

Examiners' Report/
Principal Examiner Feedback

January 2013

GCE Travel and Tourism (6996)
Paper 01 Promotion & Sales

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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 four marks available for this question. It is an AO1 question and candidates who had studied the stages involved in the sales process outlined in the specification scored well. A response that scored full marks can be seen below:

'Establish rapport'

This is where the seller tries to make the customer feel at ease and confident with the seller. This may be done by shaking hands, offering a seat or drink. This is the introductory stage.

'Closing a sale'

The second to last stage of the sales process and involves getting the customer to commit to booking a holiday. This can be done by getting the customer to fill out a booking form and pay for the product/service.

Q1(b)

This question required candidates to explain why providing good after-sales service can influence buyer behaviour. Some candidates continued to describe what this stage involves rather than to explain how it can influence buyer behaviour. Providing a description of the process was not answering the question. A response that gained the two marks available was:

By providing good after sales service it shows that you care about the customer. Therefore, they are more likely to buy from your company again as they know they will receive good service, also they may recommend your company to others and therefore the company will make more money.

Q1(c)

Many candidates scored well here. Those who did not tended to provide answers related to products rather than explaining why they thought the promotional material used would attract the market segment they identified. For example, some candidates chose families for ci) but then provided an answer related to free ice cream for the children and free drinks for the adults.

A response that scored the full six marks available can be seen below:

Q1(c)(i) Families

Families would be attracted to the idea of a free upgrade to all-inclusive because it means there is more on offer. Also they are the segment most likely to benefit from free upgrades during the summer holidays because this is the time that most families travel in order to prevent their children missing school

Q1(c)(ii) Older people

The reason why I think the advertisements would attract older people is because they have time to read through the travel sections. They will also be likely to be fairly wealthy with fewer commitments and could be looking to get away from the bad weather in February.

Question 2

Q2(a)

This was another AO1 question. Those candidates who had studied the definitions of terms outlined in the specification scored well on this question.

Q2(b)

A similar question has appeared in previous exam series. However some candidates are still making mistakes that cost them marks. Some are explaining rather than describing which can limit marks; for example;

'Sponsorship is not an advert but it is a very good promotional technique as people see it all the time when a programme starts or finishes.'

This explanation does not provide evidence that the candidate really understands what sponsorship is.

One response that scored the full six marks available:

Personal selling

Can be face to face or over the phone. The seller is working with the customer/buyer to try and interest them in holiday/products. It is important with personal selling that the seller emphasises good body language and persuasive skills with the customer.

Displays

Displays are there to attract the customer and catch their eye. Often used in the window of travel agents especially when there are certain offers/deals available as they are likely to catch the attention of the buyer. Often bright and eye catching.

Sponsorship

This is where a company pays another organisation which is very much in the public eye (seen by many) to advertise their product. For example TUI sponsor Tottenham Hotspur and therefore this football team has TUI written on their team shirts.

Please note as this is a travel and tourism paper candidates cannot be credited when they provide examples outside of this industry.

Q2(c)

Candidates did score well on this question with most scoring at least two out of the available three marks for each section. However there was often a lot of repetition between product and place which did limit marks. If candidates provided more examples from chain of distribution for place, this repetition would have been avoided. Too many candidates are still providing information on what they would introduce for Flybe rather than applying the information provided in the scenario and again this limited the marks that could be awarded.

A response that was awarded the full 12 marks available:

Product

Allocated seats are good for both business and incoming tourists as it is a more efficient service which is what business people want. Also the economy plus seat packages appeal to business travellers with the executive lounges they can use to work in when waiting for their flight.

Price

The low cost flights on so many routes will help increase the number of incoming visitors from Europe. It also offers extra free baggage allowance and free flight changes which will appeal to business travellers needing to change itineraries or carry extra equipment.

Place

Flybe offers over 200 routes across 13 countries in Europe. This is good as they are likely to fulfil their aim to get people from Europe travelling to the

UK. However a lot of their city breaks are to destinations overseas e.g. Paris and therefore not attracting people to the UK. The website booking point is good for business people who are likely to be regularly connected to the internet.

Promotion

By advertising in newspapers business people are likely to see this and be interested and with a link to their website this will be ideal for business people. The website looks UK focused (in English) so it may be difficult for incoming tourists to see it and book on it. Facebook and Twitter are worldwide so incoming tourists may get information that way.

Question 3

Q3(a)

This question was a good differentiator. Candidates who had studied the difference between promotional techniques and promotional materials were able to use their knowledge to score well here. However, those who did not understand the difference scored less well. Too often responses consisted of '25% discount' and 'free book' which combined was worth just one mark as both are examples of the same promotional technique – sales promotion. Another common error was to provide a generic description of sales promotion or direct marketing and not describe how the promotional technique was being used by the National Trust in this example.

One response that scored maximum marks;

Q3(a)(i)

Direct marketing. This means that the National Trust has sent a mailing direct to Mr Gray making the customer feel valued by the business.

Sales Promotion. This is a time limited offer which is designed to increase sales due to the value for money 25% discount they are offering.

3(a)(ii)

Direct Marketing

As the National Trust is already aware that this particular gentleman is a keen conservationist being a member of the organisation they are able to promote more products and services at him and know they will be of interest to him. Direct marketing is a way of ensuring that the customers that are targeted are likely to be influenced by the promotion making the promotion more cost effective.

Q3(b)

This question was another good differentiator. Many candidates just lifted sections from the stem, often verbatim, which limited marks to mark band 1. In addition descriptive answers also scored mark band 1 marks. This was a challenging question and it did allow some candidates to really show their

knowledge and analytical skills. One response that scored marks from the top end of mark band 2:

We have recently entered a double dip recession and therefore all businesses are finding it hard to trade in this economic climate. By Kuoni removing their offer they have ensured that travel agents do not go bust and therefore by the tour operator removing their discount the competition are working together and therefore both businesses will benefit. Kuoni have realised that if they support travel agents the two organisations can form partnerships and promote each other's services instead of the organisations competing against one another.

In these economic times customers are always looking for the cheapest deals and by tour operators removing their discounts the customers have a choice so both organisations can benefit. Also if the two organisations didn't agree to cut offers the two organisations would keep raising their discounts to gain more market share which would mean less profit and maybe both companies going bust.

This response (above) did contain some repetition which did restrict marks to mark band 2. If they had included reference to sharing promotional costs or talked more about the return of so many customers to the safety of travel agents currently, then this would have been sufficient to put the marks into the top mark band.

Question 4

Q4(a)

There was quite a bit of overlap between the two suggestions made by candidates in a number of instances and this restricted the marks that could be awarded. For example, one candidate suggested a discount for Families with young children and a two-for-one offer for adults for the evening events. Again, some candidates talked about introducing new products when the question specifically asked for a promotional technique/material.

However, most candidates scored well on this question and were able to provide reasoning in their justification.

One response scoring the 10 marks available:

Customer type: Families with young children

A sales promotion of one child is free with two paying adults promoted at local toddler groups

The sales promotion would attract the family market as they will get better value for money with two paying adults as their child can go free. By handing out these offers at local toddler groups the promotion will effectively reach the target market of families with young children as many local families go to these sessions.

Customer type: Adults for the evening events

A radio advert at 8.30am on regional radio channels such as Capital FM

Many adults are driving to work at around 8.30 in the morning and by putting on adverts at this time the radio advert will effectively reach the target market therefore train enthusiasts will hear the advert and then go and book tickets for the adult events such as wine and beer tasting. The advert will reach the target market and therefore be effective.

Q4(b)

The vast majority of candidates scored the two marks available for this.

Responses were normally similar to the one below:

The questionnaire undertaken by NVR about NVR customers as NVR has carried out its own research into its customers as opposed to analysing the secondary data from the local museum.

Q4(c)

Too many candidates provided questionnaire type answers for this question – telephone questionnaire, survey etc which meant they did not score any marks.

However most were able to describe another method of market research that NVR could use:

A focus group of different types of customers that visit the NVR who can give their opinions on the NVR and things they like and dislike about the NVR and why they visit the NVR

Question 5

Q5(a)

Candidates were generally able to use the information to choose from the information provided to suggest a promotional campaign. They were less likely to give dates/months of when they would use the materials which restricted marks. Some candidates failed to read the instructions and started to answer Q5(b) in Q5(a). However, generally candidates scored 3 - 4 marks here.

Q5(b)

This question was a big differentiator. Many candidates struggled to explain their reasoning behind the campaign they had chosen for Q5(a).

However one response that scored 6 out of the 8 marks available can be seen below:

Advertisement in specialist magazines is more likely to attract people with more money (socio economic class A/B) and therefore they are more willing to pay more money for luxury items. Ballroom dancing is often associated with people with more money who like luxury products/services. Newspaper adverts in both the national papers, The Sun and The Sunday Times are likely to attract a large number of people willing to pay more as they are nationally read (all over the UK) and therefore people are willing to pay more to travel to the destination for a luxury experience. The taster day for journalists will increase their brand awareness and the reputation of the organisation.

Question 6

Q6(a)

This question allows candidates to demonstrate their research skills. The question varied from previous series as the promotional campaign described had to be aimed at either business travellers or teenagers. The emphasis in this question is on description and on describing a promotional campaign. Too many candidates are still describing an advertisement which is not a campaign. In addition, some candidates did not read the question properly and instead of describing a promotional campaign they had researched, they described materials that might attract either the business or teenage market segment.

However, this is one response that scored the full 6 marks available:

The Alton Towers Easter Campaign 2012

The techniques that Alton Towers used to attract teenagers were advertising, sales promotion and direct marketing.

The TV advert showed teenagers going in a group to Alton Towers with their friends, on rides which would appeal to teenagers. The advert was on TV around 5pm when teenagers are back from school.

The sales promotion was for every three under 18s that book, one person is free. Teenagers often don't have much money so this appealed as it was good value for money.

The direct mail was sent out to existing customers under 18 and had the promotional offer and images of all the attractions at Alton Towers. It was sent in February attracting early bookers.

Q6(b)

This question required candidates to suggest how the promotional campaign they had described in Q6(a) could be adapted to appeal to a different target market. Too many candidates focused on the changes they would make to the product/service being offered rather than the promotional campaign.

However one response that gained high mark band 2 marks can be seen below:

Families with young children

Alton Towers is generally perceived for teenagers as many of the rides and activities provided are extremely scary. For Alton Towers to attract young children the TV advert must show less scary activities and target more TV or film characters such as 'The Mickey Mouse ride.' With high colours, graphics and these famous characters it is likely to appeal to a younger audience who will encourage their parents to take them there. Families are also likely to respond to discounts or price drops. This is known as sales promotion and it could be used in order to attract families. Families generally have lower disposable income and therefore lower prices are likely to appeal to them.

This question should give candidates time to study and research on their own with just some guidance from the teacher/lecturer. Please be aware candidates should research and study a range of promotional campaigns aimed at a variety of market segments.

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