

## **Specific Euro-marketing elements in the single European market. A cultural approach**

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**Abstract:** *European Union represents a challenge for the economists to adapt to a new structure and a new way of doing business. It created a new type of market – The Single European Market – and generated specific issues regarding the defining elements of this. New standards, new types of consumers, the European approach regarding products, doing business at the over-national level with doing the payments in a single currency are just a few of the specific elements that motivate a new specialization of marketing, euro-marketing. In this context, the European cultural elements influence in a specific way that has to be considered in the European market and in the context of the European legislation.*

**Key-words:** *European integration, Euro-marketing, The Single European Market, Euro-producer, Euro-consumer, European cultural identity.*

### **1. Introduction**

“European integration” is a complex term to define. Trying to do that, we should take into consideration the fact that integration supposes phenomenon at the microeconomic level – between producers – and the macroeconomic level – between national entities. (Prisecaru, 2001) International integration might be focused on the trade sector – integration in trade - or on goods and services – integration of markets -; also, it might consider positive effects – positive integration – or negative aspects – negative integration.\*

Speaking about markets, The Single European Market is a big challenge for the European Economy. The reason for that consists in the fact that European Market is unique in the world, considering at least the following elements: the free movements of goods, services, labour, and capitals; the European cultural values; the differences between the living-standards in the member-states; the different level of development of the European Union countries.

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\* NB – the term “positive” and “negative” are used not in the traditional meaning, but in the terms of creation/removal of some economic aspects

Marketing has to adapt, in these circumstances, to some specific conditions. As a consequence the literature specifies a new specialization of marketing science – *Euro-marketing*.

## 2. Objectives

Historically, passing over territories determined the need to cover the following stages, specific for different times: internal marketing (exclusively oriented to the internal market), marketing for exports (implication in the international level, without a specific export strategy), international marketing (adapting the marketing strategies to the international environment), multi-regional marketing (marketing strategies adapted to specific elements of some regions) and global marketing (a common strategy for the whole global level). (Boşcor, 2008)

The place and the role of Euro-marketing in this evolution should be specified considering the fact that it exceeds the national level, but it does not achieve the global level (Fig no 1). To have a complete image of its positioning we should take into consideration two main ideas:

1. It represents a form of multi-regional marketing (we should agree about the term of “pan-European regional marketing”)
2. It creates a special relationship with the global level of marketing (by the implications of the Single European Market’s characteristics)



Fig.1. *The place and the role of Euro-marketing*

**3. Material and methods**

**3.1. Considerations upon the European single market**

The Single European Market represents a new stage of integration that followed the Common European Market. With the creation of the Single Market over 16 000 km of national frontiers between EU members were basically disbanded, thus opening it up, free circulation of goods, capital and labour.

The origin of this concept can be found in the requirements regarding establishment of Economic and Monetary Union. The creation of the Single Market was, however, stimulated by the need to eliminate the difficulties of the Community in the 70s-80s. During that period, despite of the successes recorded in the implementation of the Custom Union, the Community has faced real problems that generated an unsatisfying economic growth and the unemployment rate increasing.

In 1985 the Commission presented the White Book “Finalizing the Internal Market” – by almost 300 internal measures politically sustained by the member-states which should have finished until 31<sup>st</sup> of December 1992.

The Single European Market represents - basically – the integration stage for European Union, as it results from The Treaty of EU (Maastricht, 1992), following the Common Market created for the European Community by the Treaty of Rome (1957).

Schematically, the process could be represented as following:

<b>Integration structure</b>	European Community	European Union
<b>Integration stage</b>	Common Market (Treaty of Rome – 1957) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Custom union</li> <li>• Free movement of factors</li> <li>• Common politics</li> <li>• Harmonized politics</li> <li>• Common institutions</li> <li>• Common funds</li> </ul>	Single Market (Treaty of Maastricht – 1992) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Free movement of goods</li> <li>• Free movements of services</li> <li>• Free movements of labour</li> <li>• Free movements of capital</li> </ul>

Table 1. *Integration structures and stages of integration*

To assure the functionality of the Single European Market the existing institutional system was improved. The main institutional system’s goals are focused on guaranteeing the right conditions for the Common European Politics – especially those politics regarding competition and trade – and the free movement of goods and labour.

### 3.2. Specific issues regarding Euro-marketing

The Single European Market affects the firms - in the first place because of the market economic characteristics and, in the second place, because of the new legislation.

Regarding the marketing-mix, there are some opinions that a standardization of this should be advisable. It means that we should use terms such as:

- Euro-product – a product that takes care about the specific European segment’s needs, the consumer’s attachments for traditional products, common standards for products
- Euro-price - a price that takes into consideration different purchase power in different countries, some regulations regarding prices adjustments in EU
- Euro-distribution – encouraged by the free movement of goods/services and by the European transport infrastructure
- Euro-communication – sustained by a sort of standardization of the communication process.

In plus, the Single European Market started to implement a new approach to the concepts of “producer” – which becomes “The Euro-producer” – and “consumer” – which becomes “The Euro-consumer”. Some specific issues for these two concepts should be pointed:

Concept	Characteristics
Euro-producer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Producer that creates goods/services with national/European identity</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Producer that acts in a market without barriers regarding the free movements</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Producer that has to take into consideration specific regulations – regarding legal aspects of firms activity, competition, types of protection, marketing instruments</li> </ul>
Euro-consumer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Consumer that benefits of a special kind of protection assured by the European law – in this matter it could be exemplified the information process, harmonisations – label harmonisation, for instance - , banking transfers, etc</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Consumer that has access to products from a large market</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Consumers coming from different countries with different culture</li> </ul>

Table 2. *The specific “Euro-producer” and “Euro-consumer” concepts*

For a good understanding of the Euro-consumers’ needs, considering the fact that they come from different countries with different culture and values, it might be interesting and useful to study some basic elements of culture, elements that could influence the specific European marketing mix.

### 3.2. The concept of “culture” in business

Culture is essential when we speak about international business. It is not about individual behaviour, it is about shared systems of meaning within and across ascribed (depending on gender, age, family, ethnic, national origin) and acquired (depending on political, religious, or commercial bodies) social groups (Mercado, 2001).

There are different opinions about cultural elements that could influence the business environment. Such important elements are:

1. The material culture – the way in which people relate to the material possession
2. The language – spoken language (European Union recognise as official languages all the 28 national languages) and non-spoken language (that refers to the language of space, time, etc)
3. Family – starting from the core-family and continuing with extended family and group affiliation
4. Religion – that provides a lot of values and attitudes that probably will be find in the consumers behaviour
5. Education – that form values and attitudes with cultural impact
6. Aesthetics – values coming from national values (art, music, etc)

Approaching the consumer in connection with the cultural values is the producer’s choice. In the European context the cultural differences might generate more „heterogenity” than in other markets.

### 4. Results and discussions

In our attempts to find some specific cultural elements for specific Euro-consumer segments, we established some main cultural values that might influence the buying decision more than others and we applied them on the European clusters.

Type of economic agent	Cultural values	Cultural value possible influence
Euro-producer	Material culture	Technology – knowhow (for production and distribution) – the possibility to produce more efficiently (Germany and other developed countries from Western Union)
	Language	The absence of a common language represents an obstacle for the producers The producers have to know the consumers education according to European standards

	Education	
Euro-consumer	Family	<p>A very strong value for the consumer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the Eastern Countries the extended family is more important than the core-family (the situation is different in the Northern part of Europe)</li> <li>• The role of women is distinguished</li> </ul>
	Education	<p>Even though the Bologna system offers a common there still are differences regarding the consumers' needs</p>
	Aesthetics	<p>The Euro-consumer is very attached to the national values coming from aesthetics.</p>

Table 3. *Main cultural values that influence the Euro-producer/Euro-consumer*

## 5. Conclusions

As it was presented, the Single European Market presents some specificity that is useful to be known on attempting to do business in European Union. Some of these refers to the cultural aspects. Cultural values may generate a heterogeneous market even though, in the standardization process (specific to the global level) the producers try to create common products for the whole market/segment.

The way that the producer approaches the consumer depends on several factors. The cultural factors influence – analysed in this article most of the times based on theoretical approaches – should be a start-point for a next qualitative research to find and to rank the cultural values that could influence the Euro-producer and the Euro-consumer.

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