Computers And Marketing Essay, Research Paper

Computers and Marketing

Marketing is the process by which goods are sold and purchased. The aim of marketing is to acquire, retain, and satisfy customers. Modern marketing has evolved into a complex and diverse field. This field includes a wide variety of special functions such as advertising, mail-order business, public relations, retailing and merchandising, sales, market research, and pricing of goods.

Businesses, and particularly the marketing aspect of businesses, rely a great deal on the use of computers. Computers play a significant role in inventory control, processing and handling orders, communication between satellite companies in an organization, design and production of goods, manufacturing, product and market analysis, advertising, producing the company newsletter, and in some cases, complete control of company operations.

In today’s extremely competitive business environment businesses are searching for ways to improve profitability and to maintain their position in the marketplace. As competition becomes more intense the formula for success becomes more difficult. Two particular things have greatly aided companies in their quests to accomplish these goals. They are the innovative software products of CAD/CAM and, last but not least, the World Wide Web.

An important program has aided companies all over the world. Computer-aided design and computer-aided manufacturing (CAD/CAM) is the integration of two technologies. It has often been called the new industrial revolution. In CAD, engineers and designers use specialized computer software to create models that represent characteristics of objects. These models are analyzed by computer and redesigned as necessary. This allows companies needed flexibility in studying different and daring designs without the high costs of building and testing actual models, saving millions of dollars. In CAM, designers and engineers use computers for planning manufacturing processes, testing finished parts, controlling manufacturing operations, and managing entire plants. CAM is linked to CAD through a database that is shared by design and manufacturing engineers.

The major applications of CAD/CAM are mechanical design and electronic design. Computer-aided technical design is usually done with automated drafting programs that use interactive computer graphics. Information is entered into the computer to create basic elements such as circles, lines, and points. Elements can be rotated, mirrored, moved, and scaled, and users can zoom in on details. Computerized drafting is quicker and more accurate than manual drafting. It makes modifications much easier.

Desktop manufacturing enables a designer to construct a model directly from data, which is stored in computer memory. These software programs help designers to consider both function and manufacturing consequences at early stages, when designs are easily modified. More and more manufacturing businesses are integrating CAD/CAM with other aspects of production, including inventory tracking, scheduling, and marketing. This idea, known as computer-integrated manufacturing (CIM), speeds processing of orders, adds to effective materials management, and creates considerable cost savings.

In addition to designing and manufacturing a product, a company must be effectively able to advertise, market, and sell its product. Much of what passes for business is nothing more than making connections with other people. What if you could passout your business card to thousands, maybe millions of potential clients and partners? You can, twenty four hours a day, inexpensively and simply on the World Wide Web. Firms communicate with their customers through various types of media. This media usually follows passive one-to-many communication where a firm reaches many current and potential customers through marketing efforts that allow limited forms of feedback on the part of the customer. For several years a revolution has been developing that is dramatically changing the traditional form of advertising and communication media. This revolution is the Internet; a massive global network of interconnected computer networks, which has the potential to drastically change the way firms do business with their customers. The World Wide Web is a hypertext based information service. It provides access to multimedia, complex documents, and databases. The Web is one of the most effective vehicles to provide information because of its visual impact and advanced features. It can be used as a complete presentation media for a company’s corporate information or information on all of its products and services.

The recent growth of the World Wide Web (WWW) has opened up new markets and shattered boundaries to telling to a worldwide audience. For marketers the world wide web can be used to create a client base, for product and market analysis, rapid information access, wide scale information dissemination, rapid communication, cost-effective document transfers, expert advise and help, recruiting new employees, peer communications, and new business opportunities. The usefulness of the Internet or WWW depends directly on the products or services of each business. There are different benefits depending upon the type of business and whether you are a supplier, retailer, or distributor. Lets examine these in more detail.

Finding new clients and new client bases is not always an easy task. This process involves a careful market analysis, product marketing and consumer base testing. The Internet is a ready base of several million people from all walks of life. One can easily find new customers and clients from this massive group, provided that your presence on the Internet is known. If you could keep your customer informed of every reason why they should do business with you; your business would definitely increase. Making business information available is one of the most important ways to serve your customers. Before people decide to become customers, they want to know about your company, what you do and what you can do for them. This can be accomplished easily and inexpensively on the World Wide Web.

Many users also do product analyses and comparisons and report their findings via the World Wide Web. Quite frequently one can find others who may be familiar with a product that you are currently testing. A company can get first hand reports on the functionality of such products before spending a great deal of money. Also, the large base of Internet users is a principle area for the distribution of surveys for an analysis of the market for a new product of service ideas. These surveys can reach millions of people and potential clients with very little effort on the part of the surveyors. Once a product is already marketed, you can examine the level of satisfaction that users have received from the product. Getting customer feedback can lead to new and improved products. Feedback will let you know what customers think of your product faster, easier and much less expensively than any other market you may reach. For the cost of a page or two of Web programming, you can have a crystal ball into where to position your product or service in the marketplace.

Accessing information over the Internet is much faster on most occasions than transmissions and transfers via fax or postal courier services. You can access information and data from countries around the world and make interactive connections to remote computer systems just about anywhere in the world. Electronic mail has also proved to be an effective solution to the problem of telephone tag. Contacting others through email has provided a unique method of communication, which has the speed of telephone conversations, yet still, provides the advantages of postal mail. Email can be sent from just about anywhere that there is an Internet service or access so that businessmen or travelers can keep in touch with up to the minute details of the office.

Another benefit of the World Wide Web is wide scale information circulation. You can place documents on the Internet and instantly make them accessible to millions of users around the world. Hypertext documents provide an effective technique by which to present information to subscribers, clients or the general public. Creating World Wide Web documents and registering your site with larger Web sites improves the availability of the documents to a client base larger, and cheaper, than the circulation of many major newspapers and/or television media’s. You may not be able to use the mail, phone system and regulation systems in all of your potential international markets. With the World Wide Web, however, you can open up a dialogue with international markets as easily as with the company across the street.

The Web is also more cost-effective than conventional advertising. Transferring on- line documents via the Internet takes a minimal amount of time, saving a great deal of money over postal or courier services which can also suffer late deliveries, losses or damage. If a document transfer fails on the Internet, you can always try again since the cost of the transfer is exactly the same. Current or potential clients are not lost due to late or absent documents.

Beyond product and market analysis, there are a great number of experts on the Internet who make their presence widely known and easily accessible. Quite often you can get free advice and help with problems you might have from the same people you may otherwise pay highly for their consulting services to large organizations, magazines, and other periodicals. Researchers and business executives alike have attested to the fact that much of their communications over the Internet are with others in their line of research or field of work. Communicating with peers allows the sharing of ideas, problems and solutions among themselves. Often people find that others in their field have already created solutions for problems similar to their own. They are able to obtain advice on their own situations and create a solution based upon this shared knowledge.

Many businessmen and companies are continuously on the look-out for new and innovative ideas as viable business ventures. Internet users are continuously coming up with such new ideas because of the available research the Internet offers and also because of the cooperative atmosphere that surrounds the Internet. In addition, the Internet has many job lists and resumes online for prospective employers. New resumes are constantly posted to the Web to inform companies of the availability of new skills.

As competition intensifies in the business world, consumers are faced with more and more products and services to choose from. The future of business is being decided right now in the minds and wallets of customers. The successful business and marketing approach utilizes everything possible to insure that the choice the customer makes is to choose their product or service. Computer technology is by far the most important and impressive means by which to insure a company’s success. Computers play a significant role in every aspect of a company’s survival, from product design and manufacturing, creating client databases, inventory control, market analysis, advertising and sales, and even total company operations.