



General Certificate of Education

Travel and Tourism

8651/8653/8656/8657/8659

TT05 Marketing in Travel and Tourism

Report on the Examination

2009 examination - June series

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General Comments

What was particularly good

1. Candidates gave detailed answers to most questions and very few lost marks by not attempting a question. On the whole the quality of answers was better than last year.
2. More candidates had learned about the promotional strategies used by their chosen travel and tourism organisation, although greater knowledge of specific campaigns is expected.
3. Candidates had studied appropriate examples of travel and tourism organisations. It was evident that in most cases they had visited them and been given an informative talk from a member of staff.

What was not so good

1. Stereotyping of all "old people" as being unable to cope with internet booking or an automated telephone system (or even incapable of hearing it).
2. Candidates' knowledge of market segments for their chosen travel and tourism organisation was insufficient.

Question 1

Candidates answered well when choosing two key results from the rail passenger questionnaire, but needed to express the significance of the results for Virgin Trains with regard to the company's efforts to improve the quality of their passengers' on-train experience.

Many candidates chose a focus group as an alternative method of market research to compare with the questionnaire. They were able to describe it well and consider its merits. The quality of comparison between the two methods was quite low and only those who made a clear comparison between criteria (such as cost or the quality of the data obtained) were able to gain the higher marks. Methods like "observation" and "survey" were not well answered but it was quite possible to gain full marks by considering a secondary data method.

Question 2

This question was mostly answered well. Candidates needed to consider at least three factors to give a range, and needed to outline each, rather than simply list them.

Question 3

The terms *viral marketing* and *press release* are all part of the *promotions mix* and (along with other terms like *advertising* or *direct mailing*) are not individually itemised in the specification. However, candidates were fore-warned because the pre-release booklet was available from 1st May. Despite this, very few showed understanding of how either technique works, which suggests that teachers had not interpreted the terms sufficiently for them (or had not advised their candidates to find out what they were). Of the two techniques, the *press release* is a very common means of marketing and candidates are expected in every examination to have good understanding of how it works.

Question 4

The best answers to this question came from candidates who appreciated that the activities that can be conducted while travelling were a key theme of this year's pre-release booklet on how Virgin Trains is marketed. Virgin Trains and other Train Operating Companies are striving to improve the quality of the passenger's experience by converting travel time into useful time. Candidates earned marks for explaining how travel is being made safer and how the journey time is being reduced, but the more direct answers about ways in which the quality of the customer experience was enhanced were well-rewarded.

Question 5

Candidates who describe the advantages of using the internet or any other booking method as 'easier', 'quicker' or 'cheaper' need to justify their answers. It is not obvious why this is so, unless the candidate explains, for example, how time or money are saved.

Candidates often wrote good answers weighing up whether the new methods of obtaining train tickets were more beneficial for the organisation or its customers. They have evaluative skills, yet these were rarely seen later in questions 6(b) and 7(a).

Question 6

It was expected that candidates would know details about how the travel and tourism organisation they had studied segments its market, as was the case in answers to a similar question a few years ago. However, very few could express how this was done except in the simplest manner, such as *families with children / teenagers / elderly*. Thankfully, some candidates referred to a division into social classes or to the life cycle of the family.

While many candidates had some appreciation of the advantages of carrying out market segmentation, it remains frustrating that some continue to believe that a travel and tourism organisation should try to appeal to all segments. Teachers might counter this misconception by referring to products which their students typically buy, like magazines or tickets to gigs. Candidates should readily appreciate that it would be a waste of time and money trying to market such products to other segments of the market.

Question 7

Nearly all candidates earned some marks by relating the promotional campaign 'First Class Comes as Standard' to Virgin's objectives but very few even attempted a proper evaluation. An obvious consideration would be whether the cost of the campaign was greater than the revenue Virgin gained, or whether in the future standard-class passengers would continue to buy first-class tickets.

Candidates earned few marks for general answers to question 7(c). They needed to explain a *specific* promotional campaign run by the travel and tourism organisation. Those who did often knew details about when the campaign ran, its aim, which segment of the market it was aimed at, the nature of the TV advert or deal etc. One or two candidates could even comment on how successful the campaign had been.

Question 8

Candidates were asked how Virgin Trains might overcome the lower perceived price of car, plane and coach travel. Ideas which would cost a great deal of money such as offering lower fares were not in keeping with the key theme of the pre-release booklet (i.e. the opportunity to

use travel time productively and how Virgin Trains have improved the quality of the customer's experience during a journey). Ideas emphasising the improved travel experience were favoured, although candidates who would highlight the superior environmental credentials of rail travel were also well rewarded.

Suggestions for teachers to prepare future candidates

1. Candidates need to be guided carefully through the TT05 pre-release booklet so that it may be interpreted for them. In this case, the marketing methods of press release and viral marketing were neglected.
2. The published mark scheme for this examination should be studied to show candidates how a press release serves as a useful marketing tool.
3. Candidates should learn about topics in Marketing beyond the pre-release booklet, too. For example, they should learn about a range of market research methods. Then, if the pre-release booklet includes a questionnaire, candidates could be asked how an alternative market research method could be used instead.
4. AIDA is on the specification. It is a useful tool and is recommended as a means of analysing advertising material.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.