

Examiner's Report

January 2010

GCE

GCE Travel & Tourism (6996/01)

Unit 10 - Promotions and Sales in Travel & Tourism

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6996: Promotions and Sales in Travel and Tourism

General Comments

The paper followed the format of a question and answer booklet. Candidates were required to respond in the spaces provided. There were 5 questions and 90 marks were available.

The questions related only 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 analyse 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. Overall analysis throughout was very poor and the main area of weakness on most papers.

Marks were **not deducted** for poor spelling, punctuation and grammar.

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;

Outlining features and benefits

This is when you describe to the customer the features and benefits of the service/goods you are selling to them and tailor this to their needs and wants.

Overcoming Objectives

This stage is when the customer's comments and dislikes will be answered and overcome such as someone disliking the size of the rooms and the agent saying they are cheaper and more modern.

After-sales service

This is when the company looks after the customers after they have bought the product so they feel they are receiving a quality service and will use it again e.g. sending champagne to the customers room before they arrive.

Q1(b) This is an AO2 question so application as well as knowledge is what is being tested. All too often candidates could come up with a relevant skill but then gave a generic explanation rather than referring specifically and consistently to the customer type provided. Or in other instances they come up with 'be friendly' which in this circumstance is a weak skill to then explain.

One response that did score 6 marks:

Family with small children

Good communication skills:

Reena will need good communication skills as the family are nervous about travelling and don't know what to expect so therefore she can reassure them and explain to them so they feel more confident.

Woman wanting a cruise

Computer skills:

As this lady has been on five cruises already she will know exactly what she wants so Reena needs to be quick on the computer to book the product required.

Q1(c)

The vast majority of candidates scored the five or six marks here. They were able to identify a feature and explain why it met the needs. However where candidates tended to lose marks was when they just rewrote the description in the extract without reference to the customer wants.

A typical answer that scored maximum marks can be seen below:

Feature 1. Upper class check in and security channel

Explanation:

This would ensure an easy check in and security clearance so meeting the needs as there would be no queue.

Feature 2. Seat flipping into bed

Explanation:

This would meet his needs as it would give him a luxury experience for his overnight flight. The bed is the biggest bed in business class so should be comfortable and luxurious.

Question 2.

Q2(a) This question was generally well answered and it appeared candidates fully understood the difference between primary and secondary research. One response that received maximum marks:

Advantage: Quicker as you don't have to go out into the field to conduct the research as someone has already done it.

Disadvantage: May not be specific for what you are wanting to find out and sometimes depending on who has done the research it may be biased to one side.

Q2(b) This question tended to divide candidates. Often candidates slipped into description of the park against the four Ps listed. If they did not explain and merely described, this limited the number of marks that could be awarded. Other candidates talked about what the park could do rather than what it does do or have and again this restricted the number of marks that could be awarded.

For maximum marks candidates needed to refer to the park objectives outlined.

This is a question that centres could practice with candidates, emphasizing the importance of reading the question carefully and fully appreciating what is being asked of them before answering. Generally though this question scored more highly than in previous series.

Below is an answer where the candidate scored full marks for Place and Product but then lost marks in Price and particularly Promotion due to lack of detail. The comment made under Price was extremely valid and a little more explanation would have enabled the extra mark to be awarded. Note that candidates scored when referring to the loyalty scheme either in Price or Promotion as there is cross over here:

Place: It is situated in a place that is very accessible to a number of motorway routes. This works for the park as school groups mainly travel by coach and therefore it will be easier for them to get there which will increase the number of school group visitors, one of their objectives.

Price: Their pricing works against the park as the tickets are always the same price. There could be a lower price at certain times to achieve the objective of extending the season.

Product: Works well for the park as it specializes in the conservation of big cats meaning school groups will be attracted as the children enjoy seeing the big cats as well as learning about conservation. This will achieve the objective of increasing the number of school groups.

Promotion: Works against the park as local papers won't be seen by as many people so unlikely to be able to extend the season.

Q2c)

This was a question that was specifically structured to get candidates to give their suggestions and then a full justification. Those candidates who stuck with this format scored well. However a large number of candidates often used the justification section to describe their suggestion further rather than to provide justification which resulted in them losing valuable marks.

An answer that scored maximum marks despite further description in the justification section can be seen below:

Suggestion 1: Direct Marketing

Justification: They could send mail shots or emails to regional schools to attract them. This would help raise awareness and improve school visitation rates.

Suggestion 2: Sales Promotion

Justification: To attract the school groups the park should offer discounts to visiting groups which would encourage schools as it is more affordable.

Question 3.

Q3(a)

This was a suggestion and justification question. Quite often candidates gave long descriptions with no justification. Often there was a lot of repetition between suggestion 1 and suggestion 2 so it was impossible to credit both. Other candidates gave descriptions without reference to the 'credit crunch' and in these cases application to the scenario set was weak and again marks were lost. However many candidates scored well here using the information provided to fully justify their detailed suggestions. See answer below that scored seven marks out of eight. The justification of the direct marketing suggestion was a little weak.

- 1. Sales Promotion - people have less disposable income due to the credit crunch and as holidays are seen as a luxury they are usually the first thing people cut back on. Offering sales promotions such as booking before a certain time to receive a discount or free flights, they are all incentives to persuade people to still book as they will be saving money by going with them over anyone else.*

2. *Direct Marketing* - they could segment their market and then send out brochures to the postcodes where most of their customers come from which highlight that everything is included in the price therefore it is very good value for money and also highlighting cheap prices within the brochure possibly comparing them with other tour operator prices.

Q3(b)

This was generally a poorly answered question with most candidates only scoring two out of the available four marks. Most candidates were able to describe either website development or data bases. Often there was a mixture of description and explanation, both were credited. However a large number chose TV advertising as their second technological development that had occurred over the last 15 years! Candidates were credited if they talked about the starting of specific stations like the Thomas Cook TV channel. However they were not credited for talking about TV advertising in general. The answer below received full marks.

1. *Organisations can use the internet to promote which can have their website with online booking, a faster way to buy holidays/services.*
2. *Virtual tours can now be seen before buying the holiday because the product is intangible now the customer can see it beforehand.*

Question 4

Q4(a) This is a question that has appeared on several past papers but it was disappointing to see how few candidates took the opportunity to gain an easy 5 or 6 marks here. One answer that did score maximum marks can be seen below:

Sponsorship: Is when an organization pays someone else to promote their organization. For example a tour operator sponsors a football team who promotes their logo on their ground in return.

Sales Promotion: is usually a short term method of promotion and is when an organization offers special deals, discounts for a limited time e.g free child prices or free insurance until the end of February.

Public Relations: is usually a free way of promotion and is when an organization for example emails a newspaper about a goodwill story (say a travel agency helps a school with a project) hoping it will be published.

Q4(b)

This was generally a well answered question. The vast majority of candidates chose families with small children or expectant mums as their target market. The division in marks came with the second part to this question. If candidates merely described by repeating parts of the extract this limited their marks. Those that explained how specific products or services would meet the needs of the family gained maximum marks. One such answer can be seen below:

Target market: Families - expecting or with small children

Explanation: The hotel has a lot that would benefit a family. A nursery is provided for example which would give the parents time to relax as the child can go there. If the mother is pregnant or has just had a child she could visit the spa that

specializes in maternity and post pregnancy treatments. Also there are interconnecting rooms for families meaning they can stay closer together.

Q4ci)

All candidates scored the mark available here. Most chose leaflets as their promotional material.

Q4cii)

If candidates explained here then they did gain maximum marks. However if they merely described - *'I would put bright colours, have a logo'* then this restricted their marks. An example of explanation can be seen below:

'Leaflets can be placed everywhere for people to pick up and read: supermarkets, doctors, travel agents, shops, nurseries because these are all places where families can go on a daily basis and are more likely to see the leaflet and hopefully pick it up and book.'

Q4ciii)

This question was not well answered in most cases. Candidates were told on the question paper how their answer would be scored so it was disappointing to see so many marks lost.

Target marketing was not usually an issue as candidates were good at referring to families and using images of the target market.

Information was not always there. Often there were no contact details, maps or prices.

Presentation again was sometimes weak. Promotional language was often not used and there was no slogan. Most marks were obtained for use of logo and appropriate pictures.

Question 5

Q5a)

This is a question that appears regularly. However this time to help candidates the question was structured. 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 refer to just one piece of promotional material or to all of the marketing undertaken by an organization, then this restricts the number of marks that can be awarded to two.

The question then asked the candidate to name two of the promotional techniques that the organization used. The candidates who did this scored two marks. However a sizeable number 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 many candidates 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.

Q5b)

This part of the question asks candidates to assess the success of the campaign described in Q5a). Assessment was weak.

This question should give candidates time to study and research on their own with just some guidance from you. It would be best to pick a short lived campaign that uses a variety of promotional techniques and or materials so candidates can look at how each of these fitted in with the campaign to produce maximum awareness to the maximum number of the target market.

For the description of the campaign candidates get two marks for referring to the techniques used, two marks for materials and two marks for where or when the materials were used.

For the assessment candidates should think how they are going to assess. What are they going to judge? Is it how many people came? How much money was made? How the relevant target markets were or were not reached?

**GCE Travel & Tourism Grade Boundaries
Series - January 2010**

Unit 1: The Travel and Tourism Industry (6987)

Grade	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	62	55	48	41	35
Uniform boundary mark	80	70	60	50	40

Unit 2: The Travel and Tourism Customer (6988)

Grade	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	46	40	34	29	24
Uniform boundary mark	80	70	60	50	40

Unit 3: Destination Europe (6989)

Grade	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	46	40	34	29	24
Uniform boundary mark	80	70	60	50	40

Unit 4: Destination Britain (6990)

Grade	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	45	39	33	28	23
Uniform boundary mark	80	70	60	50	40

Unit 5: Travelling Safely (6991)

Grade	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	62	54	47	40	33
Uniform boundary mark	80	70	60	50	40

Unit 6: Resort Operation (6992)

Grade	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	46	40	35	30	25
Uniform boundary mark	80	70	60	50	40

Unit 7: Responsible Tourism (6993)

Grade	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	63	56	49	42	35
Uniform boundary mark	80	70	60	50	40

Unit 8: Current Issues in Travel and Tourism (6994)

Grade	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	48	42	36	30	24
Uniform boundary mark	80	70	60	50	40

Unit 9: Working in Travel and Tourism (6995)

Grade	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	48	42	36	30	25
Uniform boundary mark	80	70	60	50	40

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

Grade	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	63	55	47	40	33
Uniform boundary mark	80	70	60	50	40

Unit 11: Special Interest Holidays (6997)

Grade	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	48	42	36	30	24
Uniform boundary mark	80	70	60	50	40

Unit 12: Travel Organisations (6998 01)

Grade	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	46	40	34	29	24
Uniform boundary mark	80	70	60	50	40

Notes

Maximum Mark (Raw): the mark corresponding to the sum total of the marks shown on the mark scheme.

Boundary Mark: the minimum mark required by a candidate to qualify for a given grade.

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