

# MARKETING SCIENCE

EDITOR ■  
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## Job Marketing

The time is here when jobs are marketed. It has slipped upon us rather without our noticing it. Just pick up any issue of *Scientific American* or *Advertising Age* or the Sunday New York *Times* or one of many professional journals. In them, you will find help wanted advertising in display form which attempts to describe the nonmonetary benefits of working for the advertiser. Some describe how the geographic location is attractive by discussing the climate (particularly Southern California) or by describing how easy it is to get to the golf course. Others try to describe the working environment so that working for the advertiser seems pleasant and fulfilling. Such advertisements are most prevalent for engineering positions, but are also common in other areas such as copywriting, management science, and top, executive positions.

Another widely used marketing activity in job marketing is the salesman (who is usually called a recruiter). At the annual campus visitation, his job is not merely to seek out the good candidates but also to "sell" the candidates on the company. Backing him up on these efforts are sales promotion pieces which describe the company and the better aspects of the position he is trying to fill. Also aiding him are corporate advertising campaigns which have the stated objective of promoting the attractiveness of employment along with "traffic building" ads on bulletin boards and in local newspapers announcing the recruiter's arrival.

### Why Has It Happened?

It is interesting to speculate on the rise of job marketing. Why have we shifted from the classified columns and a poster outside the plant to a highly organized and continuing marketing plan? What are the appeals which motivate prospective employees?

Of course, the first answer is likely to be that we now have a chronic shortage of labor. In spite of fairly high levels of unemployment, it can be documented that we have severe shortages of some skills. Another related answer is that job marketing will appear in occupations with high job mobility, which is true for the fields noted earlier (engineering, copywriting, and management science). Of course, labor shortages and mobility will tend to occur together, for each is likely to cause the other. Almost certainly, these are management's reasons for developing organized and continuing job marketing.

### What Does It Mean?

When we come to appeals, the answers are not so apparent. Recruiters and managers are surprised at the increasing difficulty of attracting young people to business careers. Management is surprised at the sharp increase in numbers of lower-level managers

who refuse promotions. Academicians are criticized for having designed curricula to prepare students for jobs. The students claim this will leave them unprepared for living even though they may be prepared to earn one. And some people are talking about the impending arrival of a society in which few will have to work, in which most people will spend little time at jobs and those who work will work very hard.

### *Time and Money*

These things all suggest that we are rapidly approaching the day when time will be a more valuable commodity than money. For the man who refuses a promotion, it would seem that the marginal utility of time is already greater than that of money. The students who complain about curricula must already sense that jobs are not the major things to be prepared for after they leave college. The rapid increase in enrollment in adult education courses might be viewed as a recognition of the same thing, since enrollments are greater for "nonproductive" courses which do not provide specific job skills.

When time becomes more valuable than money, strange things happen. For instance, people ask that jobs be "fulfilling" and "challenging." They are more interested in these attributes than in money. I have interviewed a number of job applicants who felt this way. I have, myself, turned down jobs which meant substantial pay increases because I didn't want to spend my time doing what the job required. I imagine many readers have either done the same or can think of better paying jobs they would not want.

One way to look at this is that a person's time is so valuable that no amount of money could compensate him for consuming it. The employer must, therefore, provide the employee with nonmaterial (psychic?) rewards which improve his "living" and make the job worth his time. Hence, the advertisements promote the benefits of spending less time on the job and more at the golf course. Or they talk of a "stimulating environment," good conversation with cohorts and participation in significant projects (e.g. a recent ad with the headline, "Help Send A Man to the Moon").

### *The Model We Need*

Perhaps some readers would make a stab at a model of how people trade off time and money in the pursuit of living. Such a model would have to allow for the investment of either, and develop a new currency to measure the returns on investment. It will have to recognize strong, and probably different, marginal effects for the two. Maybe the problem is like balancing advertising and promotion to attain sales results. Certainly investments of time and money have different periods over which the returns are spread, as is true of advertising and promotion.

### *The Mailbag*

I was delighted to receive the following letter on transportation problems. Anyone living in the so-called "Northeast Corridor," as both the letter writer and I do, must have a sense of impending strangulation. Driving a car is generally unpleasant (through no fault of the car); the airlines are stacked up as often because there are too many airliners as because of weather; the railroads have generally become uncomfortable with infrequent service; buses have all the problems of cars and then some, and rapid transit systems are unmentionable. With all these problems there must be something to do to make choices easier. By now, there are days when I wonder why the populace doesn't go on strike and refuse to travel anywhere.

Dr. Sommers' plea that marketing science attend to this problem should be heeded. Even though the basis of the problem seems to me to be in product design, marketing thinking is badly needed to work out the design criteria.

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*To the Editor:*

One of the critical urban problems arising today involves a very interesting marketing problem: selling mass or rapid transportation to intracity and intercity travelers who are less than eager to part with their automobiles. On the city commuting scene, of course, it is not difficult to see why cars are so popular. The alternatives are dirty, crowded, often unreliable, uncomfortable, and targets for crime in almost all major cities including the Nation's capital. For short intercity trips, however, airline, bus, and train alternatives are usually quite convenient and comfortable, and do attract many travelers. It is in this market that interesting problems are arising, particularly as new modes of travel emerge to compete with those now available. In the Northeast Corridor, high speed rail service is scheduled to begin in January, 1969, and V/STOL aircraft feasibility is under active investigation. What market shares will these new systems capture, and how will their competitors respond?

There is currently very little material available on the determinants of intercity mode choice. Much research has been performed on travel demand prediction for existing modes, using demographic data to estimate growth trends and general usage patterns, but this knowledge has been singularly unhelpful in predicting the success, or lack of it, of intercity transportation innovations. What is needed is a better model or description of traveler behavior with respect to active mode choice, a situation similar in some ways to other product or service purchases. Yet unusual factors enter into mode choice, such as safety considerations, fear of flying, convenience in all its forms, and mission pressures, which are not commonly met in other buying decisions. Mode choice decisions for intercity travel have not been successfully predicted from regression analyses on demographic or census data, i.e., on variables exogenous to the traveler's perceptual decision-making processes. A fertile field for research therefore exists in this area, especially in the light of growing transportation congestion and the huge costs of new facility construction.

Perhaps there is an opportunity here for marketing science to make a contribution to one of our so-called contemporary urban problems. The need is certainly evident.

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Readers are urged to write their views on this column or any subject related to marketing science. Send your letters to

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