

Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2012

GCE Travel & Tourism (6996)
Paper 01

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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;

'Establish rapport'

Making contact with the customer to start off with, adjusting your body language and making eye contact so building an initial relationship

'Determine customer needs and expectations'

This is listening to the customer and asking questions so you can select the correct product/service to meet their requirements

'Overcoming objections'

This is when the customer has an issue with a product selected for them and you offer them an alternative or outline the benefits to them of the product

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

'Establish rapport'

This is when you first make contact with 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, candidates had to then 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. Too many candidates were explaining why the farm would attract their market segment, not therefore answering the question asked. Answers that scored full marks:

Q1bi) Geography

The mailshot will be delivered to schools and playgroups within 10 miles of the farm so as they are local this new attraction will interest them and the mailshot contains all the necessary information

Or

Young children

As the mailshots are delivered to schools and playgroups then children may see them and pester teachers/parents to take them

Q1bii) Lifestyle

The magazine 'Living in the country' will appeal to those who admire the countryside and the lifestyle which includes the countryside walks and visits, therefore those liking this lifestyle will buy this magazine and be influenced to visit

Or

Retired people

They have more free time so may be reading the magazine and see the advert which may show pictures of the countryside which they are more likely to enjoy as it is quiet

Q1(c) This was a well answered question and most candidates scored at least three out of the four marks available. One answer that scored the full four marks:

Advantage

You know the data is up to date and reliable. Doing it yourself means you know exactly where the data has come from and how it has been obtained so making it reliable

Disadvantage

It means hiring someone or taking someone away from their current job to perform the research; this is time and money consuming.

Question 2.

Q2

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 Ragdale Hall reach its objectives. Those candidates who understand the 4Ps could apply their answers well.

One answer that received the full 12 marks available:

'Product

It will attract more European tourists as it has just been voted Best Spa in Europe and they have a great range of products. They have mountain bikes, an exercise pool, tennis courts and a gym which should attract more males; however, calling it a pampering day could put off male customers who associate that with women

Price

The price could work against the objective of attracting European tourists as some of the prices are quite expensive, but it is a luxurious and exclusive spa so they may be willing to pay these amounts. The price would work for men as the male treatments offered are not too expensive

Place

The spa is very accessible so would work for the objectives of attracting tourists from Europe and male customers. Transfers can be arranged which is useful for tourists who might not have any other mode of transport and it is near motorways, train stations and airports which male visitors may find useful especially the motorways when coming home from work

Promotion

There are special day packages promoted like 'male zone' which will attract more male customers. Direct mailshots to businesses may draw in more men too as they will see them at work. The virtual tour will show incoming tourists from Europe what the spa is like, especially if they don't read English.'

Question 3.

Q3(a)(i) This was a great differentiating question. Those that really understand the promotional terminology outlined in the specification scored well whilst others did not. It was clear which candidates had studied promotional techniques and promotional materials and fully understood the difference between the two.

One candidate that scored the four marks available:

'Advertising

Catchy leaflet with contact details and basic information

Direct Marketing

Sending the letter through to data base customers'

Q3(a)(ii)

This question was better answered. The vast majority of candidates identified the correct target market – couples. Usually candidates then went on to score at least three out of the four marks available. One candidate that scored the four marks available:

'After Christmas and spending time with the family they may need to get away and with an email received especially quoting 'romantic break' it would attract them. Also they are likely to regularly check their email so they are likely to read this in time to book the hotel.'

Q3b)

This question was a differentiator. Candidates scoring lower marks tended to provide descriptive answers, a characteristic of level 1 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.

One answer that was awarded level 2 marks:

'Technological factors have led to a lot of companies advertising on Facebook and Twitter. For example a local Paradise Wildlife Park has over 5000 likes on Facebook and 500+ followers on Twitter. This encourages people to go and visit as new information such as cheap deals or new born animals are posted and promoted to customers. Also the local zoo has money off vouchers accessed by smart phones which can be shown to

staff when buying tickets at the entrance gate. This saves the zoo money because they do not have to pay to advertise as much in brochures, posters and leaflets.'

One answer that was awarded level 3 marks:

'The use of computers and the internet now allows organisations to keep large databases on their customers creating instant access to their information making it easier to direct market as you can send promotions via email. It also facilitates updating information so the database is kept up to date so companies don't waste money and time sending mailshots to wrong addresses. You can also keep track on what your customers are more likely to be interested in by looking at past purchases which allows organisations to target better.'

The growth of social networking sites has revolutionised communication generally and now organisations have taken notice of this and have created their own pages to promote on – sites such as Facebook which allow them to reach a younger demographic, target more effectively as well as being free advertising.'

Question 4.

Q4a) This question was better answered this series. However there were still some areas for improvement. 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 6 marks is outlined below. Marks were lost here because timescales were not provided and they did not use much of the suggested budget.

Britain

'1/2 page national newspaper £20,000

40 rooms @ 25% off £2000

Mailshot 5000 contacts £25,000

Four British journalists £8,000

Total £55,000

Australia

½ page national newspaper £10,000

½ page local newspaper £2,000

40 rooms @ 25% off £2,000

Eight journalists £1,600

Total £15,600

One answer that scored 9 marks:

Britain

'In July the hotel could run three ½ pages in national newspapers - £60,000

Also in July the hotel could mailshot all 5000 contacts - £25,000

Towards August they could promote the 25% off a room in November – 150 customers £11,250

In July they could accommodate five journalists - £10,000

Australia

In July the hotel should have three ½ pages in national newspapers - £60,000

Late September they could promote 25% off a room in November to 100 customers - £7,500

Also in July accommodate five journalists - £1000

Total £174,750

Q4b) Most candidates scored 4-6 marks here.

One answer (following on from the 9 mark answer outlined above) that received the maximum 6 marks:

'Firstly by running most of the campaign in July the British market will have time to plan ahead. Many British people read national newspapers therefore this will reach them easily and attract them to come to Australia. The mailshots will attract them as it will be a reminder to visit their family in Australia. Furthermore if the journalists visit early in the season they will write (hopefully) good reviews encouraging both the British and the Australian markets to visit. The Australian families will not have to plan ahead as much therefore running the newspaper adverts in August is acceptable.'

Question 5.

Q5a) Candidates generally scored well on this question. A few candidates did get confused and provided an AIDA type appraisal of the Jetlink image, but they were definitely in a small minority.

One answer that received the full 6 marks available:

'The booklet does offer advice to organisations which could be useful and still be used to their advantage in promoting without breaking the regulations. It offers them alternative ways of promoting that would still sound appealing to tourists. Although it could be seen as helping the bigger organisations in travel and tourism that can afford to pay to be official sponsors and hindering the smaller travel and tourism organisations that stood to benefit from advertising about the Olympics. However it does ensure the rights of the sponsors making sure they get full benefit of being a sponsor, keeping the big travel and tourism organisations going is still supporting the industry.'

Q5b) 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 organise 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.

Quite often a promotional material suggested for domestic tourists was a local London newspaper. The candidates believed a domestic tourist was one living in the city rather than one leaving in Britain. Londoners would be unlikely to require a hotel room as they have homes in the locality.

One response that score maximum marks:

Incoming tourists

'Suggestion

Online advert with offers

Justification

The internet covers the globe so having an advert online will reach everywhere. Having an advert on social networking sites will reach millions of people (6 million use Facebook) and a wide range of ages will see it. Links for the Olympics are available on sites and having the hotel associated with that would give it a better chance of being booked.

Domestic tourists

Suggestion

Advertisement in a national newspaper

Justification

A lot of different people will see it and it will highlight what his small hotel has to offer.'

Question 6

Q6a)

This was a question with a slight variation on how it has been asked in the past.

Candidates are advised to research a number of different campaigns. In this instance they had a choice of choosing a campaign that was targeting either, families with children or couples in their 50s whose children have left home. The vast majority of candidates chose families with children.

Generally this question was answered well with most candidates scoring 4 marks or more. Occasionally candidates described an advert rather than a promotional campaign and this restricted marks.

One response that gained the maximum 6 marks:

'Lego land

They advertised on television at prime time. This meant that everyone was at home. They advertised on children's channels such as Disney XD or Nickelodeon. This increased 'pester power' as they targeted children directly. They used direct marketing sending emails and letters to previous customers to encourage repeat business. They advertised on radio stations when children were going to school, another form of pester power – they targeted primary school children aged under 8 and the radio adverts were from 8.30-9.00 and 3.00-4.00.'

Q6b)

This part of the question asked candidates to assess the success of the campaign described in Q6a). Assessment was better than in previous series.

One response that gained maximum marks as use of data was made to add credence to the evaluation:

'The promotional campaign used by Paradise Wildlife Park was, considering the amount of money spent, very successful as they spent £200,000 but a third was on leaflets where the success could be measured as they had to bring the code on the back of the leaflet to get a discount. It was effective as 7,500 leaflets were brought in the first month

alone, showing success. The technique of joining Gurkana (sic) was effective as they got free promotion through stories about animals so promoting the park in national newspapers. The only downside to that was what the papers said was out of the parks control. The campaign was very successful as they had the busiest March ever in 16 years. It was also effective for families with young children because 62% of people came in and used the 2 for 1 offer with their child showing that lots of families with small children did visit the park. Group-on vouchers were very popular as all 1000 tickets sold within 26 hours of the deal being launched, although the park did not get much money for each group-on ticket they did get some and it was still effective marketing.'

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