

# Consumer-Focused Marketing Mix

by Sophia



## WHAT'S COVERED

How does a business handle external marketing forces? Specifically, how do they handle those forces that relate directly to the consumer? The consumer is the one who's going to buy your product, so you need to find a way to make sure that the consumer is going to want to pick your product, as opposed to somebody else's. This tutorial will cover the consumer-focused marketing mix, introducing the 4 C's. Our discussion breaks down as follows:

1. [The 4 C's](#)
2. [The 4 C's vs. the 4 P's](#)

## 1. The 4 C's

The 4 C's is a type of marketing mix that is consumer-focused: how is my product fulfilling the wants and needs of the consumer better than my competition?

The 4 C's model focuses on:

- Customer's needs and wants
- Convenience
- Cost to the user
- Communication

The 4 C's model shows that the customer's needs and wants are quite important. If you're not meeting the customer's needs and wants, you're not making the right product. It is also important to consider the convenience. Is it easy to buy? Is it easy to find? Is it easy to sell? Is it easy to service? Also, how do you communicate with the customer to make sure that they're getting the information they need in order to purchase your product?

This model demands that businesses think like their customers. Realistically, you could have the best product in the world, but if you think that way without also thinking about who is actually buying your product, then you put yourself at a distinct disadvantage.

You need to look at marketing your product not necessarily with the logistics of moving it from place to place but from a customer's point of view. What are those things that the customer expects? What will fulfill those wants and needs, and convince customers to buy your product, from their point of view?

## 2. The 4 C's vs. the 4 P's

Now, by comparing the 4 C's and the 4 P's, we're extending our view beyond things that are under our direct control as a business.

If you recall, the 4 P's model focused on things that were internal to a business:

- Product
- Price
- Place
- Promotion

By bringing in the 4 C's as a comparison, we are taking a look at it from the other side. How does a customer see those things, and how are we, as a business, fulfilling them from the customer's point of view?

4 P's vs. 4 C's	Description
Product vs. Consumer Needs and Wants	The consumer has to want or need the product in order for you to even have a chance in the marketplace. You could have the best product out there, but if it doesn't meet those basic wants and needs from the consumer, you might as well not even make it, because the people will not want to buy it.
Place vs. Convenience	In the modern world, consumers can buy goods without leaving their home, so for many companies, place may be an outdated descriptor. It is more important that the purchasing process be simple and intuitive. Is it easy for the customer to go and get it, or order it online? If your website is too complicated, or your business is too far out of the way or in a place where people don't want to go, then consumers will have to work to get it. Unless it's an incredible want or an amazing need, people simply won't bother to go out of their way to find something. Consumers like things that are easy.
Price vs. Cost to the User	A product also has to be at the right price. If you price your product too high, then consumers will simply substitute that product for something else that fulfills that same want and need. Another possible consequence of too-high pricing is that the consumer simply may not want it anymore or may not have the ability to pay for it. At that point, your product just sits on the shelf, and if it sits on the shelf, you're not generating sales. If you're not generating sales, you're out of business.

Promotion vs. Communication	<p>Promotion can be one-sided, with the company appearing to have too much control over price and availability of the promotion. Communication conveys a two-sided dialogue, where the company is cooperative with the consumer and provides any information they need to make an informed purchase.</p> <p>How do you communicate to the consumer what your product is, what the cost is, and where they can find it?</p>
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#### THINK ABOUT IT

How many of you love getting phone calls from telemarketers? Well, telemarketing can be effective.

However, in order for it to be effective, the consumer has to actually listen to the sales pitch on the phone. If the consumer doesn't listen to the sales pitch, it's not communicating to the customer, and all of the effort put forth for product, place, and price simply goes out the window. If you have a commercial that's incredibly annoying, people will silence it, or fast-forward, or change the channel. Again, you're not promoting your product because you're not communicating.

It's also important to make sure that you hit the right demographics. If, for instance, you make a commercial that's aimed for a younger crowd, but your product is intended for a different age group, it's not going to be effective.

⇒ **EXAMPLE** Suppose you are promoting a denture cream, but you want to advertise it on MTV. That would be the wrong place to put it. There's not a lot of people watching MTV who need denture cream, so you are not communicating to your consumer.

Any advertisement has to be in the right place; it must be something the consumer is willing to listen to, and it must inform them about the product, the place, and the price.



#### SUMMARY

Today we learned about **the 4 C's**, which is the consumer-focused marketing mix that focuses on the customer needs and wants, the convenience to the customer, the cost to that end user, and finally, the communication used to inform them about the other three.

We also compared **the 4 C's vs. the 4 P's**. Whereas the 4 P's focus on controllable factors that are internal to the business, the 4 C's focus on the consumer. And let's face it--we have no control over the consumer.

Good luck!

Source: adapted from sophia instructor james howard