



General Certificate of Education

Travel and Tourism 8651/8653/8656/8659

TT05 Marketing in Travel and Tourism

Report on the Examination

2008 examination - June series

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GENERIC COMMENTS

This was the fifth paper set in Unit 5, Marketing in Travel and Tourism. Overall, candidates' performance remained consistent in relation to previous papers.

What was particularly good

1. The majority of candidates attempted all of the questions and there were few rubric errors.
2. Candidates showed a reasonable level of knowledge of the specification and there were no areas where the majority of centres had failed to cover the required content.
3. A number of candidates highlighted key words and commands on the question paper. This enabled them to remain focused on the specific requirement of the question.
4. A significant number of candidates used appropriate case studies where required, and many of these were in considerable depth.
5. It was evident that the majority of candidates had a good general understanding of the case study, suggesting that they had spent a considerable amount of time studying the pre-release material.
6. The majority of candidates had a good understanding about the structure of Butlins as a business organisation.

What was not so good

1. A number of candidates clearly had limited understanding of some of the key terminology used in the questions, especially 'product', 'market segment', 'marketing objective', 'primary research' and 'marketing strategy'.
2. Candidates did not always respond to particular commands and frequently offered simple description when the question demanded explanation or evaluation.
3. A number of candidates appeared to have spent limited time studying the pre-release material and consequently were not able to express any real understanding of a number of the questions.
4. A number of candidates showed limited awareness of the importance of well documented case studies. In some cases examples used were superficial and showed limited depth of knowledge.

QUESTION 1

(a) The majority of candidates used the data in the resource booklet effectively to describe the major holiday trends of UK residents, often quoting specific changes in great detail. While this was an important part of the question it did not fully address the marketing aspect and very few candidates went on to link the changes to the way that they may have affected marketing decisions. Those that did generally produced thoughtful and comprehensive responses.

(b) This question demanded an element of judgement in terms of what might be considered the major 'product features' of a present day Butlins resort.

There were three main approaches to the question. Firstly, a number of candidates simply copied as many features as they could find in the resources. This 'listing' approach offered very limited relative judgement and was consequently self-limiting. The second approach was to consider the core business that of family holidays and consequently to identify the features linked to them as the main products. This approach often provided a useful avenue for candidates and gave them the opportunity to develop thoughtful responses. The final approach, taken by very few candidates, was to see Butlins as a diversifying business with a changing market and this reflected a changing importance of 'product factors'. This was a sophisticated way to consider the question and led to a small number of excellent responses.

(c) The majority of candidates showed a clear understanding of how tourism is a changing industry and the need for companies to respond to changing customer demands. This theme was considered in many cases by describing the major changes that Butlins had instigated in recent years. Those candidates who developed this idea further by linking it with ideas about the competitive nature of the tourism industry and the rapidly changing expectations of customers often did quite well. Very few candidates developed the idea fully by considering how adaptation may be a significant factor in the long term sustainability of the company.

QUESTION 2

(a) It was evident that many candidates had only a limited understanding (or none) of 'market segment' and were not able to fully access the question. Those that did appreciate the terminology generally did well, using the resources effectively to identify key aspects of the organisation that related to the chosen market segment.

(b) Candidates generally showed a good understanding of the importance of both 'place' and 'price' in relation to Butlins' marketing strategy.

The quality of responses was generally directly related to how well candidates knew the resources. Those who had clearly spent time studying the resources in detail were able to develop detailed responses, often using specific quotes to support their ideas. This often provided a very successful avenue of approach.

QUESTION 3

(a) Understanding of the term 'marketing objective' was variable and often candidates identified quite vague ideas which were not always appropriate. Those candidates who focused on specific, simple objectives (increasing visitor numbers, etc) generally did well. Justification of adjectives beyond 'increasing profit', were limited.

(b) Candidates generally appreciated the importance of measurable marketing objectives in relation to the success of the business but were not always fully able to express their ideas in any detail. Consequently, many candidates offered vague comments about 'seeing how well they are doing'. While this approach was able to show an awareness of the question it was often slightly self-limiting.

(c) The majority of candidates showed a good general understanding of the question and were able to express the importance of evaluating marketing decisions in an ever changing market. Many candidates developed this theme by making observations about how companies use a range of marketing methods and how they need to assess which methods may be more successful. A small number of candidates extended this idea by considering issues of resource allocation and business sustainability, often producing very thoughtful responses.

QUESTION 4

(a) The majority of candidates appeared to understand the term 'primary research' and were able to make observations about the potential advantages of primary research methods. The most popular ideas centred around cost, reliability and the idea of getting 'up to date and focused' information.

(b) Responses to this question were variable, largely depending upon the level of understanding of the original questionnaire. It was clear that many candidates had not really studied the original document to any great extent and had not picked up that it was a 'day visitors' questionnaire. Consequently points about overnight accommodation, etc were clearly irrelevant.

Many of the suggested questions were too vague or general and consequently were not appropriate. Also, they did not always reflect the style of the original questionnaire. A number of candidates suggested questions that were already on the original questionnaires – again showing a lack of preparation in relation to the pre-release information.

(c) The majority of candidates showed a sound understanding of why feedback might be important to the ongoing success of Butlins. The most common approach was to see feedback as a way of identifying and rectifying problems and consequently improving customer service. However, more sophisticated avenues of approach were also considered, including the use of feedback to assess the relative value of different marketing techniques and consequently how this might be linked to future resource allocation decisions.

QUESTION 5

The majority of candidates used the resources effectively to identify and describe the customer loyalty scheme in operation at Butlins, or to suggest other ways that Butlins might encourage repeat custom. The reasons why Butlins encourage repeat custom were not always fully explored; often comments such as ‘to get more profit’, etc were used, with only marginal development.

A small number of candidates did offer more detailed observations, explaining how repeat custom provides a secure core for the business and why this is a fundamental part of the overall sustainability of the company.

QUESTION 6

Virtually all of the candidates were able to identify a travel or tourism organisation and describe the range of promotional activities carried out by their chosen organisation. In many cases the description was very detailed, often considering joint promotions between different companies. Evaluation was more variable. It was evident that a number of candidates did not fully appreciate what was required and consequently failed to offer any real evaluative observations. Those that did often made quite detailed observations about how effective promotional activities had been or considered the relative merit of different types of promotion.

QUESTION 7

The majority of candidates showed some awareness of what was meant by ‘economic’ and ‘technological’ factors, but did not always consider them in terms of ‘external’ factors. Those candidates that fully appreciated the external nature of these factors often produced excellent responses. A number of candidates brought in the current issues of fuel and food price rises leading to a fall in disposable incomes and points about the ‘credit crunch’ and the impact of exchange rates on decision making. This was very impressive and showed a mature and thoughtful level of awareness of current events.

Suggestions for teachers to prepare future TT05 candidates

1. Candidates should be encouraged to develop an understanding of the key ideas and terminology expressed in the specification, since questions are frequently formed around the key ideas.
2. Teachers should ensure that candidates have a number of appropriate case studies at their command.
3. Candidates should be encouraged to identify and develop their understanding of the key ideas expressed in the pre-release material.
4. Past examination papers and mark schemes should be used to:
 - alert candidates to the style and layout of questions
 - ensure that candidates have an awareness of the range of commands used and what each command requires
 - appreciate the expected level of understanding and knowledge required
 - understand the concept of levels marking and appreciate what is required of a basic, clear and detailed response.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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