



Promotion in the Merchandising Environment

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PROMOTION IN THE MERCHANDISING ENVIRONMENT

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PREFACE

Promotion is everywhere. We see it. We hear it. Sometimes we welcome it into our homes and businesses, and at other times it invades our world without our permission. Promotion is exciting and creative, entertaining and informative, and influences us every day on a conscious and subconscious level. We cannot dismiss promotion. The purpose of *Promotion in the Merchandising Environment* is to explain the process of promotion and to describe the promotion mix tools available for creating successful campaigns. This book focuses on the comprehensive nature of promotion in the merchandising environment of fashion and related goods and emphasizes the changing nature of promotion in a global marketplace.

Several themes are evident throughout this text. The first theme is the concept of integrated marketing communications (IMC). In an IMC environment, all promotion elements are thought of as a single communication system with each element supporting the objectives of every other element. Advertising, direct marketing, sales promotion, publicity and public relations, personal selling, special events, fashion shows, and visual merchandising work together to communicate the same message about the product, brand, or organization to the end user. Integrated marketing communications also present a consistent message to the public, including suppliers, competitors, members of the firm or other sponsoring organization, and the media. IMC is reinforced in each chapter with industry examples.

A second theme is the global nature of promotion. In today's society, promotion is undeniably global. With advanced communication and transportation technologies, companies have the ability to locate nearly anywhere in the world. While much promotion is still at the local or national level, manufacturers, designers, and retailers must be able to communicate in the global economic system. Examples of international promotions are included throughout this text.

Changes in technology are driving communications and promotion, the third theme of this book. Technological changes include the rapid increase in the use of computers and the transfer of data by the industry and consumers. Promotion strategies that once were limited to live performances, print, or broadcast formats, must now consider the computer as a means of communication. Additionally, communication technologies are revolutionizing the way we send and receive promotional information. Promotion tools now include satellite, cable, fiber optics, and electronic devices. To address the rapidly changing technology in promotion, we feature a future trends segment at the conclusion of each chapter.

This book focuses on the merchandising environment. We consider merchandising to include forecasting what customers want to buy, investigating where to find that merchandise in the marketplace, determining the price the customer is willing to pay, and making it available through the retail store or other merchandising outlets where the customer is willing to buy the merchandise. Promotion is a key element at each step of the process. In the merchandising environment, promotion is twofold. It is an essential information source for end users to keep abreast of the global marketplace. It is also a fundamental strategy to fulfill the merchandising task for manufacturers, designers, and retailers. This text features examples from distribution channels at all levels to explain the role of promotion in the merchandising field.

The authors believe that fashion is evident in many product categories beyond clothing and accessories, and therefore, while the majority of examples in this text are from clothing and closely related categories, we have included appropriate examples to broaden stu-

dents' thinking about promotion. Promotion extends to fields beyond fashion. This text is written to teach techniques that can be used in a fashion environment or transferred to other product categories.

The skills necessary to become a promotion practitioner are stressed throughout this text. Photographs, illustrations, checklists, tables, and real-world examples are part of every chapter to encourage creativity in those readers who will eventually produce promotion campaigns. To engage the reader in thinking beyond the boundaries of the text, each chapter features two readings on the topic that provide perspective. The readings range from how-to discussions to case studies to interviews with professionals in the industry.

Other features of the text include chapter objectives and summaries; highlighted key terms, questions for discussion, and additional resources for each chapter; and a comprehensive glossary. An Instructor's Guide has also been developed to assist instructors with suggestions for activities, field trips, and guest speakers to enrich the course.

This text is written to give a logical and informative order to promotion, from basic concepts to specific activities. As teachers and authors, we realize that course curriculums are not always prepared according to a text. It has been our goal, in writing this book, to provide the instructor who teaches all promotion mix aspects in one course with enough information to cover each subject adequately. We also realize that some instructors pull out certain topics, such as forecasting, fashion shows, or visual merchandising, and teach those as independent courses with textbooks specific to the course topic. Therefore, this book is written with the understanding that the chapters may be used independently or collectively to introduce part of the promotion industry or to provide a comprehensive view.

Promotion is fun, exciting, and changing daily. When we first started writing this text, electronic retailing and other technologies were only ideas. As we finished, e-commerce was commonplace. We can only guess what new technologies will emerge in the future. We hope you will find promotion as exciting as we do. We watch television, listen to the radio, read fashion magazines and newspapers, and surf the Net, always finding new and creative promotions.

We would like to thank the following individuals for their assistance with this text: Rebecca Pierson of Union Bay, a former student and now a successful professional in the industry; Carmela Carratie and David Wolfe of the Doneger Group; Katherine Flintoff of Mervyn's; Christine Walker of Walker Media; Helen Atkins of Pretty Polly; and Pam Esser of Esser Designs.

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During the writing of this book, there was a popular television advertisement for a packaging service. It went something like this, "Up on the top floor, the marketing guru is giving a lecture on *thinking outside the box*. Meanwhile, you are down in shipping concerned with *what's in the box*." We hope this book gives you a good foundation for *working within the box* and at the same time causes you to think *outside the box*.

Kristen K. Swanson
Judith C. Everett

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