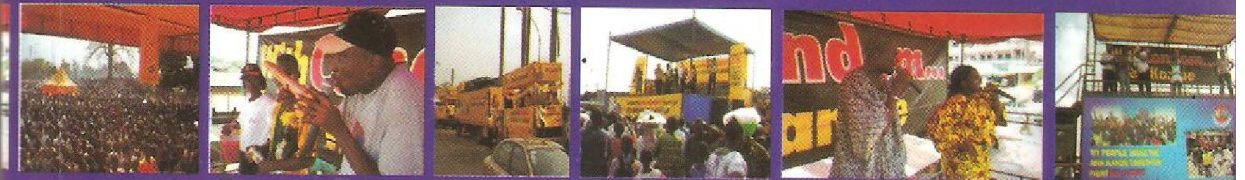


Marketing Contemporary Nigerian Theatre and Cultural Entertainment



Sunday E. Ododo
Olusola A. Fosudo

Chapter 14

Marketing and the Theatre: Praxis Convergence Analogy

***SUNDAY ENESSI ODODO &**

****HASSAN ADEDOYIN R.**

Abstract

Marketing facilitates exchanges between the product or service provider and the consumer of such product or service. This chapter attempts to create a praxical convergence between marketing and theatre service. Here, the basic elements of service marketing are being married with the tools of theatre to establish a level of agreement in terms of contextual factors. 'Service Marketing' is a process of developing ideas and services that satisfy customer and organisational needs, using the principle of pricing, promotion and distribution, while the 'Theatre' is the service in question, abiding by all the intangible, inseparable, variable and perishable features embedded in a normal service. Also, a few clear models are postulated to establish a link between the theatre and marketing.

Introduction

MARKETING and theatre share a very close affinity terms of their public-centredness and service provision orientation. In concrete assessment, both depend on the following business elements of physical facilities: People or participant and processes to thrive well. Fisk, Gountas, Hume, Gountas, Grove and John (2007) in evaluating tools for service setting concludes that theatre is a metaphor crucial for deployment in the marketing mix. This position therefore also suggests that marketing is important to a theatre setting for effective business turnover. Performance is also a common denominator of value assessment for both theatre and marketing. How well a business thrives is predicated on its market performance index, while the quality of theatrical exhibition is adjudged by the artistic and ;technical eloquence of the performance. All of these examples provide a rationale for connecting both

theatre and marketing. Each of these domains has a process of service articulation; these shall be analyzed to provide a fulcrum for the marketing convergence analogical thrust of this study.

The Marketing Process: An Overview

Marketing encompasses all those activities that facilitate exchange between parties. Those activities include a product idea or service conception and its pricing, promotion and distribution (Lamb, Hair and Mc Daniel, 2000:20).

Wright (1999:13) defined marketing “as a management process that is involved in identifying, anticipating, satisfying customer needs and wants through the efficient and effective use of the company’s resources.” It is a product market- and society-driven corporate philosophy that places the needs and concerns of the customer at the very centre of every activity the company undertakes. The concern permeates through every department from administration, secretarial and reception, through to distribution, production, finance, research and development (R & D), and of course, sales and marketing.

Bovee Courtland and Mercer David (1996) presented marketing as a process of developing and exchanging ideas, goods and services that satisfy customer and organisational needs, using the principle of pricing, promotion and distribution”. The key words in this definition can be itemised and defined as follows:

Exchange: the transfer between two or more parties of tangible or intangible items of value.

Product: a good, service or idea for which customers will exchange money or something else for value.

Under the above product factors, there are:

Goods: Tangible products that customers can evaluate by touching, seeing, tasting or hearing

Services: intangible products that offer financial, legal, medical, recreational or other benefits to the consumer, and

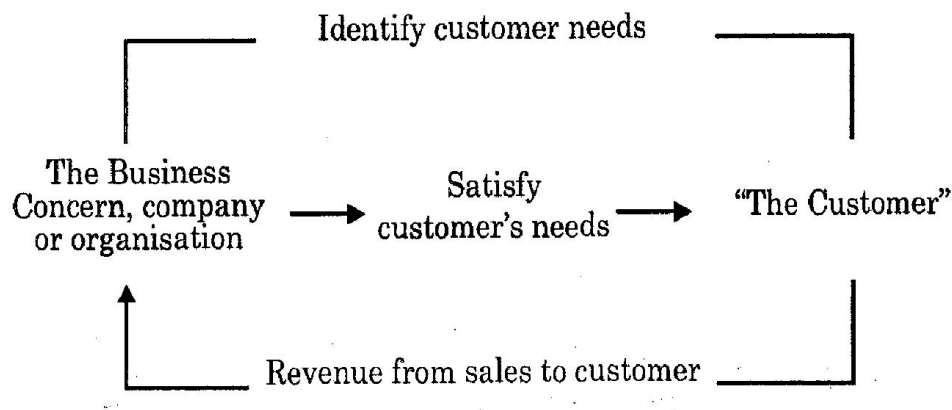
Ideas: concepts, philosophies or images that can be exchanged in the marketplace.

A classical Western definition, summarized by Philip Kotler (1997:29) portrays marketing as a human activity directed at satisfying needs and wants through exchange processes. It is a complex issue and even Kotler, who is one of the acknowledged leaders of marketing theory, has found that the subject is increasingly becoming complex. In the revised edition of his book, his definition was elaborated to: "Marketing is a social and managerial process by which individuals and groups obtain what they need and want through creating and exchanging products and values with others."

Marketing is a complex subject which covers a multitude of economic and social activities, founded on a simple philosophy of mutually satisfying (commercial) exchange relationships. It is a truism that all successful business are marketing-oriented. If they were not meeting or satisfying customer needs profitably, they would not be successful. What matters is the state of mind of the producer/seller, that is, their philosophy of business. If this philosophy includes a concern for the customers' needs and wants, an appreciation of the benefits and satisfactions which are looked for, a genuine effort to establish a dialogue and build a long-term relationship, then this is a marketing philosophy, irrespective of whether or not the organisation possesses any personnel or function designated as "marketing".

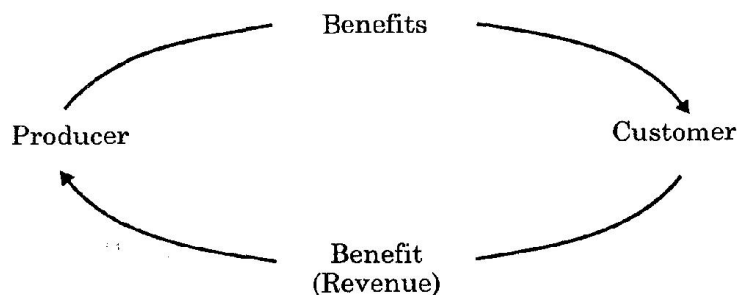
A multitude of definitions have been proposed by marketing scholars, and a key element of their propositions is all the efforts or activities directed at the "customer." This buttresses the popular saying all over the world that "the customer is king".

The concept of marketing and the exchange process can be described below:



In plain terms, the exchange process is to the benefit of the customer in terms of the desired product or service, and a benefit to the organisation in form of revenue/profit.

Fig. 2: Exchange Process



Source: Developed by the authors

A Brief History of Marketing

Marketing has been in existence for a number of millennia, traced back to when people first started to barter the surpluses they had accumulated, though this was mostly a peripheral activity, because in subsistence economies, such surpluses represented a relatively small part of the total. The Industrial Revolution made such surpluses a more common place where their 'marketing' became the province of the 'salesman' with his specialized skills. Some scholars have suggested that the first academic discussion of marketing can be traced back to the turn of the century— to, for instance, the E.D. James series of articles in 'Mill Supplies' between 1911 and 1914. In 1945, the newly fashionable advertising agencies began to redefine the discipline in a way that came close to the modern concept of marketing. This continued till the 50s,

after which marketing unarguably began its modern form in the early. 60s. (see Boyce, L.C and Mercer David, 1996). The discipline matured in the 1970s as led by Philip Kotler's seminal text *Marketing Management*, first published in 1967.

In Nigeria, between 1900 and 1967 (up to the outbreak of civil war in 1967), marketing was largely synonymous with the importation of finished goods from abroad, and the distribution and retailing of some throughout the country in addition to the traditional trade in foodstuffs and handicrafts. The chief importers were United Africa Company (UAC), John Holt, S.C.O.A., United Trading Company (UTC) and Leventis, who also engaged in the export of cash crops like palm produce, cocoa and groundnuts.

By the late 1950s expatriate trading companies started importing sewing machines, assembly plants, cigarette factories, breweries, bicycle assembly lines, cement, soap, corrugated iron sheets, tyres and tubes, etc. Advertising then became more visible, while distribution essentially followed the channel already established for imported products. An important development in this early period was the successful introduction of foreign consumer goods in Nigeria, as well as the people's ready acceptance of these goods.

Marketing made impressive gains in the post-civil war era in Nigeria after the 1970s, as the oil boom period ushered in a modern consumer sector. All manners of goods were imported and people had the purchasing power to buy. Nigerians became highly exposed and their appetite for consumer goods was sharpened. Marketing as a managerial function was increasingly recognized and applied in the operation of Nigerian businesses, that is, departments of marketing emerged and universities and polytechnics started to offer courses in marketing throughout the country and through seminars and workshops. The efforts of the Nigerian Marketing Association (NIMARK) in striving to elevate marketing practice in Nigeria came into force. The Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) in 1986 transformed the marketing scene, as forward-looking companies started recognizing the vital role to be played by experienced marketing personnel. This last position is supported by Ogbechi and Aligbe (1989), who conclude that the entire company should be oriented to thinking "Marketing" first before their special areas.

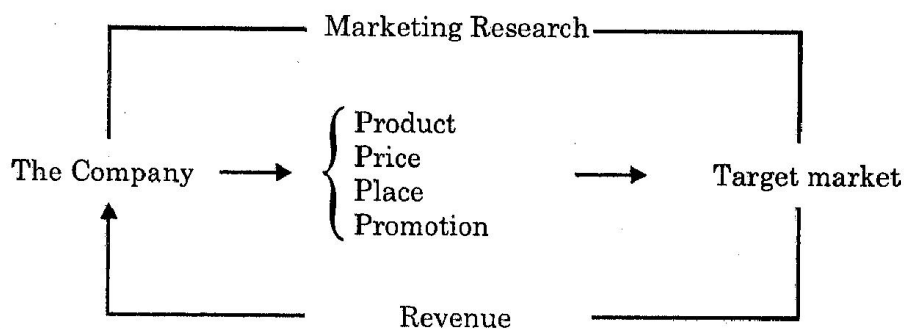
In this regard, the top brewers in Nigeria, Nigerian Breweries Plc and Guinness (Nig.) Plc, had by 1989 appointed marketing men as chief executive officers. These key appointments underscored the increasing importance of marketing in the current management of company operations in Nigeria (Nwokoye, 2000:13).

The Marketing Mix Elements

Boyce and Mercer (1996), Wright (1999), Lamb, Hair and McDaniel (2000), with a host of other marketing scholars, have their common definition of the marketing mix elements as the four P's of marketing:

Product, Price, Promotion and Place (originally postulated by McCarthy, 1960). But an extension of the four P's started by the addition of another 'P' (i.e. People, Personnel or Personal Selling), as forwarded by other scholars. (Waterscote 2002:222).

The four P's in relation to the marketing process can be described thus:



Kotler (1997:92) defined the marketing mix as the set of marketing tools that the firm uses to pursue its marketing objectives in the target market. Non-profit organisations like performing arts groups make good use of marketing because of their desire for larger audiences.

Product: Achumba and Osuagwu (1994: 103) define a product as “the totality of what a firm has to offer, including how the product is communicated to the consumers or clients, and the value attached to the product.”

Kotler (1997:469-472) spans a product through the product variety, quality, design, features, brand name, packaging, sizes, services, warranties and returns. A 'Product' is the firm's tangible offer to the market. Also, services

such as repairs, training, delivery, leasing and show presentations are the products of service organisations like mechanic's shop, academy, courier outlet, estate outlets and theatre production outfits respectively.

Price: This is the amount of money that customers pay for the product. According to Kotler (1997), a product's price should be commensurate with the offer's perceived value. If not, buyers will turn to competitors' products. "Price", in essence, is what the firm gets in value (either in cash or in another form) in exchange for the product (i.e. good, service or idea). "It is a value placed upon the product/service" (Osuagwu, 2002:1).

Place: This is the third marketing 'P'; it involves physical distribution and logistics. Physical distribution is defined as the broad range of activities within a company concerned with the efficient movement of goods and services to outlets where they are readily available for customer purchase. It also involves the movement of raw materials inward i.e. inside the company), that is, to the point of manufacture (Odueyingbo, 2004:2). 'Place' refers to the act of distribution, which facilitates the availability of the product or service to the customer/clients at the point of purchase. These are sales outlets for tangible products, as well as banking halls or hospital buildings for services (intangible products)

Promotion: According to Kotler (1997), promotion includes all the activities the company undertakes to communicate and expose its products to the target market. It involves the setting up of communication and promotion programmes consisting of advertising, sales promotion, public relations, as well as direct and online marketing. Also, promotion is a communication effort of a company that is aimed at informing and reminding customers/clients of their products/services and their benefits, and persuading them to buy such products/services (Osuagwu, 2002:32-33).

Lauterborn Robert (1990:26) equated the seller's marketing 4Ps to the customer's 4Cs as follows:

Product	→	Customer needs and wants
Price	→	Cost to the customer
Place	→	Convenience
Promotion	→	Communication

The physical goods being marketed by the company are easily identified and touched by the customers. Sales are motivated and these products are distributed to the ultimate customer at a benefit, meaning that after the customer's payment he or she takes possession of the goods (product). "Services" are not as tangible and may not be stored or held physically, but can be marketed just like the tangible product.

The Theatre Service

'Theatre' is a concept that deals with the issues relating to man and his society, using all the various media — imageries, symbols, stylised movements and gestures, picturesque words, lightings that transport and reveal man's imagination especially his perception of certain things in life and realities, in order for him to reassert, reassess, appreciate or re-evaluate his existence. (Ademeso, 200 1:2). Theatre is 'lifelike' and familiar. It is an imitation of humans in action. Theatre appears to exist and has existed in all societies in some form or another. In practical terms, going by all the views on the definition of theatre, theatre has no single definition. It means different things to different people. Scholars have defined theatre as a concept that projects a performance which involves actors, musicians, singers, set designers, costume and make-up artists, playwrights, etc and artistic creations, using a stage and in the presence of an audience. This definition is inclusive of the three basic elements of the theatre: performance, stage and audience. The Greeks view the theatre as "theatron" (meaning 'a place to see'). This assertion may be right because there cannot be an audience without a performance. The theatre communication mode can be presented thus:

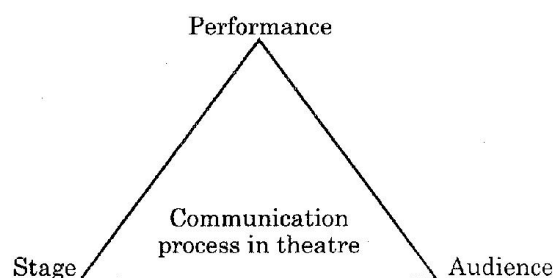


Fig 4: Elements of the Theatre Triangle

Functions of the Theatre

- Theatre mirrors the society (good and bad) with all its symbols. It exposes the individual and collective- fooleries and stupidity, as well as the general attitudes of life.
- Theatre is a form of entertainment. It is used as a means of easing tension and for relaxation purposes.
- Theatre is a tool for education and a channel of information.
- It is used for the preservation of cultural heritage.
- Theatre is a bond and cord of identity. It makes us identify with our society.
- Theatre is a profession. It is, a means of livelihood to different profession — actors, playwrights, musicians, singers, designers, costume and make-up artists, critics, etc.

Theatre practice can be:

- Institution-based: as adopted by educational institutions as major or sub-courses with practical training and award of degrees. Quite a number of Nigerian universities do this.
- Nation-based: where the federal government maintains troupes to project the cultural heritage of the people and as a tool for national cohesion and integration.
- Individual-based: where individuals engage in the theatre with the main target of making a living out of the profession, although usually aimed at having an impact on cultural heritage projection.
- Community-based: which is non-profit making and is established for the use of the society. State arts councils fall into this category.

Theatre can be designed as a tool for learning and teaching, protests, campaigns, demonstrations, etc.

Origin of the Theatre

No one can actually say how, when and where theatre began, but there is general agreement that there are three basic theories as to the origin of the theatre. rThese are the ritual origin, storytelling origin and the play instinct origin (Ademeso, 2001). The ritual origin theory believes that theatre evolved from the rituals of dance, mask, song (singing), costumes and make-up that are

combined to appease the supersensible being. The storytelling theory is the most common among all the theories on the origin of theatre. This theory is common because every society has a story to tell as a tool of information, education, reformation, entertainment and chastisement. The play instinct origin theory suggests that theatre evolved from the ability of to imitate life-the idea that man has the ability to create a 'world' that looks like his world. The origin of theatre in Africa cannot be traced to any tribe, culture or race. Rather, every aspect of African life is imbued with theatre, but it could be said that African theatre evolved from rituals (Ogunbiyi, 1981). European theatre developed from the festivals of Dionysus (the son of Zeus and Semele), the god of fertility and wine. It all began in Athens, a small town near Greece. In Rome too they started with means of entertainment that were organized in the form of festivals. Greek drama had songs and dances as major features of its drama presentations.

Nigerian folk theatre has a long history. Modern Nigerian theatre started with the opening of the Ogunde Theatre in 1944 (Clark, 1979:xvii). Theatre productions then were basically biblical stories, comedies, political satires and protest plays (Ogunba, 2004). Nigerian writers may use indigenous languages or English but some Nigerians have gained world recognition through their craft. They include Chinua Achebe, Cyprian Ekwensi, Amos Tutuola, Flora Nwapa, Elechi Amadi, Ken Saro-Wiwa and Wole Soyinka. These writers have written so many plays that resulted in memorable theatrical performances within and outside the shores of Nigeria.

Nature of Services and the Theatre Instance

Palmer (1999) argued the difficulty of defining a service, as it could be a mixture of 'goods' elements and 'service' elements. A meal in a restaurant contains a combination of goods elements (the food) and service elements (the manner in which the food is served). Even apparently pure goods such as "timber" often contain service elements such as the service required in transporting timber from where it is fabricated to where a customer requires it.

Kotler, Armstrong, Saunders and Wong (1996:586-607) defined a service as "any activity or benefit that one party can offer to another, which is essentially

intangible and does not result in the ownership of anything. Its production may or may not be tied to a physical product. If it is tied to a physical product, the service attached to it cannot be owned but the physical product can.

The following are the characteristics of a “service”:

- *Intangibility*: this means that services cannot be readily displayed, and so cannot be seen, tested, felt, heard or smelt before they are bought. A theatre service may be seen, felt or heard only after the service has been produced, and not before, unlike the physical products that could be felt or seen before purchase.
- *Inseparability*: this means that service cannot be separated from their providers, whether the providers are people or machines. If a person provides the service, then the person is a part of the service. In drama presentation, the drama group renders the service and the service cannot be delivered without consumers (audience) being present.
- *Service variability*: This means that the quality of services depends on who provides them, as well as when, where and how they are provided. For example, some hotels have a reputation for providing better services than others. A drama show can be presented at two venues, but services at these two venues can vary because of the conveniences attached to each of them. One venue can be more comfortable than the other, yet the same drama content is presented. Also, a presentation can never be the same as subsequent ones.
- *Perishability*: This means that services cannot be stored for later sale Or use. Banking service, for instance, cannot be stored so that it can be rendered later. A creative drama show cannot be stored and re-presented later. The play may be re-presented, but the manner can never be the same. A physical product may still maintain its potent nature after storage, but a service would have been altered. The empty seats at slack times of a theatre service cannot be stored for later use during peak periods.
- *Lack of Ownership*: This simply refers to the fact that services cannot be owned. When customers buy physical products (goods) such as cars and computers, they actually own the products and may decide to sell them off when they no longer wish to own them. In contrast, service products lack the quality of ownership. A holiday is experienced and, hopefully, enjoyed;

but after the event, it remains ephemeral, unlike a handy product. A theatre presentation may be enjoyed by the customer (i.e. the audience), but such a presentation (i.e. the service) cannot be owned by the audience.

The Marketing Mix Elements and Theatre Service

The marketing mix is applicable to every product, whether tangible or intangible. Theatre service can therefore be integrated into the marketing mix as follows:

Product: The art itself, being the service rendered by the actors, dancers and other performers on stage, is the 'Product'. The drama presentation can only be seen, felt and heard but the same cannot be acquired or owned by the viewers. Such a product cannot be stored. The perishability of (the theatre) service is not a problem when demand is steady, because it is easy to staff the services in advance (Kotler, 1997). Service companies have tended to become service-oriented rather than product-oriented.

Price: The gate fee charged to the audience for the entire show duration is the 'price'. It is the value placed on the performance by the organizers which the customer (i.e., the audience) usually has to pay before entry into the theatre hall. The word "price" can actually be confusing if one has to view it whether as the value placed on the 'art' by the organizers of the show or as the actual monetary worth of the show. In other words, is 'price' the gate-takings or the real worth of the show? In the real sense of the word, whatever figure is tagged on the show (on posters and tickets) by the sellers is the product (service) price.

Place: This refers to the performance venue (i.e., where the theatre presentation is being made). It is important for a place of contact to be established in order to facilitate product (theatre service) delivery to the customers (the audience). The place of performance may be in a theatre hall or an-open air venue where the audience is supposed to enjoy the service being paid for. The inseparable nature of the theatre service makes it important for both the player and the viewer to be at the performance venue together. Service is typically produced and consumed at the same time and place. It is a simultaneous common venue action; and it is important for the seller (i.e. the

show organizers) to consider a proximate and conducive place for the service transaction to take place. The venue should be access-free for the customer (i.e., the audience), so long as he or she is willing to pay the 'price'.

Promotion: Communication materials such as posters, handbills, television promos, radio jingles, as well as newspaper or magazine advertisements, internet displays, multimedia displays, guerrilla and street or open air demonstrations are the tools used by the seller to reach out to potential buyers (i.e., the yet-to-be or anticipated audience), thereby informing and attracting them to the show. The texts and photos should actually suggest efficiency and quality that will arrest the attention of the desired audience.

Philip Kotler (1997) itemised the service marketing tools as place, people, equipment, communication material, symbols and price.

The traditional 4 marketing Ps' often work for goods, but there is need for additional elements in the service business. Booms and Bitner (1981:47-51) suggested the addition of '3Ps' in the area of service marketing, which are:

- People — selection, training and motivation of employees to fully satisfy customer needs.
- Physical evidence- demonstration of service quality presentation.
- Processes — selection of what process or processes to employ in service delivery.

Marketing actually anticipates the needs of the consumer, with efforts on the part of the company to meet those needs at a price that the consumer is willing to pay. It therefore behoves the art seller to identify what appeals to his or her anticipated audience and provide same at a price that is affordable to such audience.

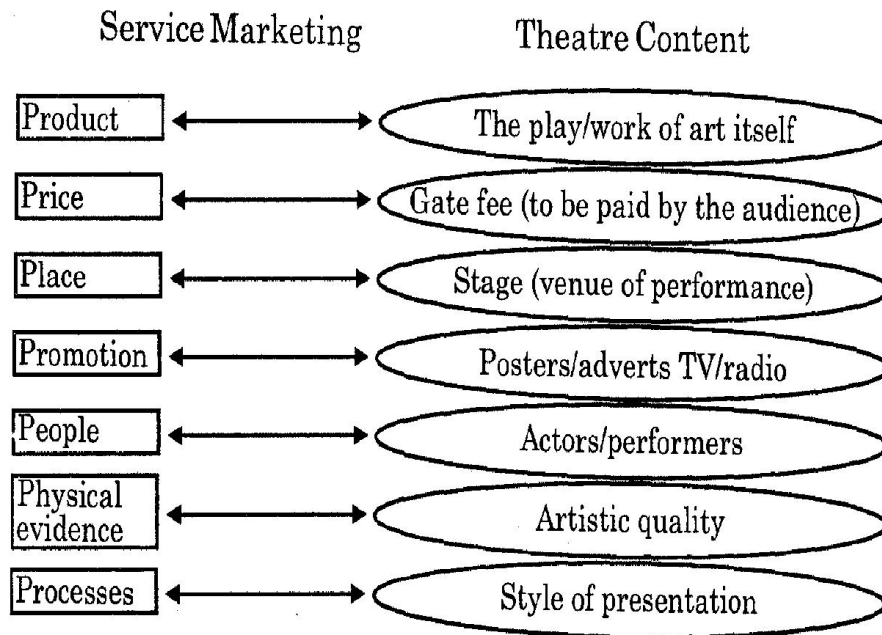


Fig.5: Marketing and Theatre Praxis Convergence View

Table 1: Service Marketing Tools and Theatre Elements (Praxis)

Service Marketing Tools (Kotler, 1997)	Theatre Performance Elements (Wilson/Goldfarb, 2004)
Price Communication materials Symbols	Performance
People	Performers/audience
Place Equipment	Environment/stage

Source: Developed by authors based on the works of Kotler (1997) and Wilson/Goldfarb (2004)

Conclusion

In conclusion, equations established in the models above would bring us to a clear understanding that all the elements of marketing (both service and product) move in agreement with all the qualities of theatre service, in the

areas of both contextual factors and tools. In line with the above, therefore, a clear praxical convergence has been established between marketing and theatre service.

Works Cited

- Ademeso, B. "A Brief on the Theatre: Notes on Introduction to Theatre" Lagos State University, Ojo, 2001.
- Achumba, I.C and Osuagwu, L.C. Marketing: Fundamental and Practice. Rockhill, USA: Al-marks Edu. Research Inc. 1994.
- Booms, B.H. and Bitner, M.J. Marketing Strategies and organisational Structures for Service Firms in Marketing Services, Eds. J. Donnelly and W.R. George. Chicago: American Marketing Association, 1981.
- Bovee, L.C. and Mercer, D. Marketing Theory. USA Blackwell Publishers Inc., 1996.
- Clark, E. Hubert Ogunde: The Making of Nigerian Theatre. Great Britain: Oxford University Press, 1979.
- Fisk, R.P., Gountas, S., Hume, M., Gountas J. Grove, S. J. and John, J. Services Marketing. (1st Asia - Pacific ed). Wiley: Milton, QLD: 2007.
- Johnson, E.E. Playwright: The Fundamentals. Lagos: Concept Publications Ltd., 2000.
- Kotler, P. Marketing Management: Analysis, Planning, Implementation and Control USA: Prentice Hall Inc. (9 1997.
- Kotler, P, Armstrong, G. Saunders, J and Wong, V. Marketing Services, Europe, Prentice Hall, 1996.
- Lamb, W.L, Hair, J. F. and Mc Daniel, C. Marketing, USA: South Western College Publishing Inc., 2000.
- Lauterborn, R. "New Marketing Litany, 4Ps Passe; C-words take-over", Advertising Age, 1990.
- McCarthy, E.J. Basic Marketing: A Managerial Approach. Homewood IL: Richard Irwin Inc. 1960.

- Nwokoye, N.G. *Modern Marketing for Nigeria: Principles and Practice*, Onitsha: Africana-Fep Publishers, 2000.
- Odueyingbo, W. "Planning and Managing Physical Distribution and Logistics". Seminar Paper for the National Institute of Marketing of Nigeria (NIMN) MMP Conversion Programme, 2004.
- Ogunba, O. *Nigerian Drama*. At <http://www.onlinenigeria.com/links/adv.asp?blurb146>. 2004.
- Ogunbiyi, Y. *Drama and Theatre in Nigeria: A Critical Source Book*, Lagos: Nigeria Magazine, 1981.
- Osuagwu, L.C. *Marketing, Principles and Management*. Lagos: Grey Resources Ltd., 2002.
- Palmer, A. "The Marketing of Services". In: *The Marketing Book* (ed. Michael J. Baker.) Butterworth-Heinemann Inc, 4th Ed. 1999.
- Read, A. *Theatre and Everyday Life: An Ethics of Performance*. London and New York: Routledge. 1995.
- Waterscote, W.V. "The Marketing Mix" *Marketing Theory: A Student Text*. (ed. Michael Baker.) London: Thomson Learning Business Press Inc., 2002.
- Wright, R. *Marketing: Origin, Concept, Environment*. Thomson Learning Business Press. Inc., 1999.