

The Impact of the European Marketing Actions Over the Quality of Romanian Police Services

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Abstract: Romanian police, as a public institution, offers the community services referring to the protection of fundamental rights and liberties of the person, of private and public property, prevention and finding the crimes, respect for public peace and order, lawfully established. The functioning of the institution and ensuring these services involve certain costs, supported by the citizens who contribute to the budget by paying taxes. Integrating marketing in the activities of the institution represents an objective necessity, meant to ensure an optimum promotion of the services offered by the Police. Marketing of public services concentrate on reputation – the result of what you do, you say and the others say about you. The practice of public relations puts the stress on the reputation, in order to get understanding and support, as well as to influence the opinions and the behavior of the beneficiaries of the respective services.

Keywords: reforms; police services; social marketing; strategies

1. The Services of the Police among the Public Services

The public sector is confronts with a big number of challenges and has to respond to a great number of necessities and request from the society (OECD, 1993; OECD, 1995; OECD, 2000). Because of the challenges and pressures, the public sector is subject to some large reforms (OECD, 2001, p.6).

„In the last decades, there have been considerable reforms in the public administration. Even if there have been reforms before, the changes since 1980 were different because of their political characteristics which differentiate them from the technical changes or e-mail in the last quarter of the century” (Pollit & Bouckaert, 2000, p. 196).

The administrations in the Member States of the European Union do not represent a homogeneous group of institutions and the same rule applies for the reform processes these institutions undergo and which are divergent enough. The European view represents a mixture of systems. As Ridley says: „Of course Europe’s countries, affected by different historical conditions, have not only

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different forms of public organization, but also distinct philosophies regarding the values public servants should observe and the roles they should enact in a democratic state. There are more methods to establish the public function in a democratic system, not only in detail, but regarding the fundamental orientations, too. It does not exist a stable model/pattern at European level". Indeed, different member states of the European Union have faced the challenges in different ways. Nevertheless, these reforms are characterized by the introduction of new principles and common justifications, based more and more on efficiency and efficiency, on the attention to transparency and responsibility, awareness regarding the services offered by the public service and the role, respectively the place of the citizen/client. Many countries have initiated actions to put the citizens in the centre of attention.

Christopher Pollitt and Geert Bockaert describe this tendency as being a passing from the producer's perspective to the point of view of the citizen/ client. The dynamic method of involving all citizens / clients of public services in order to improve the perceptions, expectations and commitment, was a specific strategy frequently used to obtain a satisfactory level of quality of public services.

The citizen/client, represents at this moment the most important priority (if not the only one) of the member states of the European Union. This has been illustrated by the results of the enquiry realized in 2007 among the member state during the Portuguese presidency..

2. Marketing of Public Services

Has the field in the tertiary sector characterized by heterogeneity, intangibility and inseparability from the provider, which lead to the appearance of some specific methods and techniques (Palmer, 1994). As the tertiary sector and its marketing developed, it led to a delimitation of separate domains, now flourishing, such as: financial marketing, transports marketing etc.

The services marketing have as particular features: interdisciplinary, unity in diversity, high level of complexity which gives specificity especially for the marketing mix.

The social marketing, characteristic to non productive or non commercial sectors, which do not involve merchandising and profit, or put in another way, *nonprofit activities*, has appeared in the 8th decade by expanding marketing in the extra economic domains and includes all that is beyond the economy's sphere. (Lovelock, 1991, p. 98)

Introducing this concept in the circuit of ideas belongs to Ph. Kotler and G. Zaltman, who had (especially Kotler) an essential contribution to the delimitation

of the sphere, highlighting the particularities of this domain of marketing and in defining and elaboration, application and control of the programs, watching the increase of adhesion to an idea, a cause or a social behavior, inside one or more groups taken into consideration.

It, the social marketing, uses the segmentation of the market, marketing studies, values concepts such as communication, facilities, stimuli, theory of exchange, to get a maximum of reaction from the target groups (Kotler, 1991, p. 523)

Since 1969 already, Ph. Kotler and S. Levy suggested that marketing should be expanded also in the non productive organizations, and W. Lazer pleaded for the recognition of the social dimension of marketing, for its application in the activity of museums, social causes, religious or political organizations etc. In 1971, Ph. Kotler and G. Zaltman introduce the notion of „social marketing” (Social marketing, an approach to planned social change, in *Journal of Marketing*, July, 1971). In 1972 already is organized at the University of Illinois the National Conference of Social Marketing and in Bruxelles (1975) the first International Congress of Social Marketing, where the first of the definitions was uttered.

For the end of this millennium, confronted on one side with big problems resulting in deepening of the „tensions” between the limited resources and the ever increasing needs determined by the unprecedented birth rate and, on the other hands by the considerable development of the non productive sector, which reflects the high level of civilization and progress, a rational administration of social actions appears as an imperative necessity, with a possible solution in social marketing. It has the purpose to ensure the knowledge of requests of a certain nature from the social environment, in order to find the best solutions.

Social marketing has heterogeneous sphere, because it refers to domains that are very diverse and are represented by *public institutions (governmental organisms)* or private (private organizations) from: education, culture, art, sports, religion, public health, leisure time, politics (the most important component being called electoral marketing), ecology, etc., or *charitable organizations* that imply the development of some programmes meant to support and enforce social causes and ideas such as: donations for disadvantaged persons (philanthropy), the fight against pollution, alcoholism, discrimination etc., causes that are usually sustained by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) which are humanitarian, civic, ecologic, protection of human rights a.o. (Hoffman & Bateson, 1997, p. 134)

The importance such domains of human activity have in modern society has lead to a diversification and specialization of marketing according to the specific conditions of each domain, the experience accumulated and their own problems they have to solve in order to reach a natural development.

This has taken shape in the differentiation of the objectives, of the methods and techniques of investigation and action on the market. Consequently has already been enforced: eco-marketing, educational marketing, public health marketing, electoral, cultural, sports, traffic marketing etc.

Any non-profit organization has to delimit clearly its *purposes for action* on one hand, which offers the possibility to establish specific measurable objectives for the organization, and on the other hand *the image purposes* by which it become known by the public, the mass media, and the beneficiaries. Also the organization has to ensure a certain *position* within the community, this depending on the ability to create an impact especially by clarifying its mission. In order to do this, the organization has to identify the needs of the community where it wants to deploy the activity, to find solutions to solve them, know the competitors, elaborate the message by which can express a position, then test it to find out if it will be supported.

Certainly, the objectives of non-profit organizations are complex, considering the large specter of domains of activity, these aiming places, ideas, organizations. The extent to which the objectives are reached cannot be measured strictly in financial terms, as these take shape into: popularization of some social causes, improvement of public attitude, encouraging donations and contributions, highlighting and consolidating some social attitudes, distribution of ideas and information, communicating opinions, attempts to change behavior (e.g. campaigns favoring family planning, fighting against smoking, alcoholism, drug abuse), modifying beliefs (e.g. conviction for liberalization of abortion), actions that attempt to change convictions (e.g. campaigns favoring women's rights, ethnic and religious tolerance, protection of endangered species), determining occasional actions (e.g. campaign for mass immunization) etc.

The objectives have to be defined clearly from the beginning in order to be received correctly by all categories of public involved: government, beneficiaries, donors, community, volunteers etc.

Non-profit organizations, by the programmes they run, identify themselves with organizations that offer services to the community. This is why have to be taken into consideration the four *characteristics* that differentiate services from products and impose to marketing series of particularities which can be found in social marketing: intangibility, variability, inseparability, perishability. Especially these characteristics imprint to social marketing certain particularities in the use of marketing mix.

A specific feature of non-profit marketing is that it addresses two categories of persons: beneficiaries (clients of the organization) and stakeholders. This implies on one hand that have to be identified and evaluated the consumers' needs as well as the public in the community, in order to define the unique niche of the

organization, the interested target group. The consequence will be the delimitation of the generic objective of the organization by setting the services that satisfy best the needs of the client, which will contribute to the increase of social well being in the community. On the other hand, non-profit marketing regards the identification of potential stakeholders, knowledge of their problems and their intentions, keeping relations of a special kind between the donors and non-profit organizations.

As the success of the activities in these organizations cannot be appreciated by the profit obtained, the role of the marketing stands in emphasizing those characteristics, proprieties, qualities that are representative for the organization, whose activity has to be client/beneficiary oriented. In the competition for donations and grants only the organizations which satisfy the requests of the clients have chances to survive. As a consequence, non-profit marketing becomes more sophisticated, more complex, as each and every segment of the market has to be approached using specific terms. This comes to confirm again what experience has demonstrated that, on long term, have been successful only the organizations which have adopted their decisions based on the wishes and needs of the clients.

The universal significance of marketing encouraged the promotion of knowledge and marketing instruments, their penetration in different domains, dissemination of the experience accumulated in theory and practice as well. A significant contribution in this respect has been brought by the institutions and organisms specialized in marketing, within each country and at international level as well.

Promoting marketing at large by every means proves to be an action of maximum acuteness as are hardly predictable some evolutions of factors which act as catalysts for ambiguous situations in different markets. Enterprises cannot carry on effective activities without a complete knowledge of the present situation and of the different tendencies on the market, without a capitalization of their opportunities on short and long term, subordinating the whole activity to the marketing vision.

The Necessity of Using Marketing for Police Services

The evolution of marketing theory and practice reveals increasing interest, private and public, expressed by more and more organizations from different domains of activity and different countries of the world, more or less developed, for internalizing and applying the marketing vision, considered the key of their success in the present and for the future.

It is more and more frequently affirmed in the last decades, that the secret of the competitive success of organizations is implementing the marketing vision which offers the best perspectives in reaching the supreme goal of their activity.

The marketing vision combines the process of adopting at the whole organization's scale of the philosophy of marketing with the functional capacities to meet the consumers' necessities, so as the pre-known market is the one to determine the characteristics of the product and the ways to trade it. In the same time, the producer creates only the goods and services requested by the consumer.

So is realized the objective of marketing activity about which the great American specialist Peter Druker says that „is the one that makes selling redundant. The goal is to know and understand the client so well that the product or the service fits his needs and sells itself”.

In modern vision, marketing is an essential activity of the company, its sphere being extremely wide, regarding the integration of the research results in all phases of the life circuit of a product, which starts and ends with the consumer.

Marketing is focused not only on trade activities; it also regards a series of activities before and after trading.

Transposition into reality of the marketing vision means a transformation of general ideas and principles into actions, programs and problem solutions, by creating a frame to allow changes in the rapports between the activities carried on in the company, its functions, implementation of a system, for programming, guidance and control of activity, as well as establishing the objectives, politics and strategies of marketing, including an adequate structural organization.

Certainly, intuition/instinct, ability, imagination, creative thinking etc. have an important role in conducting and organizing the activity of marketing, but all these have to be based on solid theoretical and practical knowledge, on understanding the principles, methods and techniques of marketing that can be applied with best results in specific conditions of socio-economic practice.

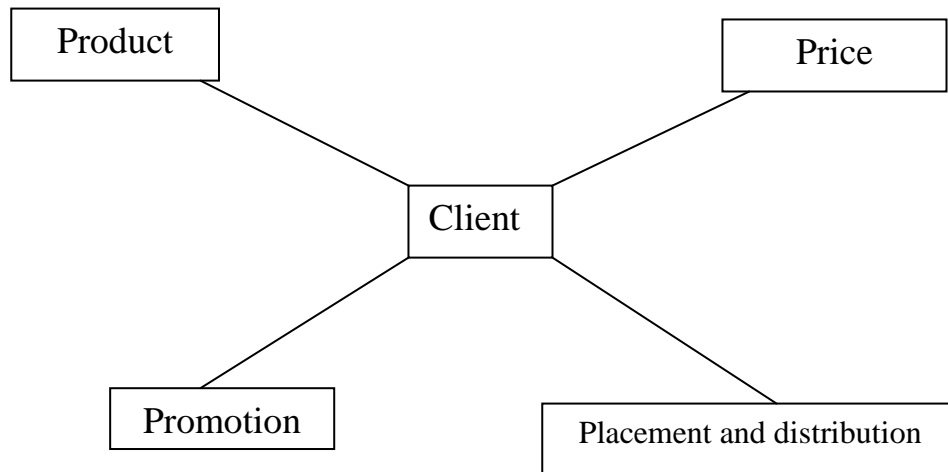


Figure 1. Essence of the marketing vision

Applying the marketing vision excludes empiricism, routine, the use of improvisation this being the reason why the penetration of marketing knowledge in economy and in the contemporary social political life is so important, contributing to an accelerate development at every level.

The need for marketing is different from an organization to another, according to the characteristics of the markets where these work, but one thing is for sure, as much the enterprises delay to absorb marketing, as much their situation will aggravate. This is a long process because it involves „transformation of strategies and plans of marketing in actions of marketing, with the goal to reach the objectives.” (Kotler & Andreasen, 1991, p. 757)

Even if at present marketing politics and practices are well known and applied in numerous domains of activity, one cannot speak about a generalization of the vision of marketing, not even in its origin country, the USA. Even there, many companies, especially small and medium ones, do not base the activity on the marketing principles and the use of its specific techniques. Others use only partially the marketing methodology and technique.

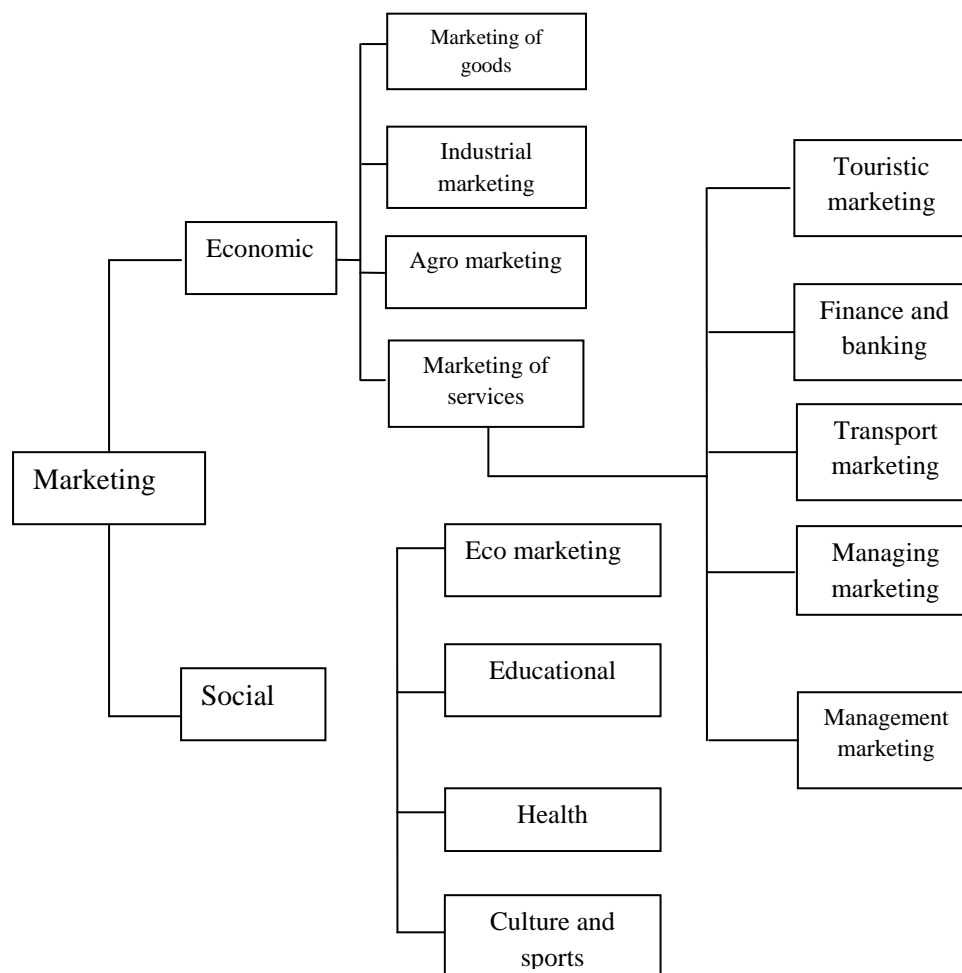


Figure 2. Specialization of marketing according to the objective of the activity

A review of the evolution of marketing highlights in the last decades a permanent tendency of diversification and specialization in certain domains, in various rhythms and proportions determined by the specific conditions of each domain, which conducted to shaping a typology of marketing.

The typology is the result of differentiation in relation with: the specific conditions of the domains of economic and social activity, the experience accumulated, and also some problems that have to be solved for a natural development of each domain. This took shape in the differentiation of objectives, methods and

techniques of investigation and action on the market etc. The delimitation of marketing types may be made using some criteria, which are abundant in the specialized literature. From this multitude we selected a few *criteria* which we consider essential: the objective of the activity, the level of organization of the economy, territorial area etc (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1985, pp. 49 – 50).

Using marketing in the police services

The quality of the services from the Romanian Police, in spite of the numerous strategies existent, the big number of financing programmes, and the insistence of the European Commission, is barely at start, as the statistics prove it.

One of the first steps recommended by the developed countries, to national, regional and local institutions is to identify the profile of the users, the degree of satisfaction they express, the reasons of those who do not use such services. From an analysis of the relation with citizens, have been observed situations when police officers do not show enough solicitude towards them, apply law abusively by forcing the findings and even act incorrectly, the kind of conduct which is incompatible with the status of the police in a EU country. By his activity, the concern of the police officer is to protect the life and integrity of the citizens as well as their other rights and legitimate interests. In this respect it is fully justified the action that enforces the law, bringing the citizens to the understanding that as long as they respect the norms they will not be object to its repressive aspect.

The principle of respect towards the citizens

When fulfilling the job attributions, the police officer must prove respect to the participants in the traffic with who they come in contact.

The principle of solicitude

In any circumstance, the police officer must show solicitude towards the citizens, especially the vulnerable ones (children, women, elder), taking the necessary measures based on the actual situation.

The principle of impartiality

The police officer does not have a plan of findings. During the job s/he has to apply the law on uniform basis, setting identical measures for facts of the same type committed in a similar context. Based on the way the act has been committed, the author's attitude during the stop and the dialogue with him/her, the police officer sets the sanction gradually, between the minim and the maxim limit, corresponding to the given circumstances.

The principle of firmness and incorruptibility

Once the fact ascertained and guilt established without doubt, the police officer has to proceed irreversibly to realize the legal procedure, categorically refusing any kind of propositions of abandonment of the action. In the same time he must warn those who try to stop the legal action about the risk of aggravating their situation by incriminating them as perpetrators of corruption acts, if they insist on abandoning the legal measures.

The principle of total and continuous action

During the job, the police officer has to get wise to any infringement of the law, having the obligation to intervene promptly to solve them according to his/her competence. It is forbidden a passive attitude towards any kind of infraction of the law.

The principle of action at sight

The police officer acting pedestrian or in auto patrols has to be present permanently in the areas s/he is responsible for within the localities or on the routes outside these, by surveillance activities, by supervising the traffic or thematic actions of traffic control creating among the citizens the sense of omnipresence of the Police and by it that of civic security.

The principle of transparency of the activity

Being in the service of the citizen, the activity of the Police has to be on record, which means that the objectives and the way of action of the police crews will be made public through mass media. When the actions are finalized, the results will be briefed taking into consideration the enhanced preventive effect of informing the community from which the offenders come, respecting the right to a public image.

The principle of complementarity

The briefing actions and public relations deployed by the Police will be combined with the effort to inform the public relations structures belonging to other institutions with attributions in enforcing the justice.

The principle of decentralization

Image marketing of police inspectorate of the counties will consider the principles established at central level, emphasizing on decentralizing the decision and execution, based on the particularities of each territorial unit. In the context, the situations of media crisis triggered at local level will be managed firstly by the territorial unit, then, according to their amplitude, will be taken over by the central competent structures.

The principle of difference

Besides the general undifferentiated messages will be elaborated and broadcasted distinct messages according to the informative needs of each target group.

The principle of partnership

The briefings and public relations actions will be deployed with support from the organizations of businessmen, other interested nongovernmental organizations, the representatives of local communities and of the components of the National System of Defense, Public Order and National Security. The application of marketing actions over the quality of the services within the Police in our country will have to take into consideration the following aspects: a marketing vision introduced at all hierarchic and functional levels of the institutions in the public administration will ensure the enhancement of cohesion and effectiveness; the ideas borrowed from marketing will contribute to the promotion of modern organizing structures within the administration in Romania.

The reform in the Romanian Police involves not only a reform of the organizing system, but it is imperious an essential change in attitude and behavior by implementing the marketing optic among the police officers. The Romanian Police reform has to take into consideration the problems of the police officers as a whole. Only the persons with vocation for this profession should be selected and in time, they should be encouraged to improve their abilities by intensive training courses.

3. References

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