

## What is Marketing?

### Introduction

Our task in this exercise is to construct our own definition of marketing. To assist you with this task, a number of different views and perceptions of marketing have been presented below.

Therefore, your first task in this activity is to firstly review the various views/definitions of marketing in the conversation below. Then see if you can come up with your own definition of marketing (based on some of these views and your general understanding of marketing).

**IMPORTANT:** Try not to use a standard textbook definition – instead, see if you can construct a suitable definition of marketing in your own words.

### A Discussion of What Marketing is All About

- Vicki:** To me the answer is pretty straightforward – marketing is all about working out how you can get consumers to buy more products from your firm.
- Susie:** That's fine, but how do you actually do that? I think marketing is the various tasks that you undertake to get consumers to buy more, such as having special offers and developing great new products.
- Natalie:** But is it just about getting people to buy more? For instance, McDonald's could get people to buy more Big Macs if they started selling them for only \$1 – I'm not sure that they would really want to do that.
- Paul:** No, they wouldn't – they would want to increase profits, not sales. That's why in their marketing they train their staff and continuously open more stores, which have lots of seating and parking, as well as having playgrounds and drive-thrus. At McDonald's, their marketing all about convenience and service.
- Mitchell:** Sure, McDonald's do all that, but they focus on value as well. For just \$6 you can get a burger combo. So, I think that a key part of marketing is having a low price. Jay: But hang on a bit, there are firms that like to charge high prices. For example, with an expensive restaurant, having high prices is a sign of the quality of the food and their service.
- Mike:** And those types of restaurants don't even need to advertise. They gain new customers through their reputation and word-of-mouth.
- Bianca:** You know what you're talking about is having a strong brand. That's what I think marketing is all about. A good example is BMW. Their cars are a status symbol, so people are willing to pay more to own one.

**Barry:** So, what you're saying is the key to marketing is lots of advertising in order to build a strong brand so consumers will pay more and buy more.

**Julie:** But isn't it more than just advertising? To build a strong brand, don't you need to start with a good product first? There's no point advertising something that people won't buy again. So, I think marketing starts with a good product.

**Charlie:** But to have a good product, you first must understand the customer and their needs. If you do that right, then you know what products they want, how much they will pay, and how to advertise. So, I think the key to marketing is truly understanding the consumer and meeting their needs.

### **Student Discussion Questions**

1. What are the key points about marketing highlighted in the above conversation?
2. What other points do you think should be included?
3. Therefore, how would you define marketing?
4. How similar/different are the marketing definitions constructed by your fellow students?