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## How to create a marketing strategy

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My wife and I recently took a trip to Eastern Europe; and if you're like me, you take your work with you.

As a marketing veteran, I see examples of marketing, advertising and media wherever I go and use these in the classroom and with my clients.

Marketing was evident in every country and region, with every tour operator and director, in every city, venue and restaurant we encountered. Some used marketing strategies more effectively than others.

In creating a marketing strategy, divide markets into meaningful customer groups (market segmentation), choose which customer groups to serve (target marketing), and create marketing offers that best serve targeted customers (positioning).

There are many ways a city or country or region can market and promote their uniqueness. We saw many different segments and marketing aspects targeted: culture/history, cuisine/food, entertainment/shopping, relaxation, outdoor sports/adventure, honeymooners, and family.

Some examples:

Street and local marketing, such as a restaurant in Helsinki displaying a sign: "Limited menu. Fairly Priced." A "street" tour guide with a sign: "Experienced, Expert Guide. Ask me." Credit cards for global worldwide acceptance.

Successful global special interest products, such as Adidas and Canon .

Liquors marketed on national origins. Premium vodkas can cost twice as much as "ordinary" vodkas.

Brand names, such as McDonald's or Mercedes-Benz, marketed globally on their country of origin.

Why use marketing and how can your company use examples from our trip? More efficient use of your resources, time, quality, money and people. Better understanding of your customer needs. Better understanding of competitors . Better development of new products.

Here's a recommendation: Make your marketing, advertising and promotion different than your competitors. Be unique with your product mix. Successfully position your product by looking at product attributes, benefits, quality/price, high tech and high touch.

And remember your target customer. Customer service is far more important than most marketing consultants give it credit. Company and brand positioning should be summed up in a

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positioning statement. The statement should follow this form: To (target market and need) our (brand or store or service) is (concept) that (point of difference).

Be different for a reason.

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