

Examiners' Report/
Principal Examiner Feedback

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GCE Travel & Tourism (6996)
Paper 01

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Unit 10: Promotion and Sales in Travel and Tourism (6996)

General Comments

The paper followed the format of a question and answer booklet. Candidates were required to respond in the spaces provided. There were 6 questions and 90 marks were available.

The questions only related to the travel and tourism industry. All questions linked to the information under 'what you need to learn' in the qualification specification.

The questions were linked to the assessment objectives. Candidates therefore needed to demonstrate knowledge and understanding and skills in vocationally related contexts. Candidates need to apply knowledge and understanding of the specified content and of related skills in vocationally-related contexts. Candidates need to use appropriate research techniques to obtain information to assess vocationally related issues and problems. Finally candidates were required to evaluate information to make reasoned judgements, draw conclusions and make recommendations about vocationally related issues and problems.

Most candidates attempted all questions and consequently they picked up marks across the paper.

Question 1.

Q1(a)

There were six marks available for this question and on average candidates scored four out of the six marks. It is an AO1 question and candidates who had studied the stages involved in the sales process as outlined in the specifications scored well on this question. A response that scored full marks can be seen below:

'Outline features and benefits:

Describing what are the good and positive aspects of the product and how it would be good for the customer, for example, the temperature will be 30 degrees which is suitable as you wanted to go to a place that is hot with lots of sun.

Closing a sale:

When the customer appears satisfied with the product chosen, the sales person persuades them to buy and completes a booking form and takes the money.

After-sales service:

This means keeping in touch giving good service after closing the sale eg. Arranging for flowers to be delivered to the room when the customer arrives.'

Often where lower marks were given, the answer was vague/not a complete answer or the stem to the question was repeated. For example:

Outline features and benefits:

Telling the customer what is good about the product.

Closing a sale:

Signing off the deal

After-sales service:

Sending flowers to the customer

Q1(b)

This is an AO2 question so application as well as knowledge is what is being tested. Market segments that would be attracted by the promotional materials outlined had to be identified, and then candidates had to explain why their chosen market segment would be attracted by the promotional materials. A common mistake was to explain why the product would suit the market segment. Sometimes answers were vague or generic in nature, for example Q1(b)(i):

Market segment – 'Young people'. Explanation – 'because they pass windows.'

Answers that scored full marks:

Q1(b)(i)

Polish residents living in the local area. Because they will see the window displays in their locality and will be drawn because they are written in their language.

Q1(b)(ii)

Geography. This is a local radio interview and a free magazine to all households in the area which means it will attract the people who live locally.

Q1(c)

Most candidates could explain one secondary market research method the planned museum could use. However many lost marks by providing two different methods rather than providing one in depth.

One candidate who scored the full four marks available:

'Get market research from the Museum of Tolerance in Los Angeles. The two museums are similar so we can presume they will get similar types of customers. By using research from the Museum of Tolerance they will be able to gain information about customer age and gender as well as their expenditure at the museum. From this they will then have a good idea about the types of customer they will get.'

Q1(d)

This question was a differentiator. Many candidates did not fully apply their answer to this question and provided generic type answers such as 'primary research is time consuming/expensive.'

The candidates who scored the highest marks understood that the fact that the museum was not yet open would make any primary research problematic.

One four mark answer:

'The product isn't yet finished so when carrying out primary research such as interviews you wouldn't know what to ask about and the data might be inaccurate if you ask the wrong market segments because you are unsure who will visit before an attraction actually does open to the public.'

Question 2

Q2(a)(i)

This question was testing AO1. Most candidates scored one out of the two marks available for each definition. Some candidates gave a general definition of communication rather than referring to the promotional term 'communication channels.'

When defining 'promotional materials' full marks were awarded to those candidates who clearly demonstrated they understood the difference between promotional techniques and promotional materials.

A candidate that scored the four available marks:

Communication Channels – 'this is how companies and organisations get their products/services across to their customers making sure they receive it appropriately and effectively in order to appeal and sell.'

Promotional materials – 'this is where an organization chooses a type of promotional technique and then must choose some materials to use within this technique. For example a technique would be advertising and the material would be the actual adverts in newspapers.'

Q2b) (i) –(iv)

This question was a differentiator. Many candidates scored well here and could apply the scenario provided to their answers and explain how they might help or hinder Claydon House reach their objectives. However other candidates struggled and many did not appear to understand the term 'incoming tourists'- a term they should remember from Unit 1. A few candidates did not refer to the objectives at all and therefore restricted the number of marks that could be awarded for their answers.

One answer that received the full 12 marks available:

'Product

The product will work well to help the House achieve its objectives as it has an interesting history which will attract incoming tourists wanting to see our heritage.

It is also built in the most extravagant way which will appeal to people looking for a wedding venue and also the fact that the house will be closed to the public during the wedding is also likely to be attractive.

Price

The price of the wedding is very good as it is only £2000 for up to 120 people, this will help to increase the number of weddings. Although the price for admissions is rather expensive as it is £7 per adult and £3.40 per child and this will work against attracting day visitors even though there has been a slight discount for families.

Place

It is well located as it is close to London and can be accessed from different parts of the country. Also as it is in the countryside it will appeal to the wedding market because of the views. This will also be a negative because this means that there are no public transport links available which will not attract any incoming tourists who often use public transport.

Promotion

The promotion is not working well to attract incoming tourists because they are only occasionally advertising in the local paper which will not be seen by incoming tourists. There is also no specific promotion for weddings which will not help to increase the number of weddings.'

Question 3

Q3(a)

Similar questions to this have appeared on past papers but it was disappointing to see how few candidates took the opportunity to gain the 5 or 6 available marks here. The answers describing displays were often very vague and sometimes incorrect. Personal selling answers often referred incorrectly to 'door to door selling.'

One answer that did score maximum marks can be seen below:

'Displays

In the travel and tourism industry these are often used at a conference or a stand at an exhibition. They are also set up in shopping malls to help show what is for sale.

Personal selling

This is when a sale is attempted between a customer and seller with direct communication, usually face to face, for example a customer walking into a travel agent in which the agent will attempt to make a sale.

Sponsorship

When an organisation pays to have their name on something such as a team shirt eg Emirate Airlines pays to have their logo on Arsenal shirts.'

Q3(b)

This question was a differentiator. Candidates scoring lower marks tended to provide descriptive answers, a characteristic of level one type answers. However it was pleasing to see so many candidates scoring level 2 and level 3 here. In many cases they were able to provide clear analysis relating to at least two of the factors that can affect the business environment.

One answer that was awarded level 2 marks:

'Environmental factors may have affected the change from brochure to website usage as a lot of paper is required to make the brochures meaning cutting down more trees. To be environmentally friendly and protect animals website usage is a better option. Profitability also has a number of effects on this change. One is that using a lot of paper would use a lot of money and the less money used on paper the more profit is produced. Also companies will need to hire people to produce their brochures and hand them out to customers. However through web usage you cut out these wages and produce more profit. The technological factors are that technology has improved vastly over time. Almost every household can access the internet in this day and age and this is a vast market for companies to look at and use the web for bookings etc.'

One answer that was awarded level 3 marks:

'Environmentally using websites allows companies to cut down on the amount of paper they use for brochures. This means fewer trees will be cut down for what could be a waste as most people throw brochures away. Once a website is set up it will be cheaper to run than spending money on printing brochures. This should allow tour operators to put more money into other parts of their business.

Technologically websites can offer more than a brochure can so potential customers will get more information about the product. Virtual tours, webcams and photo libraries all make a product more tangible because you know exactly what it is like. Websites can also be updated and information changed quickly and cheaply meaning customers can find out about new information and products instantly.'

Question 4

Q4(a)

This was a question that differentiated between candidates. Most candidates who read the question completely scored 3-6 marks. However others obviously did not read the instructions. Some made up their own promotional campaign rather than using the information provided. Common errors;

- Just to use one of the promotional materials suggested so therefore not producing a promotional campaign
- Using very little of the budget outlined for the campaign
- Not providing timescales

One answer that was awarded 4 marks is outlined below. Marks were lost here because timescales were not always provided and they did not use much of the suggested budget.

'¼ page advert in national newspaper	£5000
Public relations exercise for three days	£3000
Sales promotion throughout June	£6000
10 x local newspaper adverts	£10,000'

Q4(b)

Most candidates scored 4-6 marks here. However some missed valuable marks by not fully explaining:

'the local paper adverts will attract business people, the national newspaper adverts will attract domestic tourist.'

One answer that received maximum marks:

'The adverts in the Durham University student magazine will attract university students (as it is aimed at them) and they can inform their families when they stay in the area. Advertising twice a month in national newspapers will attract tourists and business customers who read these papers across the country. Advertising once a week in local newspapers should make local businesses aware of the meeting room facilities. Having three 'Experience the Duchess Hotel days' for journalists will promote a good image for the hotel if the journalists give it a good review. Due to the recession the sales promotion of 25% off will attract university student and their families as university fees are very expensive.'

Question 5

Q5(a)

Candidates generally scored well on this question. Those who did not tended to provide an AIDA assessment only and did not refer to the content of the advertisement. This restricted the marks that could be awarded.

One answer that received the full 6 marks available:

'Tui/Thomson emphasise how they are different by using the phrase 'that's what makes us different' and expressing their care for customers which is effective as their advert is all about helping the customer in this time of

crisis. They are trying to make customers aware of what they have done for customers, showing that they were loyal to their customers and hoping in return that their customers (and new ones) will be loyal to them and book again. However Tui/Thomson do not show any prices, there is no phone number, website or any contact details, so if the customer was wanting to book with them they would not know how to contact them which is ineffective.'

Q5(b)

Candidates varied in their responses to this question. Those who scored higher marks gave detail to their suggestion and then justified it below. Others did not organize their answers and some provided one word in their suggestion and then added more detail in the justification section which meant they did not provide justifications limiting the number of marks they could be awarded.

Some candidates did not read the question fully and tried to provide suggestions that would attract both customer types rather than providing one suggestion for families with young children and one suggestion for couples in their 50s.

One response that score maximum marks:

'Suggestion

Send out a fun DVD showcasing their holidays to families

Justification

This can be watched from the comfort of their own home and contains moving images which always attract the attention of children. They can see lots of smiling happy people on holiday which will encourage them to book.

Suggestion

Give out leaflets at golf courses with discount vouchers in them

Justification

A lot of over 50s play golf. Also golfers tend to be better off and would be the kind of people to have enough money to go on a holiday.'

Question 6

Q6(a)

First of all the candidates were asked to name the promotional campaign. No marks were awarded for this but it allowed candidates to outline fully their campaign. If candidates referred to just one piece of promotional material or to all of the marketing undertaken by an organisation, then this restricted the number of marks that could be awarded to two.

The question then asked the candidate to name two of the promotional techniques that the organisation used. The candidates who did this scored two marks. However some did not name any promotional techniques whatsoever and therefore lost marks.

Candidates were then asked to name two promotional materials used in the campaign. This really divided candidates. Those who had researched their campaigns were able to do this well. However some just named two materials not connected to the promotional techniques they had given earlier. For example a candidate said sponsorship and direct marketing, then under materials said TV advert and newspaper advert.

Describing when and where the promotional materials were used was usually better answered and candidates usually gained the available marks here.

Generally this question was much better answered than in previous series.

One answer that scored maximum marks:

'Chester Zoo Dinosaurs at large Summer 2011

Promotional Techniques
Public Relations
Advertising

Promotional materials
Billboards, leaflets, TV adverts, radio interviews

Where and when the promotional materials were used
A billboard was placed on the A43 and they started TV advertising in the early months of the year to gain interest. There was intense advertising in the run up to the campaign.
There were also local radio interviews and day break footage.'

Q6(b)

This part of the question asked candidates to assess the success of the campaign described in Q6(a). Assessment was better than in previous series. One response that maximum marks as assessment was made against measureable targets:

'Chester Zoo marketed their campaign very well. In the build-up to the campaign they gained a lot of media interest as Dino keepers were interviewed on local radio stations such as Merseyside FM. Day Break also included footage of the campaign which raised awareness. This attracted lots of families. Their public relations was fantastic as they created a lot of awareness which was one of the main reasons for their success. Their advertising was also good – they had a billboard advertising the campaign on one of the main link roads into Chester which also gained interest. In the summer months they had a footfall of 500,000, an increase of 32% from the previous year. 67% of these visitors went to visit the dinosaurs. Internet hits were also up 17% from the previous year. This shows the campaign was a huge success and very effective. It attracted a lot of public and media attention which then led to its success.'

This question should give candidates time to study and research on their own with just some guidance from you.

PLEASE BE AWARE: candidates should research and study a range of promotional campaigns designed to attract a range of different market segments. This will better prepare them for assessment and to provide evaluation of their effectiveness.

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