

# Understanding Marketing Orientation

## Introduction

In this exercise, you are required to identify which Marketing Orientation/Philosophy (see list of orientation in the questions below) that each firm most appears to follow, based on the statement that they have made on the way that they focus and operate in their particular organization.

## Discussion of Different Orientations for Ten Firms

1. "It's an old saying, but it's true – 'build a better mouse-trap and the world will beat a path to your door'. And that's exactly what we do! Our products are always being enhanced and improved upon and, quite simply, they're the best on the market."
2. "We're very focused on understanding our customers and meeting their needs. And you have to be. For example, 30 years ago our firm used to manufacture typewriters – well nobody buys them anymore. Therefore, to be successful you have to adapt and fortunately our whole firm is committed to that goal. And it's working, last year we achieved both record profits and record customer satisfaction scores."
3. "We're an importer of various products that are suited to direct marketing promotion. In particular, we are heavy users of late-night TV info-commercials. Our approach is simple – find fun, novelty or self-improvement products from overseas, import them, and them effectively promote them."
4. "In today's world, running a successful business is quite a complex challenge. It's a real balancing act to constantly provide a fair return to our shareholders, whilst meeting the ever-changing needs of the consumers. And we also do this within our requirements of working with environmentally-friendly technology and materials, as well as giving something back to the community. But it's a challenge that we really enjoy."
5. "At our firm, we are very cost-focused, and we have worked hard to become a lean organization. We believe that if we can make and distribute our products very efficiently, then we can always sell cheaper than our competitors, and hence we will sell more and make more money."
6. The Body Shop is a large retail chain throughout many countries. As part of their business philosophy, they will only deal with 'ethical' suppliers (for instance, ones that have fair employment practices). It is also important to them that they contribute to good causes and that their products are environmentally friendly.

7. Some companies are very focused on innovation and technological break-throughs. And some will even disregard poor market research concept test results if they really believe in their product. These firms understand that new technology often takes time to be adopted by consumers. (For instance, mobile phones were initially only adopted by businesses, and much later by consumers.) Therefore, they create a great product first, and then they try and create a market.
8. The Salvation Army is a high-profile charity that helps thousands of people annually through its many programs and various forms of support. However, to provide such extensive support, they need significant donations from individuals and businesses. Therefore, throughout the year they conduct many fund-raising lunches with business people, have significant direct marketing programs in place, generate significant amounts of publicity, and even conduct advertising.
9. For many years, there has been a trend of manufacturing firms deciding to physically produce their goods internationally, in countries where labor costs are significantly lower (such as China, India, Mexico). This trend is now extending to basic services as well. A good example is the firms in India that provide 'outsourced' telephone call-center services to large companies, such as banks and insurance companies. These Indian call-centers firms often win their new business primarily on the basis of offering a low price. Therefore, they continually focus on containing costs and improving efficiency in order to grow their business.
10. Burger's Galore is an organization that gathers a lot of information regarding its service levels and how their customers perceive them. Their corporate culture is highly customer focused and they work hard to meet the changing needs of the market.

### **Student Discussion Questions**

1. Which marketing orientation/philosophy does each organization most appear to follow? (Choose from the following list.)

Production Concept  
Product Concept  
Sales/Promotion Concept  
Marketing Concept  
Societal Marketing Concept

2. Do you think that there is one best marketing orientation/philosophy that firms should follow?