

Social marketing concept

According to Kotler and al. (2005) “The societal [social] marketing concept holds that the organisation’s task is to determine the needs, wants, and interests of target markets and to deliver the desired satisfactions more effectively and efficiently than competitors, in a way that preserves or enhances the consumer’s and the society’s well-being.” Ethical and social considerations are built in marketing concept in a way that penetrates consumer’s attention and motivates them to make the change.

The social marketing that is practised in the cases could be characterised as *cause-related marketing*. This means that the general purpose of these programmes is to deliver mutual benefit and well-being for both consumers and the partners of the programme (in publicly financed programmes the society). In cause-related marketing it must be taken into account that some consumers look for signs of good corporate citizenship. This applies to such programmes in which both social marketing and product sales are combined. In other words, consumers when making purchase decisions regarding for example, energy saving domestic appliances, may have expectations for companies’ public interest to environmental issues and not only for profits.

In social and cause-related marketing it is also a question about companies’ reputation as a good corporate citizenship. This sets criteria for planning of the whole project. Several examples of companies implementing or participating energy-related behavioural change programmes were presented among the case studies. However, over half of the programmes were implemented by national or regional organisations concentrating mainly on promoting energy efficiency and/or renewables. It may be possible that these organisations are considered more neutral by the consumers.