

The Effectiveness of Trade Shows and Exhibitions as Organizational Marketing Tool (Analysis of Selected Companies in Mombasa)

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Abstract

Trade shows could not be underestimated as important marketing tools that were able to reach a huge target market at one go. Over the years organized trade shows had provided an even playing field in which small business and large ones came together to determine the trade show effectiveness. The objective of the study was to determine organizations' views towards effectiveness of trade shows and exhibitions as a marketing tool. The problem statement was that most organizations were operating in budgetary constraints and therefore the need to ensure that their objectives were met became critical. Majumder (1996) noted that great issues that marketers were faced with were severe recessions, reduced purchasing power, reduced growth rate, increased competition, consumer awareness and pressure on pricing. Organizations were therefore constantly looking for the lowest cost effective methods to promote their products and services and the effectiveness of trade shows as a marketing platform to meet their objectives was not known. The results of this study was useful to:- potential exhibitors who might wish to use the trade shows for promotion of their products and services, participants to the show who were in a position to determine whether shows were appropriate to ensure that the exhibitions fitted into their overall strategy and exhibition organizers who used the results to formulate strategies that added value to participating organizations and ensured its continued existence. In the literature review summary, trade shows at their most effective could be important marketing tools for business. They were vital parts of the marketing mix as they combined the mass – reach of advertising, the targeting of direct mail, direct selling and the networking benefits of the internet. Shows created a unique environment in which a wide range of sales and marketing objectives were pursued. The shows brought buyers and sellers together to a central location. According to Reeds Exhibitions in new and emerging markets, shows were direct catalyst for industrial and commercial development. They drove industrial development and technology transfer, boosted regional and national industry by providing a shop window for goods and stimulated foreign investment. The survey was carried out using descriptive study. Stratified random sampling method was used in selecting the sample elements. The qualitative data was analyzed using qualitative analysis while SPSS was used to analyze the quantitative data. Qualitative analysis sought to make general statements on how categories of themes of data were related, Mugenda & Mugenda(2003). The population of the study was drawn from firms which had participated in trade shows. The study used semi-structured questionnaires to collect primary data. The instrument was dropped and picked later. The respondents were managers responsible for handling the show activities. The data was presented, analyzed and interpretations given. In findings and conclusions, this study made some contributions to the understanding of the trade shows and exhibitions factors affecting organizational marketing media.

Key words: Effectiveness, Trade shows, exhibitions, organizational marketing tool, promotional mix and Agricultural Society of Kenya

1.0 Background Information

Organizations were today faced with a very dynamic competitive environment that calls for constant and quick responses to ensure survival. Waterman (1997) asserted that the only constant in the business environment was change. Diverse factors such as changing consumer preferences, increased pace of industrialization, technology, innovation and inventions, intense competition and widened markets call for marketers to constantly keep abreast with the happenings around their businesses and adopt strategies that enable their companies remain afloat.

Pearce & Robinson, (1997) observed that for organizations to achieve their goals and objectives, it was critical for them to constantly adjust their strategies to the external environment. Kotler & Armstrong (2004) noted that conducting business in the new digital age called for a new model for marketing strategy and practices. To emphasize this point they quoted that since organizations were sparked by new technologies, particularly the internet, the corporation was undergoing a radical transformation that was nothing less than a new industrial revolution. To survive and thrive in this century, managers called to hard-wire a new set of rules into their brains. The 21st century corporation must adapt itself to management via the web (Byrne, 2000, pp 84 – 96).

Kotler & Armstrong (2004) suggested that the internet was revolutionizing the way we thought about how to construct relationships with suppliers and customers, how to create value for them, and how to make money in the process, in other words, it was revolutionizing marketing (Mitchell, 1999, P.24 – 25). The marketing strategies need to consider changes that take place and the opportunities and threats that keep emerging because marketing decisions made outside the prevailing environmental factors may be detrimental and lead to losses for the company as a result of poorly formulated marketing strategies.

Lyng, (2008) noted that uncertainties in market conditions overtime created risks in sales decisions. Environmental changes could mean the difference between success and failure of an organization. Marketing considerations were among the managers' most important decisions. To both manage market risks and pursue the opportunities available in the market place, strategies had to be formulated. A well – formulated marketing strategy enables the organization to avoid wrong decisions, while taking the correct direction. Marketing strategies were dependent on the situation existing in the market place, thus, were not constant. It was therefore imperative that there was continuous monitoring of the environment and development of strategies in line with the market forces in play for the business to remain successful.

1.1 Research Problem Statement

Marketing strategies needed to consider changes that were taking place with a view to making the right decisions in advancing the objectives of organizations. In this regard, traditional marketing where organizations could control the market and how it disseminated information on its products and services have had an evolutionary change, for instance, customers bought what was close to them and were only able to receive information that was within that market. Organizations were therefore able to effectively control their activities through the traditional 4ps. The turn of events today has seen a great shift in the way of doing business. Customer satisfaction was increasingly becoming a critical area of focus for the modern organization and has seen the approach to marketing change due to the realization that organizations could no longer easily control information. Rather than try to control consumers, organizations had to satisfy them. The current trend in the highly competitive environment was that customers did not want more choices but wanted exactly what they wanted, when, where and how they wanted it (Drucker, 1995).

The changing nature of marketing to suit customer needs and expectations had thus led marketers to looking into the most effective ways of establishing and maintaining customers relations. Craven, (2002) suggested that in a fiercely competitive market place, it was crucial to identify a strategy that drove the customers to you and not to your competitor. Majumder (1996) noted the great issues that marketers were faced with were severe recession, reduced purchasing power, reduced growth rate, increased competition, consumer awareness and pressure on pricing. Under these circumstances, markets had the challenges of coming up with effective and unique promotional activities to assist their firms survive. Trade shows in most cases involved considerable marketing investment by participating organizations. Costs included space rental, design and creation of stands plus displays, communication, networking, travel, accommodation, and promotion literature and give aways to attendees. Given the increasingly competitive environment in which most organizations were operating in and the budgetary constraints they found themselves, the need to ensure that organizational objectives were met became critical. Organizations were constantly looking for the lowest cost effective methods to promote their products and services. The effectiveness of trade shows as a promotion platform to meet the firm's objectives was not known. The proposed study therefore sought to establish whether trade shows and exhibitions were effective promotional tools in meeting objectives of participating organizations.

1.2 Research Objectives

The specific objectives of the study were:-

1. To determine organizations' views towards the effectiveness of trade shows and exhibitions as a marketing tool.
2. To determine whether organizations achieve marketing objectives by participating in trade shows.
3. To determine the factors those influence the participation of organizations in trade shows.

1.3 Research Questions

1. What are the organizations' views on the effectiveness of trade shows and exhibitions as a marketing tool?
2. Do organizations achieve marketing objectives by participating in the trade shows?
3. What are the factors that influence the participation of organizations in trade shows?

1.4 Significance of the study

The results of the study were useful to various groups of people. Potential exhibitors both locally and internationally that might wish to use the trade shows for promotion of their products and services. The findings would assist the organizations to make well-informed decisions about taking a stand at a show. Participants to the shows would be in a position to determine whether the shows were appropriate to ensure that the exhibitions fitted into their overall strategy and assist them to achieve their business objectives.

The trade shows could use the results to formulate strategies that would add value to participating organizations and ensure its continued existence. While the government, its agencies and policy makers might use the results for formulating good national policies for the country in the trade industry. The study was expected to contribute to the existing literature that might be useful as a source of reference to academicians and researchers. It would also be of value as a basis for further research in the area of trade shows and exhibitions in the country.

1.5 Scope of the study

The study concentrated on the trade shows and exhibitions staged in Mombasa for a period of the last 5 years and the base year being 2009.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The literature review examined the studies that had been undertaken and theoretical orientation on factors that influenced organizations to participate in exhibitions and trade shows. An empirical review was done discussing various studies already undertaken, identifying the research gaps and conceptualizing the current study.

2.2 History of trade shows and exhibitions

It was believed that exhibitions or trade fairs began almost 600 years before the birth of Christ. While no precise record was available, the book of Ezekiel (in the Bible) written in 588 BC, contained many references to merchants trading in a "multitude of the kinds of riches with silver, iron, tin and lead". Ezekiel also talked about the city of Tyre which was an important center of trade and commerce. There was also a close connection between fairs and religious celebrations and holy days. The word "Feria" came from the Latin meaning "holy day" and the term was still commonly used to describe what we might otherwise refer to as an exhibition or trade fair. Today, Trade shows & exhibitions provided a forum for companies to display and demonstrate their products to potential buyers who had a special interest in buying those products. The compacted time frame and concentrated location of trade shows were cost-effective for exhibiting companies and convenient for buyers. Trade shows and exhibitions were expensively used as prominent part of marketing strategy. The primary role of trade shows in the marketing strategy was that of a selling medium. Exhibitions provided a natural and nearly perfect plat form for the delivery of solutions to the buyers. There were two different types of trade shows. There was the business-to-business trade shows- whose exhibitions were in the areas of health care, computer products electronics, advertising specialties, heavy equipment, agriculture, fashions, furniture and toys-focus on goods and services within an industry or a specialized part of an industry or a specialized part of an industry. They were targeted to wholesalers and retailers with the intent of pushing products through the channel of distribution. There was the consumer trade shows which also had an industry focus.

They targeted the general public and were designed to stimulate end-user demand. The kinds of products exhibited at that open show included autos, housewares, antiques and crafts. Trade shows ranked second to advertising in the business marketing communications budget for many companies. That was why trade shows had emerged as an important component of business companies' marketing strategies. Trade shows, also known as trade fairs, expositions, scientific/technical conferences, conventions or exhibits, were basically the gathering of an entire industry at a single location at a given point in time. Companies paid for a booth to expose their products and services at the trade show. To many companies, trade shows represented an effective way of doing business because they attracted huge crowds of visitors.

Herbig et al. (1998) reported that whilst companies took on average five sales calls to close a sale if the prospect was found by the salesperson, it took only 0.8 sales calls on average to close a sale if the prospect was found at a trade show. A few other advantages of trade shows for exhibitors included among others, the introduction of new products to a large number of people, the enhancement of goodwill, uncovering of potential customers, promotion of existing products, reinforcement of existing customer relationships, gathering competitors information, general market research, and the improvement of corporate morale. Trade shows were obviously regarded as an important tool of marketing communications, yet relatively few studies had examined the effectiveness of the medium (Hansen 1999). This might be due to the difficulties of isolating the various factors involved in a successful promotion, the great variety of types of exhibitions or the well-established attitudes on the part of exhibitors and non-exhibitors (Blythe, 1999).

2.3 Theoretical Review

Waterman, (1987) noted that in today's business environment, more than any other era before, the only constant was change. Organizations that succeeded in this type of environment were only those that effectively managed change persistently by adapting their processes to conform to the forces of change. The rate and magnitude of changes that affected organizations were increasing dramatically. For instance, e-commerce, economic recession, and mergers. Survival of organizations highly depended on capability of cleverly identifying and adapting to the changes (David, 2005). Kotler (2000) explained that as a result of major societal forces such as technological advances, globalization, regionalization and deregulation the market place was radically changing overtime. According to Stoner et al, (1995) the technological, political, economic and social trends could have major effects on the success or failure of organizations. The constantly changing environment therefore, made it imperative for organizations to continuously adapt their activities in order to succeed (Ansoff, 1987).

Today's consumers were more educated, more inquisitive and more demanding, while on the other hand, products were increasingly becoming complex and specialized. Marketing managers must therefore be sensitive to those dynamics when recommending responses to environmental changes (Stoner et al, 1995). Furthermore, the effects of the marketing environment could be very dramatic and difficult to predict thus affecting a marketer's ability to facilitate exchanges (Pride & Ferrell 2003). Pearce and Robinson (2004) asserted that it was sometimes very difficult to identify the environmental forces because there were so dynamic and interactive to the extent that the impact of one element could not be wholly disassociated from the impact of other elements. Consequently, the role of marketing function in organizations could not be overvalued, as it was crucial for their survival.

2.3.1 Promotion Mix

The strategy that the business used to persuade a person about their products was contained in the marketing communications programme or promotional mix. The communication mix consisted of a set of tools that could be used in different combinations and different degrees of intensity in order to communicate with a target audience. There were five principal marketing communication tools namely, Advertising, Personal selling, Direct marketing, Sales promotion and Public relations, Fill (2002).

The aim of organization's promotional strategy was to bring existing or potential customers from a state of relative unawareness of organization's products to a state of actively adopting them. To generate sales and profits, the benefits of products had to be communicated to customers. Equally, due to continued business competition, firms had to go for product differentiation besides diversification; all those had to be communicated to the customer in one way or another. This was achieved through an effective promotion in any business. Cole, (1996) suggested that the principle methods of doing these were; advertising, personal selling, sales promotion, and publicity.

West (1987) explained that the type of promotion to use depended largely on the nature of the industry and the nature of information. For instance, complex products such as cars required personal selling. While Pride & Ferrell (2003), contended that the organizations objectives, policies and budget influenced the type of promotion elements used in the promotion mix.

2.3.2 Marketing Promotion Mix decisions

Peter & Donnelly, (2004) explained that markets strived for the right mix of promotional elements to ensure that their product was well received. Batra Myers & Aaker (1996) argued that the different elements of the communication mix had to be used in a way that the strengths of one were used to offset the weakness of another. The aim of determining the combination of promotion mix was to ensure that the promotion programme was effective. Peter & Donnelly (2004) enumerated three basic factors that were necessary when devising promotion mix as; the role of promotion in the overall marketing mix, the nature of the product and the nature of the market. They further stated that the promotional mix was likely to change over time, and therefore needed continuous adapting to reflect changes in the market. Jefkins (2000) stated that advertising presented the most persuasive possible selling message to the right prospects for the product or service at the lowest possible cost. Kotler (2003) defined advertising as any paid form of non-personal presentation and promotion of ideals, goods or services by an identified sponsor.

In essence, advertising existed to inform, persuade and remind a buying public of a particular product or service and it did so at a lower cost per head to the organization than personal selling or exhibitions. Trade shows provided the right environment through which exhibitors could advertise their products and services. According to Kotler (2003) personal selling was face-to-face interaction with one or more prospective purchasers for the purpose of making presentations, answering questions and procuring orders. Trade shows and exhibitions were the platforms for personal selling. Direct marketing was one of the latest additional elements to the traditional promotional mix tools. Advances made in the telecommunication sector had then opened new awareness where promotions could be carried out. That new medium incorporated the use of mail, telephone, fax, email, internet and other non-personal contact tools to communicate directly with or solicit response or dialogue from specific customers and prospects, Kotler (2003).

Peter & Donnelly (2004) indicated that sales promotion was an activity that offered customers, sales personnel or resellers a direct inducement for purchase of product. Jefkins (2000) stated that sales promotion covered special promotional schemes usually of limited duration at the point-of-sale or point-of-purchase. Batra et al, (2005), explained that sales promotions were key element in many communication programmes as they induce trial or repurchase where advertising had created awareness and favourable attitudes but failed to stimulate action. Action was elicited by the limited duration the promotion ran using the common communication platforms such as contest, games, sweepstakes, lotteries, premiums, sampling, fairs and trade shows, demonstrations, coupons, rebates, low-interest financing, and trade-in allowance, Kotler (2003). West (1987) explained further that to spend money effectively on promotion, the organization had to understand the following issues; first, the way advertising worked and what it could or could not achieve, secondly, the strategy of the organization and how promotion related to it, thirdly the type of promotional material available which best fitted the organization requirements and fourthly, the way the organization should structure the promotional investment in a particular year. According to Pride & Ferrell (2003) Public Relations was a broad set of communication efforts used to create and maintain favourable relationships between the organization and its stakeholders. Peter & Donnelly, (2004) viewed it as a non-personal form of a communication that sought to influence the attitudes, feelings and opinions of publics about the organization.

Batra, Myers & Aaker (1996) emphasized that more organizations were turning to public relations to reach the hard-to-reach consumers who try to avoid advertising unlike before when it was used as a way to build a corporation's public image. They were of the view that public relations was more credible because it was more subtly delivered compared to advertisements. Jefkins (2000) noted that public relations activities helped to bridge gaps between advertising campaigns and assisted to maintain long-term brand recognition.

2.3.3 Promotion objectives of trade shows and exhibitions

Maitland (1997) advised that it was of paramount importance for a firm to be aware of its goals. He pointed out that an organization should only attend an exhibition if it fitted in with its overall plan and assisted in obtaining set business objectives.

Patten (2001) enumerated some of the marketing objectives that organizations could use to exhibit in shows as; selling more products, launching a new line, finding distributors or outlets in a new territory and finding agents. Others were attracting new market, repositioning ones company in the market, giving support to field agents, collecting feedback on a projected new range of products, re-establishing links with clients whom the organization did not see often and public relations to strengthen the organization's position in the market place.

2.3.4 Factors that influence the choice of trade shows and exhibitions as a method of promotion

The company's choice for the appropriate medium for promotion was very important since the promotional tool was highly dependent on the marketing budget. The firm needed to maximize exposure to the target audience to ensure return to investment. Therefore, the choice of medium used is influenced by a number of factors:-

2.3.4.1 Promotional objectives

The choice of trade shows as a promotional tool was often influenced by the company's promotional objectives. Yeshin (2006) noted that there were a variety of reasons why companies participated in trade shows. Major objectives being building awareness, introducing new products, reach customers cost effectively, generate additional sales, gain information about competitors among others. Exhibitions being a direct face-to-face medium provide a good platform to collect feedback on a projected new product for one could see lots of prospects in a short time, Patten (2001).

2.3.4.2 Nature of the product

The nature of the product either, consumer or industrial played a crucial role in determining participation in trade shows. Maitland (1997) explains that large industrial products could be displayed under controlled conditions. They may also be demonstrated, touched, tested, examined and operated by exhibition attendees.

2.3.4.3 Target market

Reaching the target market effectively was crucial to the marketer. The promotional medium used was therefore highly dependent on how well it was able to reach the target market. Exhibitions were flexible marketing medium in that they represented the market in one place and time. They brought together suppliers, buyers, and the media among others. Exhibitions may be effective if the audience was specialized and targeted effectively.

2.3.4.4 Competitors' behavior

Marketers were constantly looking for ways to find creative ways to separate their promotions from those offered by their competitors.

2.4 Research gaps

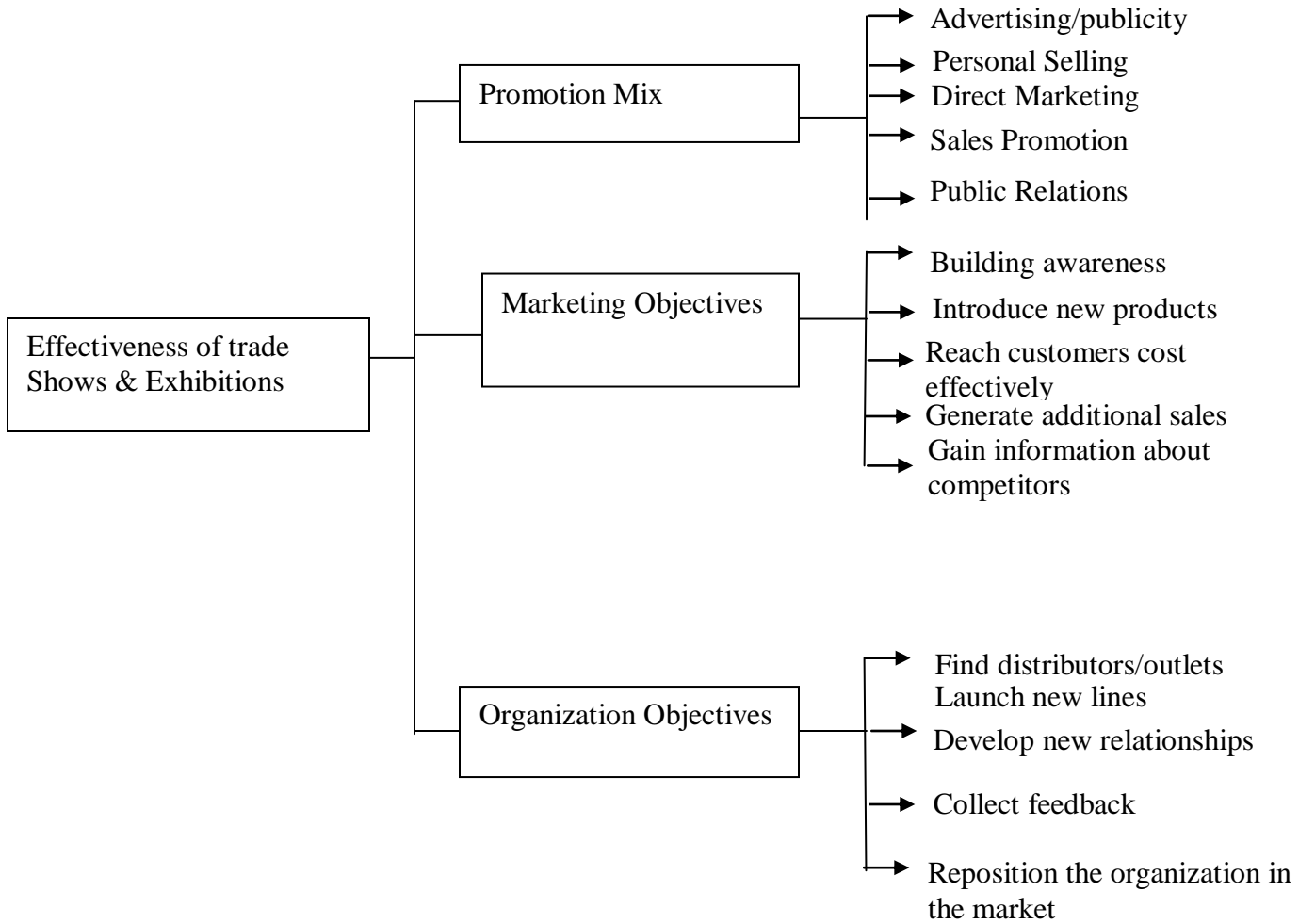
In Kenya, several studies had been carried out in the field of promotion. These studies focused on promotion in other industries. Application of promotional mix elements within multinational pharmaceutical companies in Kenya Naikuni (2001). Promotion Mix in Agrochemical industry in Kenya Ndegwa (2003). Promotion techniques used by NGO's in their social campaigns against HIV/AIDS in Kenya Mwaniki (2003). No research known to the author was found on effectiveness of trade shows and exhibitions as a method of promotion. A study by Mathenge (2003) is on effectiveness of export promotion council of Kenya that deal on promotion programmes, therefore the findings could not be applied to trade shows and exhibitions. Most literature had focused on how trade shows should be managed but little is known about whether companies do measure the relative effectiveness of the trade show practices and what these measures were.

2.5 Theoretical framework

According to this chapter the assertion is that there are various variables that measure the effectiveness of trade shows. Markets strive for the right mix of marketing elements to ensure that their product is well received. The different elements of the communication mix have to be used in a way that the strengths of one are used to offset the weakness of another. The aim of determining the combination of promotion mix is to ensure that the promotion programme is effective. The promotion mix is likely to change overtime and therefore needed a continuous adapting to reflect changes in the market. The choice of trade shows as a marketing method is often influenced by the organization's marketing objectives. There are a variety of reasons why organizations participated in trade shows. Major objectives are; building awareness, introducing new products, reach customers cost effectively, generate additional sales, and gain information about competitors.

It is important for an organization to be aware of its goals and some of the goals that organizations could use to exhibit in shows are; launching new lines, finding distributors (outlets in a new territory, re-establishing links with company in the market, and collecting feedback on a projected new range of products.

Figure 2 a.



Dependent Variable

Independent Variables

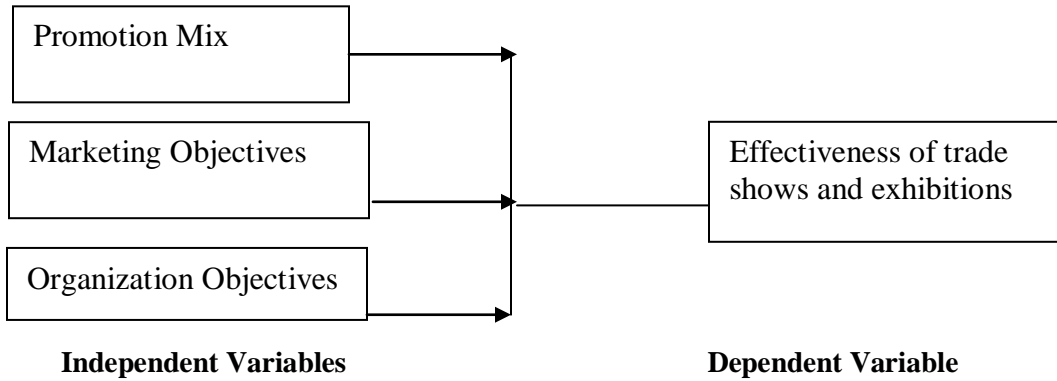
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Source: Author 2012

2.6 Conceptualization Framework

There underlies key independent variables used to determine the factors influencing the effectiveness of trade shows. The promotion mix, marketing objectives and organizational objectives influence the effectiveness of trade shows and exhibitions as an organization’s total marketing communication mix.

Figure 2 b.



Source: Author 2012

3.0 Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

The chapter presents the research design, target population, data sampling and sample size, data collection and analysis methods that were adopted to address the issue as highlighted in chapter one.

3.2 Model specification

The econometric model that was used is given by the following equation:-

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \varepsilon$$

Where: y = Aggregate mean score of effectiveness of trade shows and exhibitions

β_0 = y intercept/constant

β_1 = Regression coefficient (beta)

X_1 = Aggregate mean score of promotion mix

X_2 = Aggregate mean score of marketing objectives

X_3 = Aggregate mean score of organization objectives

ε = error term-random variation due to other unmeasured factors.

3.3 Research Design

This was a descriptive survey study intended to establish the exhibitors views towards the marketing by way of participating in the trade shows with specific reference to the Mombasa International show. According to Boyd, Westfall and Starch (2004) descriptive survey studies described the who, what, where, when and how of a phenomenon.

3.4 Sampling Method and Procedure

Stratified random sampling was used in this study because it helped the researcher achieve the desired representation of various sub-groups in the population. The sub-groups consisted of Agriculture, Trade & Industry, Government department and others. This method gave an equal chance of representation for the study and analysis. The target population included marketing managers from the selected organizations, subjects were selected in such a way that existing sub-groups in the population were fairly but randomly represented within the sample. The marketing managers from each of the selected organizations according to the industry were chosen and administered with the questionnaires.

Sample size stratification frame

It was estimated that there were about 82 serious exhibitors in Mombasa International Show. Sixty percent of these were selected and studied and the researcher used a stratified sampling technique.

Table 3

Categories (strata)	Study population	Proportion	Sample total
Agriculture	15	60%	9
Trade & Industry	40	60%	24
Government Department	20	60%	12
Others	7	60%	4
Total	82		49

Source: Author (2012)

4.0 Research Findings

4.1 Introduction

This chapter offers interpretations and implications of the results already presented in the previous chapters and summary of the findings.

4.2 Regression Analysis

In order to obtain an analysis on the level of significance of the number of times the organizations had participated in trade shows and the chances of participating in future shows to achieve promotional objectives, a stepwise regression was performed.

The number of times an organization had participated in the trade shows and chances of participating in future shows were used as independent variables and achieving promotional objectives as the dependent variable. The relationship between the two factors was established and the results of the analysis presented in Table 4.

Table 4 Regression with trade show achieving promotional objectives as a dependent variable: Model Summary, ANOVA, and coefficient,

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
I	.483 (a)	.233	.202	.917

- Independent variables (Constant), Number of times the organization had participated in trade shows, chances of participating in future trade shows.
- Dependent variable: Achieving promotional objectives.

The ANOVA table lists the two independent variables that were entered into regression model and R (0.483) is the correlation of the two independent variables with the dependent variable. After all, the intercorrelations between the two independent variables were taken into account.

ANOVA (b)

Model		Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig
1	Regression	12.539	2	6.269	7.454	.001(a)
	Residual	41.211	49	.841		
	Total	53.750	51			

- Independent variable: (Constant), Number of the times the organization had participated in the trade shows, (Q7) chances of participating in future trade shows
- Dependent variable: (Q6) How would rate the potential of trade shows

The ANOVA table shows that F value of 7.45 is significant at the 0.001 level. In the df (degree of freedom) in the same table, the first number represents the number of independent variables (2), the second number (49) is the total number of complete responses for all the variables in the equation (N), minus the number of independent variables (K) minus 1 [N – K – 1 i.e. 52 – 2 – 1 = 49].

The F statistic produced ($f=7.45$) is significant at the 0.001 level. The results mean that 23.3 % of the variance (R-square) in achieving promotional objectives had been significantly explained by the two independent variables considered in this study and still leaves 66.7% unexplained. In other words, there are other additional variables that were important in explaining the achievement of promotional objectives that had not been considered in this study.

Table 4: Coefficient analysis

Model	Coefficient a.						
	Unstandardized Coefficient		Standardized Coefficient	f	sig	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1. (Constant) (Q7)	-1.028	0.570		7.058	.000		
chances of participating in future trade shows.			0.484				
No. of times the organization had participated in trade shows	-.4165	0.108		-3.857	.000	.334	1.006
	-.096	0.199	0.607	-.484	.631	.334	1.006

a. Dependent variable: (Q6) How would rate potential of trade shows

Model summary and ANOVA (a) in Table 4 shows that the R-square (.233) which is the proportion of variation in the dependent variable (achieving promotional objectives) that is explained by the two independent variables; - number of times the organization had participated in trade shows and chances of participating in the future had 23.3% of the variance (R-square) that can be explained by the independent variables in the model.

Coefficient analysis in Table 4 shows the multicollinearity analysis and helps us to see which between the two independent variables influenced most variable in rating potential of trade shows. Multicollinearity in this model was assessed using the tolerance and variance inflation factor (VIF). Tolerance is a statistic used to determine how much the independent variables are linearly related to one another (Norusis, 2000), and represents the proportion of variable’s variance not accounted for by other independent variables in the model, where value range from 0 to 1. Mertler and Venatta (2001) suggested that values for tolerance less than 0.1 indicate a multicollinearity problem, and can cause computational problems. VIF is the reciprocal of the tolerance. As the variance inflation factor increased, so did the variance of the regression coefficient, making it an unstable estimate. Therefore, large VIF values are an indicator of multicollinearity. All VIF in this analysis were less than 10, so there was no significant multicollinearity among the independent variables (see Table 4).

Finally, regression analysis supported the causal relationship of the number of participation and chances of participating in the future shows on achieving organization promotional objectives. From the analysis, the standardized coefficient beta in the coefficient analysis table reveals that the weights of the independent variables are: - 0.484 for chances of participating in the future shows and 0.607 for number of times the organization had participated in trade shows. Also if we look at the column Beta under standardized coefficients, we see that the highest number in the beta is 0.607 for number of times the organization had participated in trade shows, which is significant at the 0.631 level. However, the direct and indirect effects among variables cannot be assessed using this statistical procedure.

4.3 Summary of findings

The findings of this study could be summarized in three aspects. The first is the organizations’ views on the effectiveness of the trade shows and exhibitions as a marketing tool. The second is the organizations’ achieving marketing objectives by participating in trade shows. The third is the factors that influenced the participation of organizations in the trade shows. The effectiveness of trade shows had an average mean response of 1.84, which implied a fairly important level of agreement given the scale range from 1 to 5, 1 being very important while 5 being not important at all.

The factors that influenced the participation of organizations in trade show showed that availability of funds was ranked lowest with a mean of 2.04 and standard deviation of 0.194. The effect of product type, product life cycle and target customers, was ranked the highest with a mean of 3.00 indicating that they determine the choice of trade show as a promotional tool to a great extent. The factors that influenced the participation of organizations in the trade shows indicated that public relations purposes/publicity, re-establish links with clients whom the organization does not see often and giving feedback on a new range of products was ranked highest with individual means of 10.40, 4.69 and 4.15 respectively. Launching new product and selling product/increase were ranked the lowest with means of 0.48 and 0.31 respectively. The organizations achieved marketing objectives by participating in trade shows and that the average mean response was 2.73, which implied a level of agreement given the scale range from 1 to 5, 1 being strongly agree while 5 being strongly disagree.

Regression analysis supported the causal relationship of the number of participation and the chances of participating in the future on achieving organization promotional objectives. From the analysis, the standardized coefficient beta in the coefficient analysis table revealed that the weights of the independent variables are 0.484 for the chances of participating in the future shows and 0.607 for number of times the organization had participated in trade shows. However, the direct and indirect effects among variables could not be assessed using this statistical procedure.

5.0 Conclusions and Recommendation

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter, conclusions are presented and based on them, suitable recommendations are made.

5.2 Conclusions

This study made some contributions to the understanding of the trade shows and exhibition factors affecting organizational marketing media tool. Overall, this research represented the beginnings to find out the effectiveness of trade shows as an organizational marketing tools. The results of this study were particularly important for encouraging and supporting trade shows marketing managers from a different perspective. This new perspective gave relevance to trade shows success and organizations performance and envisages an organization as a system where all the areas are coordinated towards a final purpose, which is, the enhancing of the organizational performance in their different aspects.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings on the study, the researcher gave the following recommendations:

- (a) Mombasa ASK should come up with strategies on how to reorganize its activities to ensure that exhibitors at the show are able to get value for their money. In this regard, there is need to establish permanent management structures that will review the position and recommend a way forward.
- (b) ASK should establish a comprehensive feedback mechanism to determine the needs and requirements of customers with a view to factoring them in their planning process and ensure they remained relevant to the changing environment.
- (c) From the study, it was clear from the respondents that ASK had very good potential as an exhibition organizer and therefore should tap into this potential and provide the conduit for exhibitors to meet new potential customers and provide opportunities to network during receptions, roundtables and other sessions.

5.4 Areas for future research

This study had implications for future research at organizational level. Several constraints already discussed may rationalize further research. The first limitation was related with the validity of the results, and these limitations could be addressed by repeating this research in different organizations, and with different stakeholders. This study needed to be extended to other sectors other than ASK trade shows to determine their role as an organizational marketing tool.

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