

Critical Evaluation of Ford Motor Company's Marketing Activity

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Executive summary

Ford Motor Company's marketing approach and possible financial implications are the focus of this paper. Ford's marketing plan centers on making the company's name universally recognized and respected by investing much in advertising and creating favorable customer associations with the Ford brand. Ford's marketing strategy responds to shifts in the economy, consumer tastes, and technology, as shown by examining the macro marketing environment through PESTEL analysis. Micro-level research uses Porters five forces to examine the marketing landscape which reveals that Ford has to deal with well-established competitors and works closely with suppliers and distributors to guarantee product quality. By using the STP theory to research and build profitable tactics for reaching specific demographics of consumers, Ford can successfully capture the target audience through various advertising and marketing platforms, including commercial advertising, online events, and marketing manuals. The materials are geared toward certain audiences, with an emphasis on security for families and aesthetics, innovation, and functionality for businesspeople/professionals. This has led to massive success for Ford in the marketplace, with sales of \$158.057 billion and a market cap of \$61.579 billion. Ford's marketing strategy strongly emphasizes media selection, mainly social media, TV commercials, print media, and online advertising. The success of marketing efforts is gauged by looking at KPIs like brand recognition, customer loyalty, revenue growth, and market share. In conclusion, Ford Motor Company has proven its dedication to staying abreast of industry developments and adjusting its marketing strategy accordingly. However, there is room for enhancement, including the adoption of more consistent advertising messages, the development of more refined market segmentation tactics. The following recommendations are vital to enhancing Ford's marketing approach: enhancing market segmentation, implementing integrated

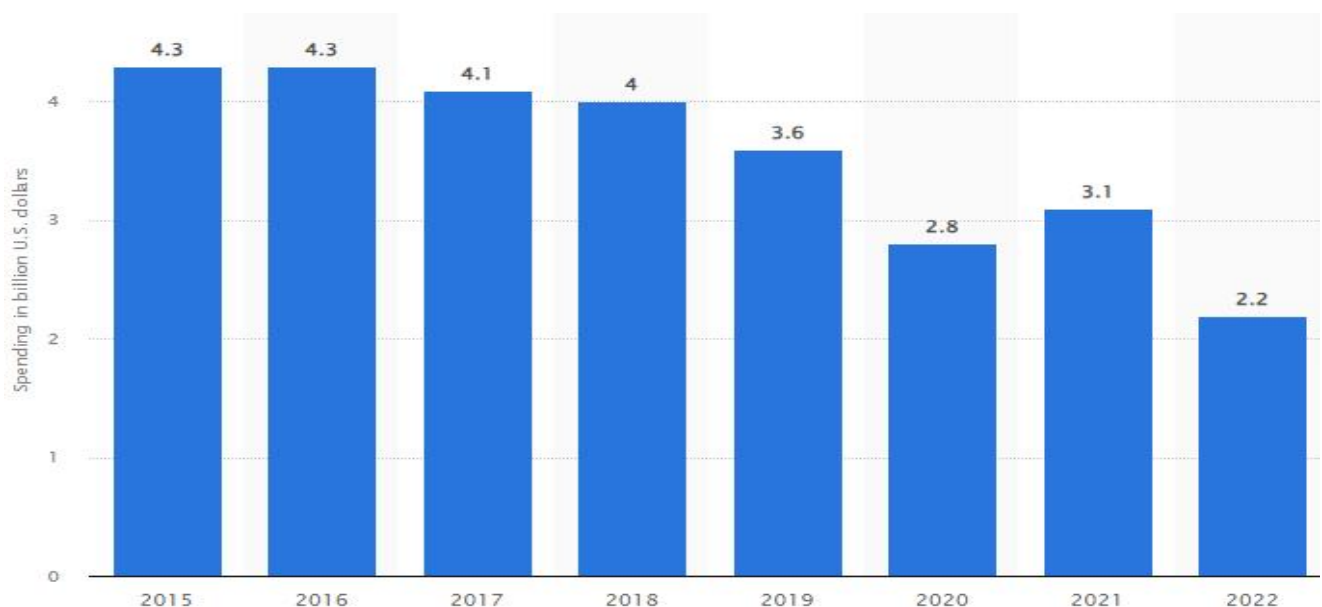
digital marketing strategies, emphasizing brand narrative, embracing all-encompassing metric evaluation, investigating potential strategic alliances, and maximizing marketing expenditures.

1.0 Introduction

Business growth is directly attributed to marketing's role in increasing awareness of a company's offerings and influencing consumer opinion (Haleem et al., 2022). This research analyzes Ford Motor Company's marketing efforts, assessing their value and effect on its profitability. Critical evaluation of Ford's Marketing strategy and its potential to achieve marketing goals is the focus of this report, which seeks to shed light on these topics through an examination of central factors such as the concept and importance of marketing, the marketing environment, target market selection, media channels, and campaign success measurement. This article aims to analyze Ford's marketing strategy and determine its merits, flaws, and areas for growth.

2.0 Main findings

2.1 Concept and Importance of Marketing



(Statista, 2022). Ford's investment in advertising from 2015-2022

Ford Motor Company prioritizes advertising and shows its dedication to the field by allocating considerable funds. In advertising, public relations, and digital marketing, marketing receives a sizable amount of the company's overall budget; for instance, 2022, Ford invested \$2.2 billion in advertising (Statista, 2022). The investment is motivated by the understanding that solid marketing is essential to accomplishing strategic goals. Ford's marketing plan primarily focuses on spreading familiarity with the company's name; because of the importance of credibility, customer loyalty, and market differentiation in the automobile business, the corporation places a premium on building a solid brand (Balawardhana, 2020). Ford Motor's goal with its advertising is to establish a strong, positive association between the brand and the products and services it offers its customers (DETROIT, 2016).

Furthermore, Ford's marketing initiatives highlight the company's latest creations and developments (Balawardhana, 2020). Ford aspires to attract potential customers and obtain a competitive advantage by emphasizing their products' distinctive features, performance capabilities, and safety innovations (Mich, 2019). The company is making concerted efforts to forge meaningful connections with its intended demographic through several distinct marketing initiatives. Social media marketing, dynamic web design, and one-on-one contact are all examples of this type of digital advertising (SHIVADEV, 2023). Ford hopes to understand customers' preferences and collect opinions on Ford when interacting with them, in order to improve its products and services.

2.2 Macro and Micro Marketing Environment

2.2.1 Macro Marketing Environment

Ford Motor Company faces stiff competition in an ever-changing market subject to the impact of both large and small external factors (Arroyo, 2019). These external elements substantially affect Ford's marketing strategy, necessitating appropriate adaptation and response on Ford's part. Macro marketing environment refers to external factors that have a far-reaching impact on Ford's industry (Camilleri & Camilleri, 2018). To better contemplate the macro environment it is unequivocal to utilize PESTEL analysis model.

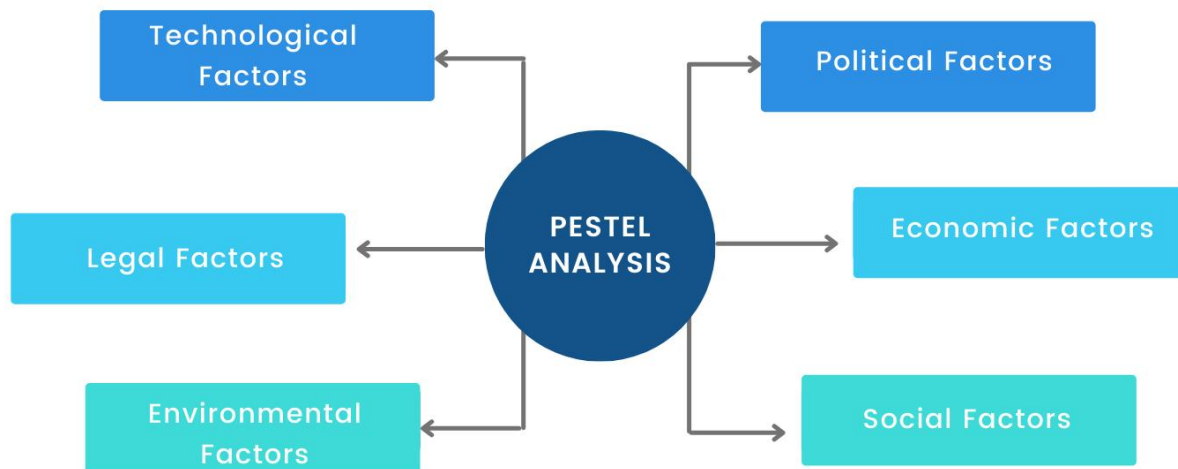


Fig 2.0 PESTLE analysis model

Due to the regulatory and policy impacts of the government on the car sector, Ford's marketing strategy is affected by politics. Ford's attempts to create and market products may be influenced by government programs to encourage environmentally responsible transportation or by legislation about emissions and safety standards.

Economic conditions heavily influence Ford's marketing approach. Changes in the GDP, interest rates, and inflation can all affect consumers' disposable income, which can affect demand for automobiles. Ford needs to monitor these economic factors to fine-tune its advertising campaigns.

Shifting consumer tastes and preferences strongly impact Ford's marketing strategies. Electronic vehicle product development and marketing tactics are affected by consumer choices for vehicle features, design, fuel efficiency, and sustainability (Buhmann & Criado, 2023) in the automotive industry. Ford has reacted to this by focusing on technology advancements, increased fuel efficiency, and emphasizing sustainability in its marketing to cater to these tastes.

Technological developments heavily influence Ford's marketing approach. New technology, such as electric vehicles, autonomous driving, and networking features, are entering the market as the automobile industry develops. Recognizing the game-changing potential of these innovations, Ford has jumped headfirst into the new energy era by creating electric and hybrid car models. Ford can better position itself as an innovative and environmentally concerned company because of this strategic adjustment in its marketing.

Environmental variables such as climate change and sustainability concerns directly affect Ford's marketing approach. Ford has developed electric and hybrid automobiles and emphasized its commitment to sustainability in marketing campaigns in response to customers' growing concern for the environment. Maintaining a competitive edge requires a constant willingness to adjust to new circumstances.

Safety requirements, pollution restrictions, and intellectual property protection are all legal factors that impact the auto sector. The success of Ford's advertising, product development, and business operations depends on the company's adherence to these regulations.

2.2.2 The micro-marketing environment

According to ActiveCollab, (2022), this includes competitors, suppliers, distributors, and customers that affect Ford Motor Company and its near industry surroundings; therefore, is unequivocal to utilize Porter's five force model to evaluate the environment.



Fig 3.0 Ford's Porters Five forces model

Competition in the auto industry is fierce. Ford faces stiff competition from established players like Chevrolet, Tesla, General Motors, Dodge and Nissan, who compete for market pie with Ford (Comparably, 2023). Ford's marketing strategy is profoundly impacted by the activities and plans of these rivals, necessitating ongoing monitoring and differentiation on the company's part. Maintaining a competitive edge in the market requires constant vigilance, analysis of competitors' marketing strategies, and the development of novel responses.

The bargaining power of suppliers is moderate. Ford's marketing efforts would only be possible with the help of its suppliers. Access to high-quality components and materials for Ford cars depends on the company's ability to collaborate with dependable and efficient suppliers. Maintaining good connections with its suppliers and getting advantageous conditions to access vital resources is crucial to Ford's ability to create cars that match consumer demands and expectations.

The Ford brand's milieu revolves around its customers. Effective marketing campaigns, individualized customer service, and product designs that meet consumers' expectations require knowledge of customers' wants, preferences, and habits. Ford's marketing strategy is based on listening to and learning from customers so that the company can create products that not only satisfy but also delight them. Ford increases client loyalty and promotes a strong brand image by always concentrating on their needs.

Ford's marketing strategy is seriously threatened by the emergence of substitute products as the company faces increasing competition from new forms of transportation and technology advancements. Ford's traditional automobile offers are threatened by the proliferation of electric vehicles, the popularity of ridesharing services, and the development of autonomous driving technologies. Ford must closely monitor consumer tastes and preferences and keep up with developing market trends in order to effectively counter this risk. To lessen the threat of substitute, Ford needs to strengthen brand engagement, provide memorable customer service, and create devoted followers of its products.

Ford's marketing strategy is also affected by the emergence of new rivals in the auto industry. Ford's market dominance may be threatened by new competitors who provide revolutionary business strategies, technology, and customer experiences. Ford must constantly monitor the

market for any signs of new competitors and respond quickly and forcefully if it wants to keep its dominant position. That means keeping an eye on up-and-coming competitors, dissecting their techniques, and looking for ways to gain an edge. Ford can successfully adjust its marketing strategy, respond to new entrants, and secure its market position by capitalizing on its well-known brand name, broad distribution network, and well-established customer base.

2.3 Target Market Analysis



Fig 4.0 STP Model

The STP theory is a marketing strategy that helps businesses find and connect with their ideal customers. Companies can better understand their customers, craft more effective marketing strategies and carve out a competitive niche by following the three-stage method outlined by Kalam & Kalam (2020). Ford Motor Company uses the STP theory to research and build profitable tactics for reaching specific demographics of consumers. Ford's capacity to cater to the

varying demands of its customers would benefit from a more profound familiarity with the particular requirements of each of its customer subsets.

Segmentation

Ford has successfully segmented its target market based on various demographic and psychographic variables. Online campaigns, social media participation, customized messaging, and commercials are a few examples of materials utilized to capture these various segments. Ford promotes its hybrid and electric vehicles as ecologically friendly solutions with low fuel costs and less emissions for those who care about the environment. Marketing brochures for families emphasize safety features, roomy interiors, and family-friendly facilities. Sleek design, cutting-edge technology, and high-performance features are geared toward working professionals.

Targeting

Ford's targeting strategies entail locating the market segments that fit its product offerings. The business targets environmentally conscious consumers who value sustainability (Gao & Souza, 2022). According to Bajj and Karthikeyan (2023), Ford also views the working class as a crucial group to attract. This group of customers seeks automobiles with cutting-edge technology, sleek design, and high performance. The brand also caters to working professionals who appreciate performance and flair and families looking for safety and adaptability. Ford wants to grab their attention and connect with their unique needs and preferences. To do this, it creates marketing materials tailored to each target demographic. In keeping with this, it has established itself as a

sustainable brand due to its dedication to sustainability and the creation of ground-breaking green technologies (Mich, 2019).

Positioning and Differentiation

Ford sets itself apart from rivals by strongly emphasizing innovation, environmentally friendly methods, and cutting-edge technology. The business describes itself as an innovative automobile that fuses style and utility. In order to demonstrate the distinctive value proposition, it provides to customers, Ford's marketing materials stress the performance, technology, connection, and design of its vehicles.

Marketing Mix

Ford uses the marketing mix components to reach its target market successfully. The product offering incorporates a wide selection of vehicles, including hybrid and electric models for environmentally conscious buyers, roomy and secure family options, and high-performance vehicles for working professionals. The price aligns with the vehicles' value and affordability for the target market. Promotion incorporates different marketing tools such as social media, digital campaigns, and commercials. Lastly, the place component guarantees that Ford's vehicles are accessible via an extensive network of dealerships and internet platforms.

Ford uses a wide range of media to attract customers. Some examples are advertisements, marketing pamphlets, ads, and online social networking campaigns. Marketing brochures emphasize safety features and family-friendly facilities to entice families, while online

advertising and commercials highlight elegant design, innovative technology, and outstanding performance elements to entice working professionals. Customers have a deep affection for the Ford brand, and the company has been able to increase its sales to \$ 158.057 billion and its market value to \$ 61.579 billion thanks to these target marketing channels (Yahoo Finance, 2022). Obviously, These marketing methods are effective.

2.4 Selection of Media

Ford Motor Company promotes its products and services through numerous channels of communication. The group employs various forms of media to spread its message to reach as many people as possible and make as big of an impact as possible (Balawardhana, 2020). Ford uses Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube as primary means of communication. Through these avenues, Ford may have in-depth conversations about its products and services with its target audience. By engaging with customers more personally, Ford can increase their loyalty to the brand. Distributing interesting information like videos, photos, and interactive posts through social media allows Ford to reach a wider audience and improve the customer experience. Ford also makes heavy use of TV commercials to reach their target audience. Ford's image and products would benefit significantly from being advertised on television, where they might be seen by a large and diverse audience (Kuyucu, 2020). Advertising Ford during highly-attended shows or events is a surefire way to get people talking about the company and raise brand awareness. Ford's television ads may play on viewers' emotions while also showcasing the product's features and benefits visually arrestingly (Shastri, 2021).

Ford also uses print media like newspapers and magazines to spread the word about its products. Although print media has declined in popularity due to the rise of digital media, it is still valuable for some members of Ford's target demographic. Advertisements in print media can be more precise, reaching readers of niche journals like those aimed at auto enthusiasts or fashionistas (Agarwal, 2019). This allows Ford to connect with specific subsets of its potential customer base who are more likely to be interested in purchasing a vehicle from the company. Ford also places significant emphasis on online advertising. Ford can contact potential buyers using the internet and social media by displaying ads tailored to their interests and behaviors (Haji & Stock, 2021).

Ford's media channels for their marketing strategy are suitable and efficient in multiple ways. According to a study by Haji and Stock (2021), Ford's use of social media has resulted in increased customer loyalty and satisfaction. By sharing interesting content like television shows, images, and interactive articles, Ford can expand its reach and attract more customers. Ford is able to reach a wide audience with its advertising on television, especially during high-traffic times such as when people are watching their favorite shows or attending major events. Print media may be on the decline in the digital age, but there is still an audience for Ford's products. It paves the way for targeted advertising in specialty magazines aimed at certain demographics, like those devoted to the auto or fashion industries. Online advertising enables Ford to use the internet and social media platforms to effectively reach potential customers by delivering personalized advertisements tailored to their interests and behaviors.

2.5 Measuring success

Ford Motor Company uses a variety of indicators to assess the results of its advertising initiatives. Key performance indicators (KPIs) are measured, which shed light on what information consumers value and how effective Ford's marketing campaigns have been. Along this line, Ford uses brand awareness, the degree to which its target market recognizes and favorably identifies the Ford brand with the company's goods and values, as suggested by Ford-Atkinson, 2022). This is calculated using data from polls about brand recognition, social media followings, and website visits which allows the company to see how well its marketing campaigns establish and sustain its brand by keeping tabs on brand recognition. Client engagement is another key metric for Ford, which estimates the degree of collaboration, contribution, and reaction from clients corresponding to its marketing efforts (PS & Thomas, 2022). This incorporates measurements, for example, virtual entertainment commitment rates (likes, remarks, shares), site commitment like online visits, and client reviews and feedback. By following client commitment measurements, Ford can identify the effectiveness of its marketing efforts in capturing and retaining consumer interest and involvement.

Ford's marketing success is demonstrated through the company's key performance measures, such as sales growth. Along this line, Ford has revenues of \$ 158.057 billion and a market cap of \$ 61.579B (Yahoo Finance, 2022); therefore, Ford gauges the efficacy of its marketing initiatives by tracking measures like sales, revenue growth, and market share. This metric allows for the measurement of the efficiency of marketing, product, and pricing initiatives. Subsequently, Ford's marketing campaigns are evaluated with the help of surveys and market research. Market research helps Ford better cater to its clients' preferences (Deineka, 2023) by shedding light on their lifestyles, hobbies, and other interests. Through online surveys, Ford assesses consumer

happiness, public brand perception, and specific advertising initiatives' success. These indicators are based on solid research, providing Ford with more quantitative data and valuable qualitative insights into the impact of their marketing campaigns.

3.0 Conclusion

Ford Motor Company has made significant investments and exerted substantial effort to modify its marketing strategy in response to the changing automobile industry. Ford has shown dedication to improving its reputation and consumer engagement through significant investments in advertising. It recognizes the significance of adapting to the new era of energy and leveraging technological advancements to remain competitive. Notwithstanding these efforts, specific concerns must be acknowledged to achieve additional improvements. For instance, Ford's marketing approach highlights certain areas needing attention. Ford must enhance consistency in its advertising endeavors to effectively communicate a cohesive and persuasive message to its target audience. Market segmentation is another area that can be improved. Ford has effectively utilized market segmentation strategies, but there is room for improvement in tailoring advertisements to specific subsets of the target market. Furthermore, Ford's advertising performance evaluation is limited as it relies exclusively on quantitative measures, potentially neglecting qualitative aspects of consumer perception. Although sales growth and market share can offer valuable insights, they may only partially encompass consumer sentiments toward the brand and its advertising.

4.0 Recommendations

4.1 Enhanced Market Segmentation

According to Babin and Harris (2023), market research is what Ford needs to understand its target demographic better. Ford can more precisely target and engage each client segment by first classifying them into various categories based on demographics, behavior, and preferences (Mohammad, 2023). To do this, Ford must create targeted promotional methods, product lines, and messages that appeal to the interests and preferences of individual demographic subsets. Ford can improve customer engagement and increase conversion rates by sending out marketing messages uniquely tailored to each individual.

4.2 Integrated Digital Marketing

In light of the growing sway of digital media, Ford would be wise to improve its digital marketing tactics to fully use the opportunities presented by digital mediums. Among these methods are content marketing, influencer outreach, and search engine optimization (SEO) to increase the number of people who see the website and the number of people who click through to it organically (Khanna et al., 2023). Ford can expand its customer base, raise awareness for its brand, and encourage constructive interaction with its intended audience by coordinating its digital marketing activities across many channels.

4.3 Emphasis on Brand Storytelling

Ford has to create a compelling brand story that emphasizes the company's dedication to sustainability, innovation, and the needs of its customers. Ads, website material, social media, and customer contact can benefit from this storytelling approach (He et al., 2021). Ford can build brand loyalty, set itself apart from rivals, and appeal to consumers' emotions by telling an engaging brand story. By effectively articulating the company's values and USPs, Ford could personally enhance its relationship with customers and boost brand loyalty.

4.4 Comprehensive Metrics Evaluation

Ford might gain insight into the effectiveness of their marketing by combining quantitative and qualitative data. Several methods, such as satisfaction surveys, brand tracking, and sentiment analysis, are used to gather client feedback (Mehmood et al., 2022). Ford can tailor its marketing strategies to better suit customers' tastes by analyzing qualitative data about their attitudes, views, and preferences. This all-encompassing approach to metrics will give Ford a more accurate view of the impact of its advertising initiatives.

4.5 Strategic Partnerships

Ford must look into strategic collaborations with influential groups and organizations that share its brand's core values; this will allow Ford's message to reach more people and earn positive connotations. Sponsorships, co-branding efforts, and other forms of collaborative advertising can help businesses reach a wider audience, raise their profiles, and strengthen their reputations among their target consumers (Wulandari & Assidiq, 2023). Ford can increase the effectiveness

of its marketing campaigns and boost its brand recognition by developing strategic alliances with other companies.

4.6 Budget Allocation

To maintain an equitable and effective distribution of resources across all of Ford's marketing channels, the automaker should routinely analyze and adjust its marketing budget allocation. Ford can better allocate resources by examining the ROI and performance of each marketing channel. Fierarub and Kremeney (2023) argue that aligning marketing activities with corporate goals, increasing the efficacy of marketing efforts, and boosting ROI are all possible with budget optimization procedures.

Considering Ford's current financial and labor constraints, these suggestions are feasible. Through the above suggestions for improvement, Ford will be able to better target and attract audiences, differentiate itself from competitors, and achieve sustainable growth in the harsh automotive business.

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