



EXAMINER'S REPORT

AUGUST 2002

MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS

Question 1

This question had two parts: one was to discuss the nature and role of attitudes and the second to look at the strategic issue of how marketing communicators influence customers' attitudes and behaviours through persuasive efforts. There were some excellent answers particularly to the second half of the question where candidates examined tools of influence and the influence process. Weak answers gave a general communication model and made a poor attempt at showing how attitudes are formed or changed. It was expected that candidates would look at the nature of persuasion with particular emphasis on the elaboration likelihood model.

Question 2

It was expected that answers to this question would include a brief discussion of means end chains focusing on the linkages between attributes of products, consequences of these attributes for the consumer and the personal values that the consequences reinforce. This should have led to an outline of advertising applications of means end chains. Finally there should have been a full discussion on the MECCAS model. Very good answers linked the concept of means end chains and the application to advertising through the MECCAS model. Some candidates only concentrated on the MECCAS model and gave a definitional style answer to each of the components. Very weak answers showed no knowledge of the MECCAS model and tended to concentrate on the creative brief.

Question 3

This was a very badly answered question with most candidates showing a very poor knowledge of public relations and its activities. Answers should have included a brief discussion on Grunnicg's theory of how public relations works followed by an application of the possible functions and activities that could be used by a community group. It was surprising how few people included publicity as part of the activities of public relations. Most candidates gave some discussion of proactive and reactive MPR with virtually no application to the activities that could be used by a community group.

Question 4

This was a surprisingly poorly answered question with some excellent exceptions. Generally candidates failed to discuss functions of an integrated marketing communications agency. There was virtually no discussion or comparison between a full service agency versus a specialist

option. Structure was usually addressed by brief mention of a media, creative, client service department with no discussion of interaction or how the agency works with the client.

Question 5

There were mixed answers to this questions, some candidates showed very good broad knowledge of media planning process. Other candidates concentrated on a narrow aspect of media strategy such as objectives and gave very detailed answers which were excellent but not appropriate to the question asked. Answers should have concentrated on how the media planning process aids decisions related to media strategy and not on singular variables connected to media strategy. Media planning involves coordination of three levels of strategy formulations: marketing strategy, advertising strategy and media strategy. Each of these should have been examined in the context of media planning.

Question 6

Some candidates chose to answer this question by listing various sales promotion techniques and defining them. These tended to be weak answers which failed to address the objective of the sales promotion. Answers should have addressed marketers' objectives such as trial, retrial and purchase behaviour in relation to consumer rewards. Consumers would not be responsive to sales promotions unless there was something in it for them. Candidates should have then examined the classification of sales promotion methods in terms of its marketing objective simultaneously with its consumer reward.

Question 7

This was a very poorly answered question where there was little display of knowledge of how to measure advertising effectiveness. Some candidates simply described why they liked a particular campaign which was entirely inappropriate. Few candidates looked at media research in determining the effectiveness of the campaign. Some of the better answers concentrated on recognition and recall and on measures of emotions. While there are dozens of measures for dealing with advertising effectiveness candidates should have looked at some of the most popular measures and related these to a particular campaign.

Question 8

A very general and personal approach was taken to answering this question with discussions ranging from favourite sites to a description of a specific company site. It was expected that candidates would look at issues such as interactivity and how the internet differs from traditional media and its contribution to building brand strategy. Other areas that should have been examined are the internets ability to deliver content, to stimulating response from click through to final purchase, the development of the website from an information model to a transaction model and finally the opportunity to build marketing relationships on the internet.