

Examiners' Report/  
Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2013

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

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Publications Code UA035418

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## **Grade Boundaries**

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## **General Comments**

The paper followed the format of a question and answer booklet. Students 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. Students therefore needed to demonstrate knowledge and understanding and skills in vocationally related contexts. Students need to apply knowledge and understanding of the specified content and of related skills in vocationally-related contexts. Students need to use appropriate research techniques to obtain information to assess vocationally related issues and problems. Finally students were required to evaluate information to make reasoned judgements, draw conclusions and make recommendations about vocationally related issues and problems.

Most students attempted all questions and consequently they picked up marks across the paper.

## **Question 1**

### **Q1(a)**

There were four marks available for this question and on average students scored three out of the four marks. It is an AO1 question and students 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;

'Determine customer needs and expectations

This is the second stage of the sales process, getting to know what the customer wants. Questions should be asked to gain information such as date, destination, party number. Open questions should be asked.'

'Outline features and benefits

Three to four things should be chosen to highlight to and interest the customer. An explanation should be given as to why they meet the customer's needs. E.g. ensure safety of children to parents and meals and drinks all included.'

Often where lower marks were given, the answer was vague. For example;

'Determining needs and expectations can be done by simply asking the customer 'How can I help you? You need to make sure the customer is comfortable to ask questions and answer them.'

This answer had too many cross-overs with the first stage of establish rapport.

### **Q1(b)**

This was a slight change to the format from previous years. Students needed to explain how someone skilled in overcoming objections could influence buyer behaviour.

This was a differentiating question. Some students did not read the question properly, or just could not cope with the change of format and simply described this part of the sales process. One response that gained the two marks available:

'Overcoming objections can influence buyer behaviour as if the customer raises concerns the seller can minimise these by turning their concern into a positive. An example may be an objection to early flights, however, the seller can emphasise the extra time the customer will have in resort.'

### **Q1c) (i) (ii)**

In this question students needed to identify two different market segments who would be attracted by two different marketing materials. More students scored maximum marks for correctly identifying business people for (ci). The advert in the monthly newspaper, (cii), caused more concerns. Some students simply suggested adults, which really is not sufficiently detailed. One response that scored maximum marks:

'Business people. With the head office located nearby, these people would require a hotel for staff from further away locations to stay whilst doing their business related to head office. A conference room could be a necessity for meetings.

Domestic Tourists. When these tourists have seen an attraction/event they want to see in Bristol in the magazine, then they will be looking for somewhere to stay such as Reena Patel's hotel.'

## **Question 2**

### **Q2a) (i)**

This question was testing AO2. The scenario provided concerned Mark Jones who owned a small farm. He was experiencing negative feedback from some of his visitors and was going to look at visitor numbers and sales figures from Easter last year and compare them to this year. The question asked students to explain how this market research could be useful. This question proved to be a good differentiator between students. Some really did not understand the difference between different types of market research, stating that looking at sales figures would enable Mark to understand exactly what had been happening with different staff members. Others provided generic answers rather than related to the scenario given in the question.

One response that scored the maximum three marks available;

'This could be useful to Mark as he could find out the amount of visitors that he had come last year compared with this Easter which will help him to find out if there was an increase which will result in him finding a solution such as maybe having more staff available.'

### **Q2a) (ii)**

Again if students had studied and learned about different market research methods and their advantages and disadvantages in different situations they did well in this question. However too many times easy marks were lost as students did not seem to know what information can be gained by looking at sales figures and visitor numbers.

One response gaining maximum marks;

'This is not useful to Mark as it does not provide in depth information as to why people said staff have little time for customers. He will be just looking whether there is an increase/decrease not why there is an increase/decrease.'

### **Q2(b)**

The vast majority of students scored full marks for this question. Customer survey questionnaires is one type of market research most seemed to know and understand.

A typical response;

'An advantage of using questionnaires is that Mark will get a clear insight into what customers want and expect from the farm, this will help him change and improve it. A disadvantage of using questionnaires is that it costs money to make them and print them and if the questions are badly designed customers can give misleading information.'

## **Question 3**

### **Q3a) (i) (ii) (iii) (iv)**

This question was a differentiator. Many students scored well here and could apply the scenario provided to their answers and explain how they might help or hinder the Eden Project reach their objectives. However other students struggled and confused the P's providing answers for Promotion that should have been seen under Product.

One answer that received the full 12 marks available:

Promotion

'Through advertising through the website I think this is likely to increase the number of families from across the UK visiting the Eden Project. The discount offered is likely to work for the Eden Project to meet the first of the two objectives (increase the number of families from across the UK travelling to the Eden Project by public transport). But I feel there is little promotion outside of the UK working against the Eden Project when trying to attract more incoming tourists from France.'

Place

Location is ideal to increase the number of families from the UK due to it being situated 3 miles from the train station which is on the mainline from London. It is also accessible to tourists from France by ferry. Buses and cycle routes make it more accessible for green travel.

Price

The fact that children up to 16 years are free if they come by public transport will incentivise families to try and visit without their cars. Families from France are likely to book tickets online and therefore will receive a 10% discount.

Product

The cultural events may be of particular interest to incoming tourists looking for something different and the play areas, trails and free workshops for children will attract families.'

### **Q3(b)**

As always the analysis questions are good differentiators between students. Some students are very descriptive in their responses therefore restricting marks that can be awarded. Others looked at environmental issues in travel and tourism generally and did not consider promotional activities so therefore they did not answer the question.

One response that scored 3 marks;

'Environmental factors have affected promotional activities within travel and tourism because some areas in the industry like hotels and places of interest to certain people have changed and started to benefit the environment. More and more travel agents and tour operators have started to use technology to promote different things. Texting is becoming more known to people to promote offers and discounts. Many organisations like Thomson are using texting as a way to let customers know their currency is ready for them. Technology is evolving more and more by creating apps like the Premier Inn has created an app for looking at available rooms in different areas of the UK.'

This response does look at some promotional activities affected by technology and the environment but is not consistent and sometimes looks at operations instead. There is also no link between changing technology and environmental concerns and how organisations promote themselves and their products.

Compare with a response that was awarded 7 marks;

'Environmental issues such as how tourist activities can affect the environment are well known and many people want to avoid this. This encourages travel and tourism organisations to promote responsible eco tourism as an alternative. This can include promoting tourist activities that support locals, this not only meets the rising demand for environmentally friendly holidays but it also creates a positive reputation of an environmentally friendly business and this will be a promotional technique in itself as people will want to be involved with a business like that. Technological factors such as widespread internet usage may encourage travel and tourism organisations to promote themselves online, for example, via emails or online adverts and pop ups. Technology can allow for savings on promotional activities for example loss of printing and distribution costs due to internet promotion.'

## **Question 4**

### **Q4(a)**

This is a question that has appeared on several past papers but it was disappointing to see how few students took the opportunity to gain an easy 5 or 6 marks here. The answers describing direct marketing were often vague with many students confusing target marketing and direct marketing. Personal selling answers often referred incorrectly to 'door to door selling.'

One answer that did score maximum marks can be seen below:

#### Direct Marketing

'Direct marketing is promotions sent straight to the customer through email, letter and text messages. It can be targeted at past customers.

#### Personal selling

This is done face to face for example in a travel agency. This has a personal approach because it is just you and the travel agent having a conversation to help you buy.

#### Displays

This can be a large display for example, in a shop window or exhibition displaying product information.'

#### **Q4b) (i)**

Many students did not score any marks for this question as they could not identify specific promotional techniques used by Disney in their communication.

Student responses included discounts in prices or visual pictures. This did not gain them any marks. They needed to identify the techniques of Sales Promotion and Advertising. More students identified Sales Promotion and therefore gained two of the available four marks. Students could either describe the promotional techniques generically or applied to the Disney communication provided.

One response that gained four marks;

Sales Promotion is used by offering 25% saving on hotel and park ticket  
Advertising in Disney Travel Agent magazine with logo, picture and brief writing.

#### **Q4b) (ii)**

This was better answered with most students gaining 3-4 marks. One four mark response;

'Advertising allows families to see with their own eyes what Disney and Paris is all about. It tells families about the wonderful prices and package holidays included and it also shouts out 'fun' with the use of the visual aids – pictures etc.'

#### **Q4c)**

Many students scored four out of the available six marks. Answers relating to using focus groups were better than those relating to sales figures from another company. This again suggests that students are more confident and knowledgeable about primary market research methods rather than secondary research methods.

One six mark response;

'The use of focus groups of young people is good as it will provide in depth qualitative information about what holiday they want. Focus groups are good because they create a range of information and encourage young people to have their say and opinions. However this may be negative as the group will need a skilled person who will know how to get the information out of the group, which is very time consuming and hard to record the data. The sales figures are quick to access as they are secondary data and patterns and trends can be drawn which provides more data and doesn't cost a lot, it can be easier to measure.'

## Question 5

### Q5a)

This was a question that differentiated between students. Most students who read the question completely scored 4-8 marks. However others obviously did not read the instructions. Some made up their own promotional campaign rather than using the information provided. Common errors;

- Just to use one of the promotional materials suggested so therefore not producing a promotional campaign
- Using very little of the budget outlined for the campaign
- Not providing timescales
- Giving reasons for their choices which is not required at this stage. Hence the instructions to read the whole of question 5 before answering parts (a) and (b).

One response gaining maximum marks;

'First of all there should be an advertisement on  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the page to advertise the new campaign to give people background information of what is happening. This will start in early July. In August another advertisement will be put on  $\frac{1}{4}$  page of the newspaper to advertise the offer for the first 100 people to book as people will be aware of this happening. (£4000). In early August people over 60 will be contacted to tell them what is happening by email (£3000) and also sponsor one Halloween Ball (£2000) Total £9000.

### Q5b)

Most students scored 4-6 marks here. However some missed valuable marks by not fully explaining;

'the regional paper adverts will attract people.'

One answer that received maximum marks:

'I have decided to sponsor the balls at both universities at Halloween so they will know about the company before December. They know in time for the Christmas holidays so they have the option of using BC2L for visiting friends and family at a cheap price.

During August I've used the £1 for the first 100 passengers scheme because it gives them a chance to experience the customer services first hand. They may then tell their friends and family in time for any winter holidays or university breaks. I've also decided to advertise in the newspapers because many over 60 are more likely to read the paper than surf the internet (hence why the database wasn't used). It will be in the paper once a month at the beginning so they are reminded that this service is available.'

## Question 6

### Q6a)

Again this question differentiated between students. Many just explained whether they felt the individual activities would work for Bannockgray Museum, e.g.

'the mail shot to schools will create interest and inform teachers who may bring their group to the museum.'

However the students who scored higher marks looked at the cost of the campaign and then the amount of extra money made and extra visitor numbers and then based their assessment on these outcomes.

One candidate that scored five marks;

'The outcomes clearly show that although they had to spend £4750 they actually had £10,000 worth of extra income which may well have been the result from the group discounts, advertisements and 10% discount. There was also a 10% increase in student numbers so again we can see that they successfully reached their objectives of increasing the number of school groups visiting as there was a rise in profits and increase in school students.'

### **Q6b)**

This question was not well answered. Many students ignored the question and just wrote about adverts they had seen for travel and tourism organisations. Previous examiner reports have advised candidates to study a range of promotional campaigns.

One response that scored five marks;

'Organisations target customers differently due to the product/service they offer. For instance some may be niche markets and some may be mass market. If we use Easyjet as an example, they offer national services in the UK and Europe only because they are a budget airline whereas British Airways targets customers internationally because they fly all over the world. Some destinations such as British Heritage museums only target locals because transport access is scarce and poor whereas some such as Shakespeare theatre is targeted internationally because its in London, the capital city, has great accessibility and is well known around the world. These are reasons why travel and tourism organisations target customers locally, nationally and internationally.'

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