011).

The good news comes from the fact that 75% of the investigated subjects have answered that they will continue to invest substantial sums in marketing, this shows that the Romanian economy is recovering from the crisis blow. If managers in Romania will acknowledge their misconceptions and misunderstandings towards marketing, only then they can start to fix them by taking part in marketing courses.

**REFERENCES**