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The Marketing of Ideas

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ABSTRACT

This thesis explores ideas as a type of product. Specifically, it investigates the thesis that the marketing of ideas is a demonstrably unique sub-field of the marketing discipline. Ideas marketing literature provides limited theoretical grounding from which to answer this question. Therefore, an understanding of ideas was sought by studying those who work with idea offerings on a daily basis. Three organisations involved in marketing ideas were investigated: The Health Funding Authority, marketing the idea of non-discrimination against people with mental illness; the Peace Foundation, marketing the idea of peace; and a Buddhist Meditation Centre in relation to marketing Buddhism. A fourteen-month study, drawing on a range of ethnographic techniques from participant observation to one-on-one interviews, was conducted with these three case organisations. The findings reveal eleven themes regarding idea offerings. These themes are analysed in order to establish the conceptual domain of ideas. This conceptual domain can be summarised through five descriptors: immateriality, interminability, omnipresence, transferability and Weltanschauung. Each of these characteristics is considered relative to goods, services and social products. In so doing, the distinctiveness of ideas is demonstrated. The five characteristics of ideas form the basis for establishing the marketing of ideas as a unique sub-field of the marketing discipline. The contribution of this thesis for the marketing discipline is both conceptual and theoretical. This research highlights the need to distinguish idea offerings semantically from ideas that are connected to other aspects of marketing activities. The research findings also raise questions about the applicability of some marketing theory to ideas, in particular the exchange paradigm. The mix of incongruity and applicability of marketing theory in the context of ideas imply ideas are situated on the edge of marketing's domain.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

*Nothing else in the world is so
powerful as an idea whose time has come.*

Victor Hugo

1.1 Introduction

This thesis explores the nature of idea offerings, how they differ from goods and services, and the marketing implications of that difference. The impetus for this inquiry came from an introductory lecture in marketing, in which the 1985 American Marketing Association (AMA) definition of marketing was presented to the class:

Marketing is the process of planning and executing the conception, pricing, promotion and distribution of ideas, goods and services to create exchanges that satisfy individual and organizational objectives. (“AMA Board,” 1985, p. 1)

The lecturer deconstructed the definition as a way of introducing marketing concepts such as the 4P’s (product, price, place, promotion), the exchange concept, the strategic nature of marketing and different types of products.

The products given specific mention were goods, services and ideas. As a naïve student of marketing, my curiosity was piqued by these different product types. Many examples of goods such as soap, toothpaste and cars

would be identified in the years of study ahead. A specific course existed to analyse the second category – Marketing of Services. Yet, the third product type – ideas – was given no in-depth discussion.

My marketing experience at that point was limited, so I assumed that an understanding of ideas, as a product type, would develop throughout the course of study. However, upon completion of the undergraduate marketing degree, the marketing of ideas was still not mentioned. A Masters in the area did not alleviate this curiosity. But the doctorate programme provided an opportunity to address this inquisitiveness towards ideas.

Focusing on ideas as a product type however presents difficulties. As addressed in Chapter Two: Conceptualising Ideas, the term idea is itself confusing and can be used in a variety of contexts which effect its definition (e.g., idea generation as the first stage in the new product development process versus ideas as they relate to creativity and innovation). A review of the marketing literature does not provide a comprehensive answer. It only adds further questions. There are limited studies specifically in this area. Ideas (as a product type) are mentioned in social marketing, cause-related marketing, non-profit marketing and political marketing, yet there appears to be no solid conceptual domain underlying this sub-field. And yet, in returning to the origins of this inquiry, the AMA definition of marketing suggests ideas are a significant and relevant marketable product.

Ideas have not always been viewed as a relevant product to be included within the scope of marketing. Indeed, AMA originally defined marketing as:

The performance of business activities that direct the flow of goods and services from producer to consumer or user (Hunt, 1976, p. 17)

This marketing definition (which is notable for its omission of ideas) reflects marketing thought of the pre-1960 era, which focused on the distribution of economic goods and services. As society developed, and marketing thought evolved, this approach to marketing required re-evaluation. Kotler and Levy (1969) entered this debate in proposing that marketing also occurs in non-business activities. They suggested the domain of marketing be extended to incorporate such activities. This development gave rise to the notion of exchange as the focal point of marketing. Exchange theory became the foundation of marketing definitions. For example, Bagozzi defined marketing as,

The process of creating and resolving exchange relationships (Bagozzi, 1974, p. 17)

As discussed in Chapter Three, during this period of marketing thought, the exchange paradigm emerged as a useful framework for conceptualising marketing behaviour and justified the inclusion of non-business activities. Exchange theory describes not only economic transactions, but also concerns the exchange of intangible offerings for intangible meanings. Ideas appear to fall into this category. The shift from distribution as the focus of marketing, to the focus on exchange, suggests ideas are relevant to marketing. Under the exchange-focus definitions, non-business activities, including ideas, fall within marketing's domain.

The focus on exchange is still evident in contemporary marketing. However, the notion of exchange has itself been extended to relational exchange. During the 1990s, numerous academic articles appeared on the subject of

relationship marketing. The general thrust of such articles was that marketing was undergoing a further paradigm shift, in which relationship marketing is seen as the central concern of marketing thought. Whether this argument comes to fruition is unclear. No matter the outcome, ideas as a product type still appear relevant to marketing. As a product type, ideas are a non-business activity (as described by Kotler and Levy, 1969a), and an exchangeable commodity.

While ideas appear relevant to contemporary marketing thought (under the premise that marketing concerns mutually satisfying exchange relationships), a further definitional question must be asked: why is it necessary to provide a listing of product types in the marketing definition? (as in the case for the AMA definition of marketing). The justification for including various product types lies primarily in the services marketing literature.

Having now established a conceptual basis for services marketing (through successfully addressing the question: are goods and services different?), services marketing has moved towards providing managerial advice and considering practical implications for marketing intangible, inseparable, perishable, and heterogeneous products. Services are different from goods, and therefore the marketing of services offers unique challenges relative to their tangible counterparts.

If ideas are demonstrated as being different from both services and goods, then the marketing of ideas equally may hold idiosyncrasies worthy of consideration. The positioning of ideas (alongside goods and services) in the AMA definition suggests that differences may exist. Yet, any potential difference between ideas, goods and services has never been adequately addressed. While ideas appear relevant to marketing, as a product type they

have been largely ignored. This thesis aims to address this gap in marketing theory by investigating the nature of ideas and their potential difference relative to goods and services. In doing so, it considers the very nature of marketing. And as suggested by Morgan (1996, p. 19), “the health of the marketing discipline is manifest in its constant desire and willingness to review and question the domain of marketing”. This thesis adds to that debate through focusing on the potential third dimension of marketing’s domain: ideas.

The proposition that ideas are distinct from both goods and services is supported in a variety of marketing literature. For example, as discussed in Chapter Three: Conceptual Underpinnings and Justification for Ideas Marketing, some product typologies present ideas as a specific product category. Such categorisation distinguishes ideas as separate from goods and services. Fine’s (1981) product taxonomy for example classifies products as goods, services, ideas and issues/causes. The basis for this categorisation is two-dimensional: the intangibility associated with the offering, and the non-profit/profit making motivation of the firm. Murphy and Enis’ (1986) product typology, based on consumer benefits, also lists ideas as a separate category from goods and services. Hunt’s (1976) Three Dichotomies Model further supports the notion of ideas as a distinguishable category, although the labels used to describe such offerings are social marketing or societal issues. In each of these cases, other product types are mentioned, for example, social products, causes and issues. Rather than limiting the product types to three main categories (as suggested in the AMA definition of marketing), product typologies appear to proliferate classifications outside goods, services or ideas.

The mention of products other than goods, services or ideas is also provided in most introductory marketing texts. For example, Kotler, Brown, Adam

and Armstrong (2001) list product types as physical objects, services, persons, places, organisations and ideas. Similarly, Kinnell and MacDougall (1997) suggest products include physical products, services, persons, organisations and ideas. Examples listed under the idea category include churches, charities and educators. This means that product types may include not only goods and services, but ideas, organisations, persons, issues, causes and social products. The list of product types seems to be growing rather than consolidating into the three main product types referred to in the AMA definition. Furthermore, such categories appear unstable with examples floating between labels. Politics, for example, is mentioned by Kinnell and MacDougall (1997) as a “person” product, while political marketing literature refers to this product as an idea (e.g., Butler & Collins, 1994; Clemente, 1992).

Such inconsistency in the literature creates more confusion than clarity. As a result, a broad research question was posed:

Is the marketing of ideas a demonstrably unique sub-field of the marketing discipline?

At the heart of the question lie three fundamental issues:

1. What is the conceptual domain of an idea offering?
2. What are the unique characteristics of idea offerings that distinguish them from both goods and services?
3. What are the implications of these unique characteristics for marketing?

This inquiry set out to provide some answers to these elusive questions. The marketing literature provided clues, but no answers. An understanding was sought by observing and listening to those involved daily in marketing ideas. Specifically, an ethnographic study was conducted with three organisations: the Health Funding Authority’s Project to Counter Stigma and Discrimination Against People with Mental Illness, the Peace Foundation, and a Buddhism Meditation Centre.

A fourteen-month inquiry provided insight and understanding of idea offerings. The result is a conceptualisation of idea offerings, which outlines the unique characteristics of these products and explains how the marketing of ideas differs from the marketing of goods and services.

While this inquiry was born from theoretical curiosity, its relevance to industry is also significant. In recent years, industry talk of the “age of creativity” and “age of ideas” suggests idea offerings are an important topic to explore (Behara, 1997; De Bono, 1999; Roberts, 1999b; Saatchi & Saatchi, 1997). Countless articles in industry publications (e.g., Kern, 1997; Knox, 1990; Majaro, 1988) posit the importance of ideas and creativity in today’s environment. International advertising agency Saatchi and Saatchi for example, propose that ideas are the “currency of the future” (Saatchi & Saatchi, 1997, p. 14). In light of such talk, understanding ideas has become imperative. This thesis goes some way towards developing that knowledge.

1.2 Organisation of the thesis

The thesis begins with a definitional and theoretical overview. Chapter Two outlines the definitional boundaries framing this inquiry. The term “idea”

figures often in academic and every-day conversation. This chapter therefore undertakes the task of clarifying how “idea” is used within this study. Chapter Three reviews current marketing literature on ideas marketing, and provides the theoretical justification for including ideas within marketing’s domain.

The thesis then turns to the methodological framework guiding the research, and outlines the ethnographic method employed in the three case organisations.

Chapter Five provides the contextual background to the case organisations. Specific traits are identified across all three case organisations, and these organisational characteristics are discussed.

These four chapters therefore provide the definitional, theoretical, methodological and contextual background necessary for understanding the research findings. The research findings are then presented over three chapters. Chapter Six presents the themes to emerge during the inquiry regarding the production of ideas. Chapter Seven focuses on the consumption of idea offerings, while Chapter Eight deals with the marketing activities. These three research findings chapters are essentially a reiteration of the data in a structured manner that is easier to digest than a screed of interview transcription and fieldnotes.

The research findings are then synthesised into the five characteristics of ideas in Chapter Nine. These five characteristics are considered relative to goods and services, as well as social products. Chapter Ten discusses the theoretical implications of this inquiry, and concludes with a commentary on how the contributions from this thesis suggest future research avenues for further improving our understanding of idea offerings.

CHAPTER 2

CONCEPTUALISING IDEAS

A man may die, nations may rise and fall, but an idea lives on.

John F. Kennedy

2.1 Introduction

During this inquiry, in everyday conversations with respondents, supervisors and colleagues, the term idea emerged continuously. Common-use phrases such as “I’ve got an idea”, “that’s a good idea”, “here’s an idea”, meant that discussion around this thesis often became entangled in vocabulary gymnastics. From the outset, it became clear that it would be necessary to explain how the term idea related to this particular marketing thesis.

The term idea is problematic, and attempting to answer the question, “what is an idea?” led down murky corridors with confusing corners. Such a question has caused speculation and debate among theorists, philosophers, scientists and scholars for centuries. An entire thesis could be devoted to that one question and an answer would still prove elusive. Nevertheless, the philosophical interpretations of idea provide a conceptual foundation for defining this elusive term. Philosophical definitions of idea are therefore considered within the context of marketing, since, for this thesis, what is important is how idea is used as part of marketing language. With reference to philosophical definitions, this chapter therefore outlines the marketing

use of idea, and distinguishes common-everyday usage of the term from the application of idea in this thesis – specifically idea offerings. In doing so, this chapter provides the definitional boundary for understanding how the term idea is regarded within this inquiry.

2.2 Philosophical interpretations of idea

Philosophy provides a means to establish an operational definition of the term idea. Historically, this term has attracted contention and debate, from early metaphysicians such as Plato and Aristotle, through to the modern day philosophers¹. Such debate has created a volume of philosophical literature on ‘what is an idea?’ While this literature may appear indeterminate and somewhat obscure in places, it does provide a potential basis for understanding, and thereby defining, idea.

In philosophy, the term idea is common to all languages and periods, but as emphasised in *The Encyclopaedia Britannica* (1910, p. 280) “there is scarcely any term which has been used with so many different shades of meaning”. Nevertheless, a review of the philosophy literature reveals a number of common threads and specific differences in the use of idea. In particular there is a marked contrast between considering idea as a universal principle (e.g. as defined through Plato’s ‘Theory of Forms’), versus defining idea as an action of the mind (e.g. 17th century philosophers).

The difference between ideas as a universal principle versus the 17th century interpretation of idea as a thought process holds particular significance to

¹ Modern day philosophy incorporates the last three hundred years, with Rene Descartes (1596 – 1650) heralded as the father of modern philosophy.

this thesis. A broad review of marketing literature suggests that idea is used in at least four different ways, and its meaning differs slightly depending on the context. The four uses of idea in marketing language include:

1. Ideas as creative inputs
2. Ideas as the first stage in the new product development process
3. Ideas as the basis for advertising campaigns
4. Ideas as products

The first three marketing uses of idea relate most directly with 17th century philosophical thinking regarding ideas as thought process. The focus of this thesis however is on the 4th interpretation of idea – ideas as products. This use of idea is closely aligned to early Greek philosophers' interpretation of idea. These contrasting philosophical views of ideas are therefore discussed.

2.2.1 17th Century interpretation of idea

Locke, a 17th century philosopher, defines idea as the 'object of understanding when a man thinks' (Alexander, 1985). This definition is similar to another British empiricist Berkeley (1685-1753) who found idea to be a word commonly used to denote the immediate objects of understanding. Locke (and Berkeley's) empirical thinking² is built on the premise that all our knowledge comes from experience³. This means that, in his view, there cannot possibly be ideas that are prior to experience, (therefore dismissing Plato 'innate ideas'). For Locke, ideas are not mnemonic, and are applied not to the mental process, but to anything

² Locke is generally credited as the founder of British empiricism, and as the father of modern political liberalism (Solomon, 1989).

³ Indeed, the *tabula rasa* view of the mind is regarded as Locke's most famous epistemological concept. The term '*tabula rasa*' translated as 'blank tablet', simply means the mind is a 'blank' at birth, and everything we know must be 'stamped in' through experience (Solomon, 1989).

whether physical or intellectual which is the object of it. This view of idea appears similar to his predecessor Descartes' (1596-1650) definition of thought.

While there are differences in Locke's empiricism and Descartes' rationalism, their understanding of idea (or thought) displays some similarities. For both philosophers, ideas are essentially what the mind is employed about in thinking (although Locke further suggests that thoughts are 'made up of' ideas). Descartes refers to ideas as 'something existing in the mind', hence his association with 'thoughts'. In both philosophical doctrines however, there lurks confusion between the object of thought (what is being thought about) and the activity of thinking (what thinking itself consists in or amounts to) (Kenny, 1994; Solomon, 1989). Nevertheless, both approaches to the word idea lay, in part, the foundation for the modern sense and use of the term (Alexander, 1985). This modern use of idea equates most closely to marketing's interpretation of idea as being either a creative input, part of the new product development process, or the basis of an advertising campaign. In each of these cases, the idea at hand is essentially part of the thinking towards developing a good or service. This is distinguishable from the fourth marketing use of idea – ideas as products. The notion that ideas are marketable commodities in their own right relates most closely to Plato's definition of ideas.

2.2.2 Early Greek philosophical interpretation of idea

It has been argued that the single most important feature of Plato's (427-347B.C.) philosophy is his 'Theory of Forms' (the Greek word used by Plato for 'Form' is "*eidos*", which also translates as 'idea') (Solomon, 1989; Kenny, 1994). This doctrine which concerns Plato's interpretation and

understanding of idea, is partly logical and partly metaphysical. The logical part has to do with the meaning of general words. Language uses general words such as ‘cat’ to refer not to this or that cat, but rather some kind of universal ‘cattiness’. Plato explains that whenever a number of individuals (e.g. cats) have a common name (for which we apply a general word), they have a common idea or ‘form’. For example, though there are many cats, there is only one idea or ‘form’ of a cat. This is not born when a particular cat is born, and does not die when it dies. In this way, ideas, or Forms, are eternal and unchanging (Russell, 1961; Weinberg, 1970).

The metaphysical part of Plato’s Theory of Forms deals with the ‘World of Being’ (universals) and particulars. The word ‘cat’ means a certain ideal cat, “the cat”, of which particular cats are only temporary appearances. In this way, the Forms are usually thought to be separate from the physical world, or separate from their particulars. The particulars, which are the objects of sense, are more or less imperfect copies of these universals. This distinction between universals and particulars is sometimes referred to as the ‘what’ (the idea, or Form of the ‘cat’) and the ‘that’ (the particular cat) (Demos, 1948). Under the Platonic doctrine, the value of an idea is therefore precisely that it can be universalised, so that it transcends the particularity and mutability of a thing (Macquarrie, 1970; Weinberg, 1970).

For Platonic metaphysicians, ideas therefore exist in a “supersensible” reality (the ‘World of Being’). While you can think, imagine or remember ideas, you can never touch or feel them. This interpretation of idea relates to the marketing use of idea as a product type. Rather than being part of the thinking process behind the development of a good or service, the Platonic interpretation of idea aligns with the concept that ideas exist in their own right. This thesis explores such ideas – albeit with consideration that ideas exist in a supersensible reality. Rather than focusing on ideas as part of a

marketing process, this research concerns ideas as a marketable commodity. Locke's definition of ideas as thought processes approximates more closely to the usage of ideas as creative inputs, in product development and as the basis for advertising campaigns. Plato's interpretation of idea as a universal principle is most appropriate to idea offerings, and distinguishes them from other uses of the term in the marketing realm.

2.2.3 Marketing uses of idea

As outlined above, the term idea figures often in marketing language, and its meaning differs depending on the context. The four common uses of idea are:

1. Ideas as creative inputs
2. Ideas as part of the new product development process
3. Ideas as part of an advertising campaign
4. Ideas as products

Each of these interpretations of idea is discussed below.

2.2.3.1 Ideas as creative inputs

Industry talk of the "age of creativity" or "age of ideas" has turned attention toward creativity and ideas as vital ingredients for a successful business. Ideas in this context are taken as creative inputs. Numerous articles (both academic and in popular business magazines) proclaim the importance of creative ideas in today's marketplace. For example, Majaro (1988) claims,

The inescapable conclusion that I have reached by observing a large number of companies in many parts of the world is

that the truly excellent ones are those that have consciously learned how to harness creative ideas from within the firm and from the external environment and, at the same time, manage the firm's innovation in a systematic way. (as cited in Knox, 1990, p. 246)

Similarly, Kern (1997, p. 18) states “in today's marketplace, cutting-edge ideas are essential for maximizing results”. An entire academic field has established around ideas as creative inputs, with specific academic journals such as *Creativity and Innovation Management*, *European Journal of Innovation Management*, and *The Journal of Creative Behavior*.

Practitioners also assert the notion that creative ideas are the “currency of the future”. For example Peter Biggs, head of Creative New Zealand, declares, “it's not about primary products anymore, but our future lies in what we do with our primary products, what we do with our thinking, our imagination, our innovation” (Biggs, 2001).

In both academic and industry language, this use of idea is essentially about harnessing creativity to come up with ground-breaking innovations. Advocates of creative ideas draw on the work of people such as DeBono (1999), Altier (1988), Rogers (1983) and Amabile (1996). In this application of idea, there is a linkage between ideas and creativity, as well as innovation, imagination and problem solving⁴.

In all these cases, idea is taken as a creative input into a business. Creative ideas are seen as a prime asset, or as described by Sonnenberg (1991, p. 13), “an organization's [*sic*] greatest natural resource”. In this sense, ideas form part of the creative thinking necessary to run a successful business. This

⁴ Linkage to this use of idea can also be found in ‘knowledge management’ literature (e.g., Alvesson, Karreman & Swan, 2002; Bontis, 1999; Morey, Maybury & Thuraishingham, 2002; see also *Journal of Knowledge Management*).

particular interpretation of idea differs from the use of idea in this thesis. Ideas as creative inputs are signalled in this thesis as “creative ideas”, in order to distinguish this use of idea from idea as a type of product.

2.2.3.2 Ideas in new product development

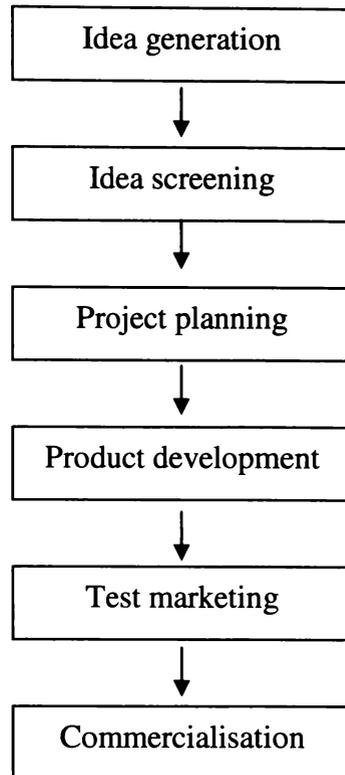
For decades, marketing scholars and practitioners have stressed the importance of continuous new product development for the ongoing survival of any business. For example, Hanna, Ayers, Ridnour and Gordon (1995) assert,

The introduction of new products continues to be a critical business activity to all companies, both consumer and business marketing-orientated....Without a doubt, the long-term health of most organisations is tied to their ability to provide existing and new customers with an ongoing stream of new products. (p. 33)

Most marketing textbooks devote an entire section to new product development. Indeed, when studying marketing, it is almost impossible to not be exposed to this construct.

The new product development process is essentially about finding, testing and launching profitable new products. The process can be mapped as a developmental sequence, as illustrated by Peter and Donnelly (1998, p. 124):

Figure 2.1. New Product Development Process



As shown, the first step in this process is idea generation. The use of idea in this context relates to the discovery and development of a new idea, which is transformed into a good or service. As Peter and Donnelly put it (1998, p. 128), “every product starts as an idea”. But it is the product (good or service) that is taken and tested in the marketplace – not the idea *per se*. The use of idea in this context is therefore about idea generation. There is undoubtedly a link to creativity and innovation. Findings in this thesis regarding idea products may have some relevance to idea generation. However, this inquiry is not focusing on ideas underlying all goods and services. This thesis does not concern the thinking inherent to the development of a commercial good or service. Rather, the focus is on ideas

that exist as products themselves. Therefore, the phrase “idea generation” is used in this thesis to distinguish this preliminary stage of the commercial cycle.

2.2.3.3 Ideas in advertising campaigns

Advertising professionals have also recognised the importance of ideas to their work. Saatchi and Saatchi, the international advertising agency, for example, now regard themselves as an “ideas company” (Saatchi & Saatchi, 1997). They even took “advertising” out of their name and, in their words, aim to become “the hottest ideas company on the planet” (Saatchi & Saatchi, 1997).

In this context, ideas relate to the idea being promoted as part of the advertising for a particular good or service. Roberts (1999b) explains this use of idea with the example of detergent:

In detergent land we [Saatchi & Saatchi] run a brand called Tide in the United States which has 39% share. And we took Tide from the heart of the laundry to the heart of the family. And Tide is now in 50% of American homes, 1 in 2. And the other 1 in 2 would buy it if they could afford it. And the words they use is “oh Tide, its one of the family, you can always count on Tide”. The fact that Tide gives you the best cleaning in the world, it’s very high on respect, but so what. That gets you an 18% share....The higher end benefit is that if you use Tide to get your clothes cleaner and your kids feel better and they don’t feel dirty and so forth. So that makes you a better mum, and you feel great about yourself because you’re a cool mum, therefore you love Tide. So it’s the idea behind the product performance that counts. (T-G1-KR, p. 3)

Ideas underlying advertising campaigns are implicitly linked to branding. For example, advertising of Disney products (from the theme-park to merchandise) is based on the ideas of fun, fantasy and happiness. These ideas lie at the core of Disney's brand, and are communicated through all Disney products. Volvo is marketed on the idea of safety; Steinlager on New Zealand pride. Advertising agencies aim to have consumers "buy into" that idea, and purchase the respective product on the strength of its underlying idea. This is why Saatchi and Saatchi, an advertising agency, regard their company as being in the "business of ideas". However, while an idea is being marketed, the purpose of the promotion is to encourage the purchase of the good or service. The advertising campaign forms part of the thinking process behind marketing the good or service. Again, it is not the idea itself that is for sale. This application of idea is referred to in this thesis as "advertising ideas".

2.2.3.4 Ideas as products

A fourth use of the term idea is the notion of idea products. In this context, idea relates to a type of product that is exchangeable within the marketplace. What is being marketed is the idea, as an idea, not the idea underlying a good or service. Examples range from the idea of peace, and the idea of marriage, to scientific ideas, and religious ideas. These are idea offerings, neither goods nor services. They are marketed solely as an idea, as a type of offering that can be purchased, or otherwise acquired, by consumers. Ideas as creative inputs and ideas in new product development are clearly not universal and eternal, since they are concerned with innovating activities and products that have never existed before. Likewise, ideas in advertising campaigns must respond to changing social values and social norms. Therefore these uses of the word idea are closer to Locke than to Plato.

Ideas as products however do refer to ideas being universal, eternal, unchanging, and belonging to the 'world of being', and are in this sense far closer to Plato's theory⁵.

The marketing of ideas sub-field is based on this interpretation of idea. It does not concern creative ideas, idea generation or advertising ideas. For the purpose of this thesis, unless stated otherwise, the term idea is used to mean idea offerings.

A clear definition of idea offerings is yet to emerge. As outlined in the following chapter, ideas marketing currently suffers from a weak conceptual basis. While examples such as peace, religion, marriage and so forth are proposed, the definition of such idea offerings is unclear. An objective of this thesis is to find such a definition – to recognise what idea offerings are, particularly in relation to goods and services. Identifying the characteristics of idea offerings – what common traits idea offerings share, and what makes them unique – is the first step towards laying the conceptual basis for the ideas marketing subfield.

Due to the lack of definitional frameworks for ideas marketing, this inquiry seeks to find a definition of ideas from studying the products themselves. Specifically, an ethnographic approach has been adopted as a way of understanding the industry's internal definition of the term. Respondents' definitions and descriptions of their offering give a privileged insight into what idea offerings are. The data leads to a definition of idea offerings which is grounded in the field.

⁵ Of all the Western philosophers, Plato comes closest to the philosophy of Buddhism, and is therefore especially applicable to one of the case studies in this thesis.

Before such an inquiry is entered upon, it is necessary to review the literature in detail, in order to discover whether definitions already exist, and determine if the proposed method is needed and appropriate. This review is presented in Chapter Three.

CHAPTER 3

CONCEPTUAL UNDERPINNINGS AND JUSTIFICATION FOR IDEAS MARKETING

*One's mind, once stretched by a new idea,
never regains its original dimensions*

Oliver Wendell Holmes

3.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a theoretical perspective on idea offerings. The evolution of marketing thought over the past four decades is reviewed, to provide the theoretical context to the development of ideas marketing as a distinct field of enquiry. In particular, the 1960s and 1970s debate surrounding the broadening of the marketing concept sparked interest in the application of marketing to non-business activities. The embryonic beginnings of the marketing of ideas were formed during this period.

Following this review of the broadening debate and the resulting implications on the definition of marketing, attention turns to research specifically dealing with the marketing of ideas. Relative to goods and services marketing, ideas marketing has received the least attention and study. Nevertheless, research and conceptual papers focusing on this sub-field support the view that ideas are a distinguishable product category with inherent properties that create specific marketing challenges (Fine, 1981; Kotler, 1972; Rothschild, 1979; Whyte, 1985).

The significant theoretical issues discussed include: the importance of the marketing exchange paradigm as justification for including ideas marketing as a legitimate field of enquiry; potential idea products (as suggested through both examples and product typologies) and the inherent characteristics of ideas; and the challenges to consider when marketing ideas. A key theme to emerge from this review is the similarity between ideas marketing and the burgeoning field of social marketing. A review of social marketing is therefore provided, and the question of difference between these two research fields posed. The chapter concludes with a list of questions that emerge during the literature review, which guide this research into the marketing of ideas.

3.2 Origins of ideas as a product type

The initial stirrings of the marketing of ideas sub-field can be traced back to the vigorous debate in the 1960s and 1970s surrounding the nature and scope of marketing. Questions regarding marketing's domain were accentuated with Kotler and Levy's (1969a) seminal article *Broadening of the Marketing Concept*. Kotler and Levy (1969a) observed that marketing-like activities took place in numerous fields including churches, schools, museums, political contests and social welfare agencies and suggested that the concept of marketing be expanded to include such non-business organisations.

The idea that marketing was an all-pervasive activity, which applied as much to politicians as it did to toothpaste, was not accepted by all scholars. Luck (1969), for example, suggested marketing should be limited to those

business processes and activities that ultimately result in a market transaction. Enis (1973) similarly proposed the traditional domain of marketing should be respected, while Arndt (1975) expressed concern over the potential confusion in terminology.

Kotler (1972) denounced such critical response as “myopic” and suggested that the original broadened proposal should be expanded still further to include all transactions between an organisation and all of its publics. This “generic concept” suggested a multidimensional approach that included broadening the nature of the product to anything of value, the objective of exchange to any type of payoff and the target audience to any public that relates to the organisation.

While the debate continued during subsequent decades, the movement to broaden marketing’s domain was perhaps initially realised in 1971 when the *Journal of Marketing* devoted an entire issue to marketing’s changing social/environmental role. Empirical evidence supporting the broadened and generic view of marketing was provided by Nickels (1974) who reported that an overwhelming majority of marketing professors believed marketing was carried out by non-business organisations. By 1976, Hunt declared the “battle” won and suggested all that remained was the need to market “marketing to non-marketers” (Hunt, 1976, p. 24).

A limitation of the broadened concept of marketing is that it rests on the inclusion of non-business activities. Considering non-business activities within the scope of marketing opened the door towards the broadened view of marketing, but it also limits the application of marketing to profit-orientated products that are not goods and services. Politics, for example, may be profit orientated, as can religion. Gambling and fashion design are classified by Fine (1981) as profit-orientated ideas. Such examples appear to

be not goods and not services, but also not non-business. If non-business activities are the justification for expanding marketing's domain, then shouldn't the product types listed in any marketing definition simply be: goods, services and non-business activities? Similarly, are all goods and services assumed to be profit-orientated? In essence, the seminal work of Kotler and Levy (1969a) raised an important question, but the very question – should non-business activities be included in marketing's domain? – limited any possible answer. Where business-orientated ideas, such as gambling for example, sit within marketing's domain is still unclear.

The arguments of Kotler and Levy (1969a) and others (Alderson & Cox, 1948; Hunt, 1976; Nickels, 1974) towards including non-business activities within the scope of marketing sat at the heart of the marketing discipline. The question prompted a more central debate regarding marketing. In essence, such scholars were grappling with the question: “what is the proper conceptual domain of the construct labelled marketing?” Or more simply, what is marketing? In investigating the nature of ideas, and how they are distinct from goods and services, this thesis similarly questions the boundaries of marketing.

With the gradual establishment, but now prevalent appreciation of marketing's application to non-business activities, by the 1980s the definition of the construct itself required re-evaluation. In 1985, largely in response to the broadening debate, and following exhaustive deliberation, the American Marketing Association (AMA) provided an updated definition of marketing (“AMA Board,” 1985). As explained in Chapter One, this redefinition took a step away from the traditional interpretation that stresses the distribution of economic goods and services. Rather, mutually satisfying exchange (which was argued as the justification for including non-business

activities) became the foundation of all marketing. The reformulated definition is as follows:

Marketing is the process of planning and executing the conception, pricing, promotion and distribution of ideas, goods and services to create exchanges that satisfy individual and organisational objectives. (“AMA Board,” 1985, p. 1)

At the heart of the AMA definition, (and similar marketing definitions as outlined in Chapter One), is the concept of exchange. Exchange theory provides theoretical justification for the inclusion of non-business activities within marketing’s domain. Indeed, Bagozzi (1974, p. 77) argues “exchange has been proposed by a number of marketing scholars as a fundamental framework for viewing marketing”. In reviewing the origins of idea products, as justified through the acceptance of the generic concept of marketing, a discussion of exchange theory therefore seems imperative.

3.2.1 Marketing Exchange Paradigm

Bagozzi (1975a), a seminal author on the topic, argues that “the exchange concept is a key factor in understanding the expanding role of marketing” (Bagozzi, 1975a, p. 32). During the broadening debate, the exchange paradigm emerged as a useful framework for conceptualising marketing behaviour and justifying the inclusion of non-business activities. Indeed it is argued as the basis of the generic concept of marketing (Bagozzi, 1975a; Houston & Gassenheimer, 1987).

Alderson and Cox (1948) were one of the first marketing scholars to propose exchange as a foundation of marketing. Alderson’s ‘Law of Exchange’ states:

Given that x is an element of the assortment A_1 , and y is an element of the assortment A_2 , x is exchangeable for y , if and only if, these three conditions hold:

- (a) x is different from y
- (b) the potency of the assortment A_1 is increased by dropping x and adding y
- (c) the potency of the assortment A_2 is increased by adding x and dropping y

In essence, Alderson and Cox's (1948) description of exchange specifies the conditions under which exchange occurs. It provides the premises in which exchange relationships can be formed. While significant, because it provided a basis to develop exchange theory, Alderson and Cox's (1948) work is limited in that it assumes positive values are reciprocated in the exchange between two parties. It does not consider one-way exchange, deceptive exchange or a combination of positive, negative or neutral actions on behalf on either party. These shortcomings of Alderson's 'Law of Exchange' led Bagozzi (1975a; 1975b), to develop a more general theory of exchange, which is more reflective of how exchange relationships occur. For Bagozzi (1975a), exchange occurs under a system of univocal or mutual relationships between two or more parties and can involve the symbolic transfer of both tangible and intangible entities. This evolution of marketing exchange theory mirrors the development of marketing thought, from the exchange of tangible goods for a tangible return (e.g. monetary) through to the transfer of intangible offerings for intangible meanings. As suggested through Plato's interpretation of ideas, ideas are universal and intangible. The development in exchange theory, and the corresponding redefinition of marketing, suggests Platonic-type ideas do fall within marketing's realm.

The limited view of marketing that excludes non-business activities parallels the "economic man" perspective in exchange theory. This perspective

focuses on the direct transfer of tangible entities that exhibit utilitarian meaning. The motivation for exchange in the economic model is the anticipated use or tangible characteristics of the market offering. The underlying assumptions of economic exchange were the basis of the traditional interpretation of marketing as the distribution of economic goods (Bagozzi, 1975a; Houston & Gassenheimer, 1987).

As the generic view of marketing gained acceptance, other types of exchange, including the generalised and complex exchange of offerings that embody symbolic or mixed meanings, were recognised. A transfer may occur between more than two parties, with the offering exhibiting more intangible characteristics such as psychological or social meaning. Such exchanges may not include the payment of money for tangible and functional products. Rather the exchange occurs under a system of univocal or mutual relationships between two or more parties and involves the symbolic transfer of both tangible and intangible entities. Such exchange relationships are typical of services and non-business activities. The offerings of religious services, political contests and social welfare agencies are highly intangible and symbolic, and often involve many parties in the transfer process. Such characteristics appear to mirror the previous discussed Platonic interpretation of ideas as being universal and intangible. The acknowledgement in exchange theory of such transactions provides credence for the inclusion of intangible and symbolic offerings, such as the exchange of ideas, within the scope of marketing.

The exchange paradigm is particularly relevant to idea products in providing criteria for determining what ideas are regarded as legitimate marketing exchanges. One criticism of the inclusion of ideas as a specific product type is that it involves all types of human activity – the bounds of marketing appear limitless (Kurzbard & Soldow, 1987). As explained by White (1986)

however, not all exchanges are marketing exchanges. The determining condition is one of mutual satisfaction. The basis of mutually satisfying exchange rules out idea products such as Gandhi's population control campaign, whereby Indians were sterilised without understanding what was happening. While marketing techniques can be used to deceive or manipulate people such as in this case, the absence of the essential criterion of mutual satisfaction denotes that such transactions are not marketing. The closest description that may be used in such cases is propaganda. Such deception may be more aptly described as propaganda.

The significance of the exchange paradigm is highlighted by its specific mention in the revised AMA definition of marketing. Mutually satisfying exchange relationships have become the crux of contemporary marketing thought, and provide the justification for including non-business activities such as idea offerings. The basis of such mutual satisfaction need not be monetary, nor tangible. Offerings embodying symbolic (or a mix of both symbolic and utilitarian) meaning are as much marketing exchanges as the distribution of tangible goods. More importantly though, exchange theory offers some criteria for determining what ideas, as a product type, include. Mutual satisfaction is the essential condition when deciding if a particular idea is indeed a marketing exchange.

Those studies that label specific products as ideas however rarely mention the criterion of mutual satisfaction. This may be indicative of the confusion surrounding idea products – how they are defined, what their inherent qualities are, and what products should be labelled as ideas (as opposed to goods, services or issues/causes). The lack of consensus regarding such conceptual issues is further evident in the inconsistency with which certain products are categorised. For example, population control campaigns are mentioned by Kotler and Levy (1969a) as an idea, by Fine (1981) as an

issue or cause, yet White (1986) and Whyte (1985) suggest they may fail the condition of mutual satisfaction and are therefore not even a marketing exchange. The question of “what is an idea product?” is yet to be conclusively resolved.

3.3 What is an Idea Product?

Throughout the marketing literature, various cases of idea products are discussed. The examples range from marriage (Fine, 1981) and family planning (El-Ansary & Kramer, 1973; Fine, 1981; Kotler, 1972) to peace (Webber, 1998) and organised religion (Kinnell & MacDougall, 1997; Murphy & Enis, 1986). The commonality between these cases lies with the product being a “concept” or “idea of something”, rather than a tangible offering. For example, a marketing strategy developed by the Los Angeles City Attorney’s office was based on selling the idea of peace to warring gang members. In reviewing this campaign, Webber (1998) refers to “peace” as an idea product and suggests that such ideas can be marketed like any other product.

Similarly, El-Ansary and Kramer (1973) regarded family planning as an idea. For these authors, family planning organisations market the idea of birth control and planned pregnancy. Such strategies may include tangible properties, for example condoms, or intangible services, for example educational campaigns. However, the core offering is the concept, or idea, of family planning. El-Ansary and Kramer’s (1973) review of the Louisiana Model case highlighted that personnel were “taught that they were selling an idea to the potential customer rather than rendering or giving a free service” (El-Ansary & Kramer, 1973, p. 2). An extensive mass media advertising campaign, continuous market research, and careful design of tangible

representations such as clinic sites then supported this idea of family planning.

In both Webber's (1998) example of peace, and El-Ansary and Kramer's (1973) example of family planning, the offering is referred to not only as an idea, but also a service and a social product. Webber (1998) specifically defines "peace" as an idea, but then refers to the marketing of "peace" as a social marketing campaign. Similarly, El-Ansary and Kramer (1973) suggest that the idea of family planning should be sold, rather than giving away a free *service*. Does this mean that the personnel in the Louisiana family planning organisation were essentially providing a service (even if their emphasis in marketing that service was the *idea* of family planning)?

These examples emphasise the confusion in terminology when dealing with ideas. Referring to peace, marriage, organised religion and family planning as ideas may be more indicative of a slip of the tongue, rather than a clearly defined offering distinguishable from goods and services. This possible confusion indicates the need to clearly delineate the boundaries of ideas within marketing's domain. The previous operational definition provided by the review of philosophical thinking on ideas, may assist this process.

Further examples of idea products are provided through product typologies. Most notably, Fine's (1981; 1990) work categorises ideas as distinguishable from goods, services and issues/causes. His product typology identifies and gives specific examples of marketing exchanges classified as ideas. This classification schema is based on a tangibility continuum correlated with the opposing dimensions of non-profit/profit. The resulting framework categorises products as goods, services, ideas and issues/causes (see Figure 3.1).

Figure 3.1. A Typology of Products (adapted from Fine 1981, p. 29)

	Tangible Product	Service	Idea	Issue or Cause
Non-Profit	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	▪ Girl Scout cookies	▪ Library	▪ Seat belt use	▪ Speeding
	▪ Salvation Army store	▪ Post Office	▪ Value of education	▪ Littering
	▪ Blood donations	▪ Museum	▪ Marriage	▪ Pollution
	▪ Pets from ASPCA	▪ Zoo	▪ Politics	▪ Religion
Profit Making	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
	▪ All merchandise	▪ Travel	▪ Credit purchasing	▪ Tourism
	▪ Investments in real estate, securities, & commodities	▪ Performing arts	▪ Legalised gambling	▪ Private religion
		▪ Insurance	▪ A fashion design	▪ Recycling wastes
		▪ Fashion designing	▪ Private branding	▪ Free enterprise
	▪ Advertising agency	▪ Franchising		
		▪ Patents		

As shown, the tangibility dimension is used by Fine (1981) as the primary basis of difference between product types. This typology suggests that ideas are less tangible than services. Relative to issues or causes however, idea products exhibit stronger tangible qualities. For Fine (1981), family planning is an idea, while population control is a cause. This degree of intangibility relative to other product types may thereby indicate a potential characteristic of idea products. Such a characteristic would be in accordance with the Platonic interpretation of idea.

Of further note in this typology is that producers offering an idea-based marketing exchange may have either a profit or non-profit making motive. Idea products occur in both categories (cells 3 and 7). As discussed by Murphy and Enis (1986), examples of ideas have tended to concentrate on non-profit consumers and consequently been identified within the non-profit marketing field. This may also be a result of idea products coming to the fore during the broadening of marketing debate, which focused on non-business activities. However, “ideas are increasingly being marketed by both for-profit and non-profit marketers” (Murphy & Enis, 1986, p. 30). Recognising ideas as a specific product category that may transcend the non-profit realm therefore seems warranted. This supports the previous concern regarding the basis for broadening marketing’s domain to include non-business activities. As outlined in Fine’s typology, business-orientated ideas (and issues/causes) may also exist within the scope of marketing.

While Fine’s (1981; 1990) work provides a significant contribution to the ideas marketing sub-field, it is limited in that it lacks a conceptual framework for distinguishing ideas. The only features used to differentiate ideas from goods, services and issues/causes are the tangibility dimension, coupled with a profit/non-profit orientation. This leads to ambiguity in terms of the examples listed. For example, fashion design, as a profit-orientated idea, appears to be more closely aligned to idea generation. In relation to the philosophical definitions of idea, this product appears closer to 17th Century philosophical thinking of ideas being an action of the mind, which result in inventing a product that does not already exist. The creative idea behind the design is developed into a garment (a tangible good). Why this example is positioned within the idea category is unclear. In order to distinguish the distinctiveness of ideas, further work is required on developing a conceptual framework that can be used to clearly delineate the boundaries between

product types. Again, the philosophy of ideas may provide the foundation for defining them.

Fine (1981; 1990) was not the first scholar to propose a product taxonomy that includes idea offerings. The initial product typology that presented a category for marketing exchanges such as political contests, religion and other non-business activities was Hunt's (1976) "Three Dichotomies Model". This schema proposes that all marketing phenomena can be classified using the three categorical dichotomies of:

1. Profit sector/non profit sector
2. Micro/macro
3. Positive/Normative

The profit versus non-profit dichotomy relates to the producer's motivation, while the micro and macro polarity signifies the level of aggregation from individual units to marketing groups. The third contrasting category of positive versus normative relates to the focus of analysis as either examining "what is" versus "what ought to be". Brought together, these three dichotomies form an eight-cell matrix. Hunt (1976) argues that all "problems, issues, theories, models and research usually considered within the scope of marketing" (Hunt, 1976, p. 22) can be categorised in one of these eight cells.

Marketing exchanges such as political contests and religious services are included in the non-profit/macro/normative category. While the label "idea products" was not specifically used, the inclusion of this category gave rise to researching such non-business activities and further legitimises the study of idea products. Indeed, Hunt (1976) gives specific mention to the two research trends of social marketing and societal issues. As further discussed

below, these two research fields are strongly associated with the marketing of ideas.

Both Hunt's (1976) and Fine's (1981) classification schemes are based on an analysis of the product or producer's characteristics – for example, the relative intangibility of the product or the producer's profit-seeking motive. In contrast, Murphy and Enis (1986) propose that the benefits of the product offering as perceived by the consumer are a more appropriate basis for a product typology. Rather than emphasising the difference between products (e.g. good versus service versus idea), Murphy and Enis (1986) propose a unified product taxonomy. This framework focuses on the benefits sought by a buyer minus the costs incurred, including both the effort and risk involved in purchasing the bundle of utilities (the product). As argued by Murphy and Enis (1986), it is the benefits, not the product features, which the consumer desires. For example, the need for a good night's sleep could be satisfied by a sleeping pill (good), an exercise class (service) or meditation (idea). The resulting strategic approach developed by Murphy and Enis (1986) therefore classifies goods, services or ideas in terms of convenience, preference, shopping, or specialty products.

With particular reference to idea products, Murphy and Enis (1986) discuss various idea-based marketing exchanges within each of the four product categories. Examples of idea products that fall within the convenience category include antilitter campaigns and police/security protection. Preference ideas include patronising the arts and the choice of a computerised database used by business firms. For such marketing exchanges, the degree of effort and risk involved is relatively higher than for convenience products. Shopping products are those which buyers are willing to spend significant time and money searching for. Shopping ideas include education and conducting marketing research studies. The final

category of specialty products warrants the highest degree of effort and risk. Idea based marketing exchanges categorised as specialty products include joining a select donor club for a charity or museum.

While the product typology developed by Murphy and Enis (1986) may not support the notion of differentiating idea products from other product types (e.g. goods and services), the examples provided do offer some insight into idea based marketing exchange. Similar to Fine's (1981) typology which includes fairly intangible offerings such as family planning and marriage, the idea products highlighted by Murphy and Enis (1986) also deal with relatively abstract concepts such as police protection, and patronising the arts. Such intangible and abstract products further align idea offerings with the Platonic interpretation of ideas.

In summary, products specifically referred to as ideas (in the context of a product offering), including those idea products that have attracted contention and debate, include the following (see Figure 3.2):

Figure 3.2. Examples of idea products and corresponding literature

Idea product	Author(s)	Year
Peace*	Webber	1998
Family planning or Population organisations	Kotler & Levy	1969a
	Kotler	1972
	El-Ansary & Kramer	1973
	Fine	1981
	Whyte	1985
	White	1986
Religion/churches	Whyte	1985
	Murphy & Enis	1986
	Kinnell & MacDougall	1997
Politics	Fine	1981
	Butler & Collins	1994

	Whyte	1985
Education/value of education	Fine	1981
	Murphy & Enis	1986
	Kinnell & MacDougall	1997
Seat belt use/safe driving	Kotler	1972
	El-Ansary & Kramer	1973
	Fine	1981
Anti-smoking campaigns	Kotler	1972
	El-Ansary & Kramer	1973
	Whyte	1985
Philosophical discussion*	Kurzbard & Soldow	1987
Meditation*	Murphy & Enis	1986
Scientific theory	Peter & Olson	1983
	Fine	1981

(Note to Figure 3.2: only those exchanges referred to as ideas by more than one study are listed other than those marked *. These exceptions are included as they raise issues regarding idea products, of specific reference to the case studies explored in the present thesis.

With consideration of the above examples, the most obvious feature to emerge is the inconsistency in the debate over what offerings should be labelled an idea. Population control has already been mentioned as such a case. This theme is also demonstrated in the example of politics. Clemente (1992) defines political marketing as the “marketing of ideas and opinions which relate to public or political issues or to specific candidates” (as cited in Butler & Collins, 1994, p. 19), further emphasising that, “it is different from conventional marketing in that concepts are being sold as opposed to products or services” (as cited in Butler & Collins, 1994, p. 19). The inclusion of politics as an idea product however is disputable. Whyte (1985) for example suggests that while marketing techniques can be used within the political arena, mutually satisfying exchange is not always evident. Politicians or political parties may deliberately deceive voters of the product offering – for example by marketing one idea, and then, once in power, implementing a different program. This issue raises an important challenge

to ideas marketing in that consumers (in this case, voters) often have no tangible basis upon which to evaluate the offering, and may need to engage in the transaction (vote for a party) on its potential promises rather than on immediate benefit.

A further issue to emerge from the literature relates to the levels of tangibility associated with the idea. Indeed, intangibility is the only characteristic of ideas consistently cited throughout the literature (Fine, 1981; Whyte, 1985). Intangibility is also inherent within services. However, idea products are regarded as even less tangible than service offerings. Whyte (1985) suggests that the “expansion of the domain of marketing to include the marketing of organisations, persons and ideas, simply results in the addition of products of increasing intangibility to the scale of market entities” (Whyte, 1985, p. 26). The tangibility-intangibility continuum commonly used to depict the difference between goods and services is extended by Whyte (1985) to include organisations and persons, and ideas, as shown in Figure 3.3.

Figure 3.3. Scale of Market Entities (Whyte, 1985, p. 26)

PHYSICAL PRODUCTS	SERVICES	ORGANISATIONS AND PERSONS	IDEAS
TANGIBLE DOMINANT			INTANGIBLE DOMINANT

The increased intangibility of ideas, relative to goods and services (and organisations and persons) is also demonstrated in Fine’s (1981) product taxonomy. As previously discussed, under this classification scheme, the primary basis of difference in product types is the relative degree of

tangibility. Ideas are regarded by Fine (1981) as relatively less tangible than goods and services, yet more tangible when compared with issues or causes. Such work suggests intangibility is an inherent feature of idea offerings, which as previously mentioned, links ideas with their Platonic definition.

A review of the idea products discussed by Fine (1981) and others (El-Ansary & Kramer, 1973, Kotler & Levy, 1969a; Peter & Olson, 1983; Webber, 1998; Whyte, 1985) also reveals that such offerings often have a strong association with broad social or societal issues. The offerings marketed by both non-profit organisations and government agencies are frequently targeted at the broader public and often seek to benefit society at large. This is particularly evident in examples such as seat belt use or religion. This theme is also inherent in social marketing strategies and has led some to treat ideas marketing and social marketing as synonymous (Webber, 1998). The difference between idea and social marketing – both conceptually and practically – is therefore an issue that warrants attention when developing a conceptual understanding of idea products. The correlating and contrasting features of these two research fields is discussed further below (see Section 3.4).

A further theme to emerge from the literature relates to the difficulty of clearly identifying the producer of certain ideas. For example, it could be argued that God himself is the producer of religious ideas. (This may create some difficulties for interviewing producers of ideas!). Similarly, who is the producer of the idea of peace? Such questions raise the issue of terminology within the context of idea offerings. Unlike goods and services, which speak of producers and consumers, such labels may be inappropriate for the ideas marketing realm. Plato also speaks of ideas as universal principles, existing only in the 'world of being'. This notion of ideas existing beyond any one

identifiable producer further links idea offerings with the Platonic interpretation of ideas.

In some cases however, people or organisations claim right over particular ideas. This is certainly evident in the examples of research and academia. Peter and Olson (1983) raise an interesting example of an idea product in discussing science as a “special case of marketing – the marketing of ideas in the form of substantive and methodological theories” (Peter & Olson, 1983, p. 111). While Peter and Olson’s (1983) paper is primarily concerned with the “marketing as a science or art debate”, it approaches the topic by arguing that scientific theory is an idea product that can be marketed. As stated, “in the broadest sense, the major products of science are ideas...[and] to successfully achieve an adequate level of adoption, scientists must develop and carry out a marketing strategy to promote their theories” (Peter & Olson, 1983, p. 112). In this case, the idea products being offered to the scientific community are indeed owned, and therefore the property of the researcher/scientist/academic. Marketing strategies can be developed in order to convince the consuming parties of the merits and validity of that idea or to receive funding in support of that idea. The inclusion of scientific research as an example of an idea product is further supported by Fine (1981). Under Fine’s (1981) categorisation of the “concept sector”, education and research are given specific mention as a particular category of idea products produced by non-profit organisations.

A similar idea product to scientific theory – in the sense of its intangible and abstract nature – is philosophical discussion. During a philosophical discussion or debate, two or more parties may exchange ideas with the objective of convincing the alternative party of their merits. Such an objective is similar to politicians’ attempts to gain credence and acceptance of their political ideas in the eyes of voters or scientists seeking adoption of

their scientific ideas. This exchange of philosophical ideas may also be mutually satisfying in that both parties are enlightened and may benefit from gaining a new perspective on the phenomena discussed. Whether Plato considered the sharing of his philosophical ideas as an example of ideas marketing is an interesting notion.

The inclusion of such human interactions as scientific theory or philosophical discussion as examples of idea products is contentious. Kurzbard and Soldow (1987) for example suggest ideas exchanged during philosophical discussion do not represent an end in themselves. Indeed, Kurzbard and Soldow (1987) dispute the entire inclusion of ideas within the definition of marketing and suggest that marketing exchange processes should deal exclusively only with goods and services. This objection to the inclusion, or even existence, of certain types of idea products (and particular types of human interaction) raises the conceptual boundaries issue. Such reluctance to include ideas within the scope of marketing appears to heighten with the degree of abstraction and intangibility of the example discussed. This issue raises two important points. Firstly, within ideas marketing, idea products themselves differ in their degree of intangibility and abstraction. Those products towards the intangibility extreme (e.g. philosophical discussion) raise the greatest questions as to their inclusion within the scope of marketing. Secondly, this issue again highlights the need to clearly identify the boundaries surrounding idea products, including the characteristics of ideas that determine the categorisation of certain marketing exchanges as idea products.

In sum, the key points to emerge from this review of pertinent marketing literature on idea products are:

1. Idea products are often highly intangible and abstract and are based on a “concept” or “idea of something”, for example, family planning and religion;
2. Ideas may be the products of either non-profit organisations (e.g. social services), profit-seeking companies (e.g. patents), or government agencies (e.g. politics) and all fall within the concept sector of an economy;
3. Idea products are often strongly associated with broad societal and universal issues and targeted at the broader public, for example, religion;
4. Due to the similarities in the product offerings, ideas marketing and social marketing are closely related;
5. Idea products may include tangible and/or intangible features which complement the core idea offering, for example, educational services as part of the concept of family planning. However some idea products have extremely limited tangible features thereby creating difficulties for consumers’ evaluation of the product offering, for example, politics;
6. It is often difficult (or even impossible) to clearly identify the producer of an idea product, for example, religion;
7. In some cases, ideas are claimed to have been developed by, and are thereby the property of, a clearly identified producer (e.g. academics);
8. While various offerings may be classified as idea products (as opposed to goods or services), within this category differences may exist between the idea products themselves (primarily in terms of the degree of tangibility);
9. Debate exists over the inclusion of particular idea products (e.g. politics, philosophical discussion). This debate is more evident for offerings displaying very high levels of intangibility and abstraction.

Overall, the boundaries surrounding idea products are somewhat blurred due to the lack of a strong conceptual basis upon which to define or categorise particular offerings as ideas. Establishing a clear conceptual domain for ideas may therefore need to come from the concept sectors' internal definitions, because of the inconsistency and indeterminacy of current marketing literature.

3.4 Pertinent theoretical issues for marketing ideas

Following the conceptual debate in the services marketing sub-field regarding the unique characteristics of services, a number of scholars assessed the potential implications for marketing services (see for example, Groenroos, 1982; Sasser, 1976; Shostack, 1982; Zeithaml, Parasuraman & Berry, 1985). While the conceptual basis for ideas remains weak, some marketing literature has considered the marketing strategies for ideas offerings. Specifically, mention is given to the need to compensate for the extreme intangibility and non-monetary basis of the exchange, as well as the need to market to a broader public. Such marketing implications are discussed below.

The marketing implications of intangibility are similar for ideas as for services. The intangibility of an offering creates difficulties for the consumer's evaluation of the product. Throughout the services marketing literature, scholars suggest that service providers should compensate for their intangible offering by presenting the consumer with some tangible representation of the service (Berry, 1980; Rushton & Carson, 1985; Shostack, 1977). This recommendation also emerges in the ideas marketing literature (Fine, 1981; Peter & Olson, 1983; Rothschild, 1979). The need to

tangibilise the intangible may be even more crucial with ideas due to their extreme intangibility.

Peter and Olsen (1983) stress the need to “tangibilise” intangible offerings in their discussion of scientific theory as an idea product. These authors suggest that scientists should develop a manuscript to describe the idea offering. As stated, “marketing a theory as a tangible manuscript is both easier and more effective than promoting an intangible set of ideas” (Peter & Olson, 1983, p. 112). The reasoning behind this recommendation is that a tangible representation of the theory allows the idea product to be stored and therefore always available. Furthermore, the permanence of the manuscript allows wider dissemination of the idea and it can also be used to establish and identify the original producer of the idea offering. Without addressing the intangibility of ideas through developing a tangible representation such as a manuscript, these issues regarding storage, availability, dissemination and production could create difficulties for marketing the scientific idea.

The suggestion to tangibilise the idea offering is particularly important for communication effectiveness. Rothschild (1979) highlights this point in his discussion of non-business situations, including the idea product of brotherhood (as in religion). Rothschild (1979) suggests that intangibility can be addressed in advertising by showing an object that may not be the product itself, but rather the producer of the product (e.g. a university) or some mechanism involved with the product (e.g. the bible for denoting religious ideology). Other than advertising, idea products can also be communicated through publicity and personal selling. Again, the intangibility of the offering suggests that direct word of mouth through personally selling the concept may be a more convincing and effective strategy for marketing the idea.

This recommendation for personal endorsement also relates to a further marketing issue regarding the professional credentials or reputation of the producer or organisation involved in marketing the idea. With little tangible basis upon which to judge the idea, a consumer may focus on the producer or marketing organisation in evaluating the offering. Peter and Olsen (1983) discuss this point in relation to scientific theory, suggesting “scientists who are well known and respected, based on their previous contributions to a field, have a better chance of successfully introducing a new theory” (Peter & Olson, 1983, p. 113). Alternatively, producers who do not enjoy a strong reputation may have difficulties in marketing their ideas.

A further marketing issue to arise from the literature relates to the non-monetary price of idea products (Fine, 1981; Rothschild, 1979). Often, the price paid by a consumer in exchange for the idea may have little or no monetary basis. For example, the price associated with adopting a religious ideology may be the psychological effort and disruption involved in changing one’s existing beliefs. Similarly, a consumer may pay not just financially, but also in terms of time and effort for participating in a family planning program. As such, Fine (1981) uses the term “social prices” to cover the non-monetary costs associated with marketing and consuming ideas. Fine (1981) suggests that social prices should be considered by “incorporating into the marketing mix those considerations perceived by consumers to constitute their total contribution to the exchange transaction” (Fine, 1981, p. 337). With idea products, this contribution is likely to go beyond monetary terms.

The non-monetary price of ideas is further reflected in the “bottom line” objective of behavioural change, rather than financial profit. Under ideas marketing, the emphasis is placed on influencing consumer behaviour through adopting the idea. Financial considerations are given lesser

importance. For example, purchasing the idea of seat-belt use may require the consumer to pay in terms of time and effort and is indicated through a change in behaviour towards putting the seat belt on. This behavioural bottom line objective relates to a further marketing issue regarding target marketing. Since idea products are often associated with broad societal issues, the target market for ideas is commonly the entire but heterogeneous society. This creates challenges for the marketer. In the seat-belt use case for example, various groups within the society may respond quite differently to the same idea. This suggests a greater emphasis towards segmentation and target marketing. While the entire society may be the focus of an ideas marketing strategy, homogeneous groupings within this society can be identified and different campaigns developed for each segment.

These marketing issues including the implications of intangibility, the non-monetary price of purchase, and marketing towards the broader public are also prevalent in social marketing literature. Throughout this review a key theme to emerge is a similarity between ideas marketing and social marketing. The product offerings, characteristics and marketing issues resemble a likeness and thereby suggest a potential relationship between these two research fields. Underlying this relationship is a key question: what is the difference (if indeed there is a difference) between ideas marketing and social marketing? A brief review of social marketing is therefore provided below.

3.4 Ideas Marketing and Social Marketing

Social marketing came to the fore during the 1970s following a seminal article by Kotler and Zaltman (1971) *Social marketing: An approach to planned social change*. In this paper Kotler and Zaltman (1971) coined the

term “social marketing” and defined it as “the design, implementation and control of programs calculated to influence the acceptability of social ideas and involving considerations of product planning, pricing, communication, distribution and marketing research” (Kotler & Zaltman, 1971, p. 5). Thus, social marketing was originally conceived to be an application of marketing technologies to socially beneficial ideas and causes.

Since this early work, social marketing, as a field of study and practice, has evolved substantially. Conceptually, social marketing rests on the premise of “influencing human behaviour on a large scale, using marketing principles for the purpose of societal benefits rather than commercial profit” (Smith, 2000, p. 11). Scholars fluent in the language of social marketing often turn to Andreasen’s (1995) definition as a way of describing their activities. This definition states that social marketing is “the application of commercial marketing technologies to the analysis, planning, execution and evaluation of programs designed to influence the voluntary behaviour of target audiences in order to improve their personal welfare and that of their society” (Andreasen, 1995, p. 7). This definition emphasises three key elements.

Firstly, the objective of social marketing is to benefit individuals or society, not the marketer. This is distinct from commercial marketing (for goods or services), but similar to non-profit marketing. Indeed within the marketing discipline, social marketing is commonly categorised as a sub-field of non-business marketing. Whyte (1985) for example divides non-business marketing into the two areas of non-profit organisation marketing and social marketing. In his view, non-profit organisations include hospitals, colleges and cultural organisations, while social marketing is concerned with ideas and causes such as family planning.

Secondly, social marketing's bottom line is behavioural change, or as stated by Andreasen (1995, p. 8), "social marketers are in the behaviour business". The objective of improving the personal welfare of the consuming party, as well as the society of which they are a part, is the building block upon which social marketing is constructed.

And thirdly, the social marketing process begins, and is guided by, the target audience. In practice, social marketing has evolved from social advertising, through social communication to the more recently accepted broader paradigm of social marketing. This broader paradigm fits with a consumer orientation, and rests on the premise that "it is the customer who must ultimately undertake the action the marketer is promoting. And so everything a good social marketer does starts with the customer's perspective" (Andreasen, 1995, p. 8).

The examples of social products discussed throughout the literature range from explaining to mothers the importance of breast-feeding their babies (Fox & Kotler, 1980), encouraging organ donation (Lwin, Williams & Lan, 2002), to reducing tobacco and alcohol consumption (Hastings, MacFaden and Stead 1997; Hughes, MacKintosh, Hastings & Wheeler, 1997), and promoting sun safety to prevent skin cancer (Peattie, Peattie & Clarke, 2001).

The amount of text books (Andreasen, 1995; Kotler & Roberto, 1989), journals (e.g. *Social Marketing Quarterly*), and social marketing institutes (including centres established in Scotland, Canada and Poland) attest to the fact that social marketing has gained a broad acceptance among scholars and practitioners. However, as a field of study, social marketing still requires further clarity and development (Andreasen, 2002; Buchanan, Reddy & Hossain, 1994; Goldberg, Fishbein & Middelstadt, 1996; Hastings, 2003).

Andreason (2002) for example, comments on the concern that “too many definitions of social marketing [are] being used...[and that] social marketing is not adequately differentiated from its competition” (p 6). In focusing on ideas, including how ideas differ from social products, this research may help define the boundaries of social marketing. Not doubt, there are similarities between these two fields. However, social marketers have come to realise “that the fundamental objective of social marketing is not the promotion of ideas (as Kotler and Zaltman suggested in the 1970s), but the influencing of behaviour” (Andreason 1994, p. 4). This recognisable distinction may provide a basis for differentiating ideas from social products.

A thorough examination of social marketing would require a thesis in itself. This brief review however is enough to suggest some common threads may exist between ideas marketing and social marketing. These similarities can be explored further in the field. While the crux of this inquiry lies in distinguishing idea offerings from goods and services, questions do arise regarding whether idea offerings also differ from social products.

3.6 Summary and emerging questions

In sum, the marketing literature on ideas marketing can be best summarised in three themes. These include:

Theme 1: Literature concerning the emergence of ideas marketing

The origins of ideas marketing can be traced to the *broadening debate* of the 1960s and 1970s. During this period, scholars argued over marketing's role in non-traditional industries such as schools, museums, churches and political contests. The outcome was the acceptance of an expanded view of marketing that relates not only to traditional firms but also to non-business activities. The broadening debate literature is relevant to ideas marketing because it: (1) reveals the embryonic beginnings of this area, and (2) provides justification for the inclusion of ideas in the scope of marketing.

The validation for ideas as a type of product comes by way of the *exchange paradigm*. A cornerstone of the broadening debate was the argument that marketing is based on mutually satisfying exchange relationships. The exchange between two or more parties need not be limited to monetary transactions or tangible, functional commodities. Intangible or symbolic offerings exchanged for non-financial costs such as time or a change in behaviour are also acceptable. Potential idea products such as political contests, population control campaigns and charities often operate at this intangible, symbolic and non-financial level. Exchange theory therefore provides justification for including such activities in the expanded and now-generally accepted view of marketing.

The literature relating to theme one provides the historical basis for this research and context for developing the ideas marketing sub-field.

Theme 2: Literature citing examples of idea products

Throughout the marketing literature various products are referred to as ideas. These include: seat belt use/safe driving, (value of) education, marriage, politics, family planning, fund-raising, religion/churches, anti-smoking campaigns, peace, meditation, philosophical discussion and scientific theory. Examples of idea products are given in both case studies (e.g. the LA Attorney's Office peace campaign) and product typologies (e.g. Murphy & Enis, 1986). Current marketing textbooks often list ideas as a type of product, together with goods, services, persons and organisations.

There is little evidence in the examples cited of definitions or conceptual frameworks. In most cases, it is simply assumed that the product(s) mentioned are ideas with no basis for that classification. The lack of depth in this literature and the inconsistency of the examples cited indicate a gap in marketing knowledge in relation to idea products. This research aims to address this gap through investigating the following questions:

1. What is an idea? The conceptual domain for idea products is currently unclear. Sound definitional boundaries for ideas are needed to determine what products can be labelled as ideas.
2. What products fall within the conceptual domain of an idea? Once the conceptual boundaries of ideas have been established, products that meet that criteria can be identified.

With regard to the unique characteristics of idea offerings, the only feature consistently mentioned is extreme intangibility. Other unique characteristics are yet to be established.

The difference between idea products and goods and services is given little consideration in the marketing literature. Goods, services and ideas are each given specific mention in the contemporary AMA definition of marketing. Why ideas are granted equal and specific standing alongside goods and services however is unclear. How ideas differ from other product types is also uncertain.

Of particular significance in the ideas marketing literature is the comparability of ideas marketing and social marketing. The difference between these two sub-fields needs clarification.

Overall, the marketing literature regarding the potential uniqueness of ideas lacks depth. This is understandable since the conceptual domain of ideas is also unclear.

The literature concerning the uniqueness of ideas raises a number of research questions:

3. What characteristics make ideas unique?
4. How do ideas differ from goods and services?
5. How do ideas differ from persons, organisations, issues/causes?
6. How do idea products and social products differ?

Theme 3: Literature concerning marketing implications

If ideas are demonstrated as being significantly different from other product types then the question arises as to what implications this difference has for marketing idea products. Current literature gives little consideration to this question, indicating a gap in marketing knowledge in relation to the marketing of ideas. This gap leads to the following questions:

7. How might the uniqueness of ideas affect the marketing of idea products?
8. What specific challenges would exist in designing a marketing strategy for an idea product?

These research questions help guide this inquiry. This thesis now turns to the method used in this study, and describes how idea offerings will be explored. Chapter Four describes the method employed, while Chapter Five provides a background to the case organisations involved in this inquiry.

CHAPTER 4

METHOD

4.1 Introduction

This chapter details the investigative process framing this thesis. Initially, a review of early services marketing work is performed. This review highlights the development process of a new sub-field. Services marketing pioneers underwent a similar process to this research, when they embarked on the process of distinguishing services from goods. Their approach and experiences helps guide this inquiry, and indicates where this research is positioned in the phrases of knowledge development.

From this review, it is argued that a qualitative approach, and specifically an ethnographic inquiry, is most appropriate. The second part of this chapter turns to the specific method employed to conduct the data collection, analysis and presentation of this material.

4.2 Research Context

The overall research question guiding this inquiry is:

Is the marketing of ideas a demonstrably unique sub-field of the marketing discipline?

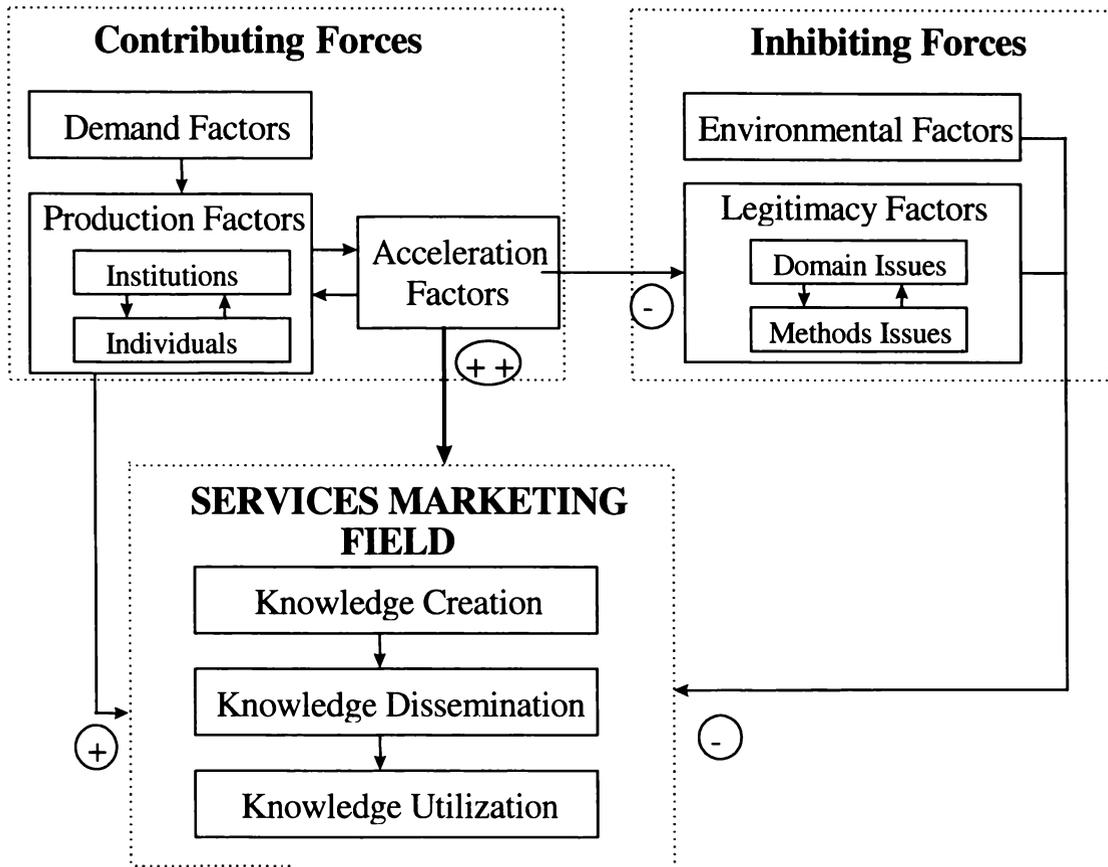
Through addressing this question, this inquiry deals with a nascent field, which currently suffers from a weak conceptual basis. As described in the literature review, the marketing of ideas has attracted limited attention. The conceptual basis of ideas is currently unclear. Establishing a new theoretical sub-field of marketing means this inquiry is situated in the early stages of knowledge development. It concerns the creation of knowledge regarding ideas, from which specific theory can subsequently be developed.

The process of developing a new sub-field in marketing is well documented for services marketing. The conceptual debate concerning whether services marketing is distinctive (from goods marketing) parallels theoretical questions in this study. The process of demonstrating the uniqueness of services marketing therefore provides some guidance for the development of ideas marketing. Specifically, it offers a framework for situating where this inquiry is positioned in the development of a new sub-field.

4.2.1 Developing a new sub-field – the case of services marketing

The process of knowledge creation, dissemination and utilisation of the services marketing sub-field is described by Berry and Parasuraman (1993) in their article, *Building a new academic field – The case of services marketing*. In this paper, Berry and Parasuraman (1993) suggest, “services marketing offers an unusual opportunity to develop a case study that illustrates how an academic field develops” (p. 15). Their analysis operates at a macro level, resulting in a detailed model indicating the various forces that influenced the development of services marketing. This model is provided in Figure 4.1.

Figure 4.1. A Model of Forces Influencing the Development of the Services Marketing Field (Berry & Parasuraman, 1993, p. 16)



The authors suggest these “sequential stages [are] widely acknowledged as being relevant to the growth of any discipline” (Berry & Parasuraman, 1993, p. 16). This model offers a context for understanding the process of knowledge development. Each of the influencing factors can be considered relative to ideas marketing.

Berry and Parasuraman's (1993) diagram shows the contributing forces in services marketing as including demand factors, production factors and acceleration factors. The demand factors relate to external marketplace influences such as the growth of the services sector, deregulation of service industries and heightened competitive pressures for service organisations. In essence, it deals with practitioners and their need for knowledge on how best to produce and market their services. As detailed in the introductory chapter of this thesis, the demand from practitioners for knowledge in ideas marketing is beginning to emerge. Industry talk of the "age of ideas" and the "importance of creativity" suggests that idea products are a relevant and indeed even imperative topic of interest (see for example, Behara, 1997; De Bono, 1999; Kern, 1997; Majaro, 1998). It is probable that practitioners involved in the concept sector will be demanding such knowledge from marketing academics in the foreseeable future.

The production factors concern the sources that supply new knowledge, particularly the academic response to industry demand. In terms of ideas marketing, this thesis aims to provide one such source of information concerning idea products.

The third contributing force in the development of services marketing was the acceleration factors. As detailed by Berry and Parasuraman (1993) the necessary ingredients were legitimacy, conceptual guidance and research-teaching leadership. Offering academic courses in marketing of services, for example, became an important factor towards the development of the sub-field. An internet search indicates there are currently no known courses at academic institutions on the marketing of ideas. However with the increased influence of demand and production factors, this might soon change.

In the formative years of services marketing, the factors that inhibited the growth of this sub-field included environmental factors and legitimacy factors. Environmental factors concern insufficient resources, particularly the “lack of instructional materials” (Berry & Parasuraman, 1993, p. 48). Legitimacy factors related to the belief among academics that a separate services marketing field was unneeded, as well as the “pervasiveness of studies lacking a strong theoretical foundation in the services marketing literature” (Berry & Parasuraman, 1993, p. 49). This would suggest that to nurture the development of ideas marketing, sufficient resources and materials from academic institutions are required. Particularly worth noting is the need for a strong conceptual basis of ideas, to minimise the effect of domain or method issues that may inhibit the growth of ideas marketing.

The value of Berry and Parasuraman’s (1993) model can not be clearly determined prior to applying it within the ideas marketing context. An assessment as to its merits as a description of how a new sub-field emerges can be made as ideas marketing develops. It is a concern however that the model appears very linear, assuming that each factor (both contributing and inhibiting the development of a sub-field) develops sequentially over a period of time. In reality, this is unlikely. Ideas marketing was first mentioned during the broadening debate of the 1960s and 1970s, yet has not developed in a similar fashion to services marketing. This may not be due to excessive inhibiting forces (or equally the lack of contributing forces), but more likely due to the lack of a conceptual foundation, which has estranged researchers exploring this field. Those who have considered ideas marketing seem to come up against a conceptual and definitional brick wall (e.g. Fine’s 1981, 1990 work confuses social products with ideas). Subsequently, these scholars move into other fields of inquiry (e.g. White, 1986, Whyte, 1985). As a result, the development of ideas marketing as a sub-field is unfolding in a more erratic, rather than linear fashion.

The most notable downfall of this model however regards the definitional boundaries of the product under study. Services marketing pioneers benefited from having a clearer understanding of what products may be a service, relative to a good. As demonstrated by the infamous story of Shostack standing up in an AMA marketing conference with a can of Campbell's soup stating "this is what I learnt to market in graduate school...but marketing soup holds few answers for my work in banking" (Berry & Parasuraman, 1993, p. 17). For Shostack, it was clear that soup was a good, but banking was a service. The mission of such services marketing pioneers was to clearly identify this distinction through investigating the characteristics that distinguished services as a unique product type. The model provided by Berry and Parasurman (1993) illustrates the development of services marketing from this more clearly defined conceptual foundation. Idea offerings however are still conceptually weak. As outlined in Chapter Three, ideas marketing is a field that has been largely ignored, and papers that do discuss ideas offerings are fraught with inconsistency and contradiction. While Berry and Parasurman's (1993) model may provide some guidance (particularly in terms of potentially inhibiting forces, as well as necessary contributing forces for the development of a sub-field), the conceptual underpinnings of ideas marketing need to firstly be laid.

It seems clear that whether ideas marketing emerges as a distinct sub-field that stands alongside goods and services marketing is largely dependant on developing this conceptual basis of idea products. This thesis goes some way towards addressing this conceptual issue and thereby moving the sub-field beyond the entangled position it has sat in for over three decades.

In reviewing the evolution of services marketing literature, Fisk, Brown and Bitner (1993) (see also Brown, Fisk & Bitner, 1994) noted three specific stages of development: the “crawling out stage”, the “scurrying about stage” and the “walking erect stage”. The pre-1980 “crawling out stage” marked a time of risk taking and discovery. During this period, conceptual papers primarily focused on the debate over whether goods and services are different. Services marketing pioneers such as Judd (1964), Rathmell (1966), Regan (1963), Thomas (1978) and Shostack (1977) argued for services to be recognised as distinct from physical goods. Papers spoke of the definition of services, the inherent qualities of services, the importance of the services sector and the difference between services and goods marketing. A major outcome of this stage was the establishment of the unique characteristics of services: intangibility, inseparability, heterogeneity and perishability. These characteristics were asserted as the reasons why services were different from goods and consequently why services marketing is distinguishable from goods marketing. The conceptual debate surrounding goods versus services has now subsided. However the characteristics of services are still regarded as the justification and grounding for the services marketing sub-field.

The limited amount of work on idea products suggests that the marketing of ideas is still at the “crawling out stage” in theoretical development. As with early services research, this study concerns the definition of ideas, the inherent qualities of ideas, and the difference between ideas and both goods and services (as well as social products). The outcome of the “crawling out stage” in services marketing was to identify the characteristics of services. The purpose of this study is likewise – the identification of the unique characteristics of ideas.

The subsequent two stages of development in the evolution of services marketing are labelled by Fisk, Brown and Bitner (1993) as the “scurrying about stage” and “walking erect stage”. The “scurrying about stage” occurred from 1980-1985 at a time in which the conceptual debate was continuing, but some new specific areas of enquiry were beginning to emerge, for example, services quality and customer satisfaction. The growth of the sub-field was exponential due to two influencing factors: the deregulation of services industries and the interaction of participants at the newly established services marketing conferences. Simply, what was happening in industry and the fact that academics started talking to each other helped secure services marketing as a legitimate and worthwhile sub-field to explore.

The present situation in services marketing reflects the “walking erect stage”. Now, the difference between services and goods is assumed to exist and focus rests on specific topics within services marketing. Publications tend to be more empirical and based on axioms, derived from conceptual debate, that have been formalised as a coherent theory.

The relevance of these two further stages in services marketing to this study is somewhat limited since the conceptual basis of ideas marketing is yet to be laid. This research aims to lay that foundation, upon which the ideas marketing sub-field can be built. The “scurrying about” and “walking erect” stages are minor compared to the innovative work characteristic of the “crawling out stage”. Without the groundwork, the development of a new sub-field is limited.

4.2.2 Methodological approach of formative services marketing studies

Of particular relevance to this research is the method used by services marketing pioneers during the “crawling out stage” to demonstrate the distinctiveness of services from their tangible counterparts. A review of early service marketing literature (for example, Judd, 1964; Rathmell, 1966; Regan, 1963; Thomas, 1978; Shostack, 1977), indicates that the process used to discover the inherent qualities of services has two central themes:

1. Producer-orientated: while the consumption of services held some interest, researchers turned to the producers of service products to develop a conceptual understanding. The hands-on experience of service practitioners provided a basis for determining the unique characteristics of services. For example, service practitioners spoke of the difficulties in managing their time. If a doctor had no patients on a Tuesday, yet was over booked on Wednesday, there was no way that they could save up their spare time on Tuesday for the following day. Such remarks lead to the identification of the perishability characteristic.
2. Qualitative approach: interviews with service providers and case studies of services firms were the primary methods of data collection. Early services marketing research concentrated on the conceptual development of the sub-field. The research was exploratory and qualitative. Academics learnt from the field, as the marketing discipline provided little theoretical grounding from which to draw.

These two themes suggest that in exploring idea products, the producers of ideas may be the most valuable source of data and a qualitative approach to data collection most appropriate. This methodological approach, together with the knowledge of how a sub-field emerges, was therefore taken into consideration in the design of this research.

A producer-orientated and qualitative approach does limit the scope of this inquiry. The focus on producers means that while the supply of ideas can be investigated, the demand of these products will be absent. Attempting to cover both the supply and demand of ideas would be difficult within the practical constraints of completing a thesis. Following this inquiry, and with reference to its findings, a study of idea consumers is advisable. Equally, a qualitative approach limits the broad generalisability of the study. If ideas were studied quantitatively, the results may be more widely applicable across a variety of contexts. However, such a quantitative approach would require a theoretical framework from which hypotheses could be postulated and tested. Such theory does not currently exist for ideas. Therefore, as with services marketing, an understanding of ideas may best initially come from spending time in the field with those involved in marketing ideas, and learning from their experiences. This inductive approach, together with other methodological issues, is described in more detail below.

4.3 Method and rationale

As explained by Guba and Lincoln (1994), questions of method are secondary to questions of paradigm. The choice of research method depends largely on the ontological and epistemological assumptions of the researcher, and whether they take an inductive or deductive approach to the

inquiry. Traditionally, marketing scholars have subscribed to a positivist paradigm, employing a deductive approach to the research, and thereby drawing on quantitative methods such as questionnaires and content analysis. They may also employ more traditional qualitative methods such as observation, focus groups and in-depth interviews, however are likely to analyse such data in a quantitative manner, aiming to test hypotheses drawn from pre-established theory. This inquiry does not take this approach. Deductive reasoning is a “theory testing process”. This means the research begins with established theory, which is taken into specific instances to test its applicability. Pre-existing theory on ideas however is notably absent. Even though marketing’s domain has embraced ideas for over three decades, as a product type they have been largely ignored. Consequently, a more inductive approach which allows for an in-depth study of a particular instance appears more appropriate. At present, there is no theory on ideas to test.

The results from this inductive inquiry may subsequently be tested in a deductive manner. The findings will form, in part, a theory of ideas. This theory relates first and foremost to the marketing of peace, non-discrimination against people with mental illness and Buddhism. The characteristics developed may be applicable to other areas, but further research would be necessary before claiming a generalised theory of ideas that is context and value free.

Approaching this research from a more quantitative stance could have been possible, however it would have likely limited the research findings. For example, the characteristics of services (intangibility, inseparability, heterogeneity and perishability) could have been held up against ideas to determine if these qualities are also inherent to idea offerings. This may have revealed potential differences between ideas and services, but would

not have provided a basis for differentiating ideas from goods or social products.

Alternatively, a single qualitative method such as one-on-one interviews could have been used. However, such interviews are limited in that they provide data in a second-hand manner. For example, the data collected from a marketing committee member discussing a recent marketing meeting is filtered through their interpretation and bias. Attending the marketing meeting in person yields a richer set of data. Given such limitations of any research method, a range of qualitative techniques was necessary, including participant observation, one-on-one interviews, and a review of company documentation. This allowed for triangulation among data sources, and limited the degree of personal bias from respondents in their interpretation of issues and events.

To accommodate the exploratory nature of this inquiry, the investigative process had to be flexible. Ideas marketing is currently at the “crawling out stage” of development. This study is exploring, for the first time, a potentially new sub-field of the marketing discipline. There was a need to allow for change during the data collection process to manage the multifaceted and sometimes contradictory themes characteristic of exploratory research. Emergent design was therefore employed in this study. As knowledge of ideas, the context, or the usefulness of particular data collection methods developed through the course of the inquiry, appropriate changes could be made. For example, as the research process unfolded, the value of one-on-one interviews as a forum for discussing emerging findings became evident. While participant observation was employed primarily at the outset of the inquiry, in-depth interviews developed as the central method for collecting and analysing data.

Ethnographic techniques appeared most appropriate for the study of an emerging field because ethnography is a broad qualitative method, in the sense that it allows for data to be sourced from a range of means including interviews, participant observation, as well as company documentation. With little knowledge on ideas prior to data collection, any means of information that could further an understanding of ideas were sought. The ethnographic process has been likened to the “nets of deep-sea explorers, which may pull up unexpected and striking things for us to gaze upon” (Barton and Lazarsfeld, 1969, p. 166). The exploratory and qualitative approach of ethnography fitted well with the innovative nature of this inquiry. Ethnography also allows the researcher to be responsive to the context, thereby adapting techniques to the circumstances, as well as providing the opportunity to clarify as the study evolves, and explore any anomalous observations (Guba & Lincoln, as cited in Merriam, 1998). A fourteen month, ethnographic inquiry was therefore conducted with three organisations involved in marketing ideas. The process of data collection and analysis is outlined below.

4.3.1 Pre-field work stage: Planning

Prior to entering the field, a review of the previous work on idea offerings was conducted (see Chapter Three). Debates exist regarding the extent to which literature should be considered prior to data collection, since such work may create preconceptions that influence the research design and data interpretation (see for example, Hirschman & Thompson, 1997; Locke, 1996). Typically, an ethnographer enters the field with no preconceived notions regarding the phenomena under study. Ethnographic inquiry is based on “not knowing what he or she does not know”, rather than conventional inquiry which rests on “knowing what he or she does not

know” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 209). Thus, ethnographers are ideally able to “see possible parallels and links not previously noticed; to enable us to free ourselves from the frameworks we employ so routinely to see reality” (Hammersley, 1992, p. 14).

In this case however, the literature review was performed in an endeavour to begin the process of delimiting the field of idea offerings. This provided some sense of knowing what needed to be known. The phenomenon that needed investigating was idea offerings. Ethnographic inquiry is usually unable to name the phenomena under study prior to entering the field – deriving a term and description for the phenomenon is the objective of ethnography (Emerson, Fretz & Shaw, 1995; Merriam, 1988). In this case, while the term “idea offerings” was named prior to the study, understanding of this phenomenon was poor. Cases were therefore sought that could provide information-rich data that could describe what “idea offerings” are.

The lack of conceptual understanding of ideas created some difficulty in the selection of cases. It was unclear what products could be regarded as ideas, and therefore could be included in this inquiry. The decision of where specifically to locate the ethnographic study was therefore governed by seeking immediate clarification from respondents (at possible sites) that their offering was perceived as an “idea”.

Firstly, a political office was approached in the endeavour to explore politics as a potential idea product. This was considered due to the ambiguity in the literature regarding the classification of politics. The approach was made six-months out from an election campaign. Ideally, ethnographic techniques could have been employed throughout this six month period to explore the marketing of the political ideas in the run up to the election. The Member of Parliament approached however was concerned as to the confidentiality of

the subject matter and potential to access information which could damage the party. After discussing my possible entry into the organisation with the marketing committee for the party, it was felt such research would be inappropriate due the confidentiality and sensitivity of the marketing campaign. This case was therefore not included in the study.

The following week, a television advertisement for “not judging a person with mental illness” provided some stimulus. This campaign appeared intuitively to be based on an idea offering, and the researcher contacted the sponsoring organisation – the Health Funding Authority. The terminology of respondents immediately confirmed this intuition. The idea – non-discrimination against people with mental illness – was described thus:

What we wanted to do is shift people’s thinking from someone with a mental illness, I can’t cope with that, I can’t cope with them, they’re sort of a write-off, to the *idea* where someone with a mental illness, oh OK, how can I help? (T-1-Ki101-2, p. 2; emphasis added)

So we’re in the business of changing social *ideas* and attitudes. (T-1-Ki101-1, p. 2; emphasis added)

However, terms such as attitudinal and behavioural change, and the phrase social marketing also emerged,

I can see value in this research, that it would add to our corporate knowledge about social marketing. (T-1-Ki101-1, p. 1)

What we are selling is an attitude. I guess we are wanting to change behaviour (T-1-Ki101-1, p. 2)

As such, the definitional issues regarding this project made for an interesting and insightful case. One of the overall objectives of this inquiry is to find definitional boundaries, outlining the conceptual domain of idea products. From the outset, it seemed Case One lay on the threshold of this definitional boundary between social marketing and ideas marketing. Case One (particularly in comparison to Cases Two and Three) provided a unique opportunity to explore the distinction of idea offerings relative to other product types. Fortunately, the Health Funding Authority welcomed the research, and provided the necessary access into this organisation.

Typically, an ethnographic inquiry is performed in a limited number of locations, and often a single case is selected and studied in-depth (see for example, Celsi, Rose & Leigh, 1993; Wallendorf & Arnould, 1991; Hill, 1991). In this thesis however, it was felt that two further cases would provide further insight into idea offerings.

During an informal conversation with a member of Case One, the Peace Foundation was mentioned. Previous ideas marketing literature had pointed to peace as an idea offering (see Chapter 2), so the Peace Foundation was approached. Again, the terminology used by respondents at the Peace Foundation further substantiated the notion that peace is an idea offering:

The way I see it is you're basically trying to sell something, whether it's an idea or a product. And what the Peace Foundation is trying to do is sell a concept, sell a philosophy. (T-3-Ki309-1, p. 3)

The fact is it's a concept...you're not asking people to buy something or use something or watch or read something.... this is like a concept or a way of thinking or a way of life or a philosophy. (T-3-Ki309-1, pp. 3-4)

From the outset however, it became evident that describing or defining the idea of peace proves difficult,

I think what I've learned is that you can't actually describe it.
You can't describe peace. (T-3-Ki323-1, p. 3)

This challenge was particularly highlighted during a marketing meeting with the Peace Foundation. The central objective of the meeting was to determine the marketing priorities for the upcoming annual strategic planning session, with the initial priority being to define their product. After an hour of discussion around the definition of peace, a committee member finally commented,

That's why there's no peace in the world, no one can define it! (T-3-Kis1, p. 17)

While this comment was made in humour, it does highlight a definitional challenge of this organisation. This challenge was particularly recognised by the marketing committee,

Something that I've specifically said at the Peace Foundation marketing committee meetings, is, how about we try to define what it is we are trying to promote (T-3-Ki308-2, p6)

Such initial observations and comments indicated that firstly, the product at the heart of the Peace Foundation was an idea offering (i.e. peace), and secondly, an innate difficulty seemed to exist in terms of defining or conceptualising that idea. This conceptualisation issue led to a range of research themes outlined in the following research findings chapters.

In accordance with emergent design, The Peace Foundation became the central case of this ethnographic inquiry (Case Two). Their openness towards the research, and willingness to allow the researcher to become involved in the organisation meant this case site provided depth and richness of detail towards marketing ideas.

The third case selected for this inquiry emerged mid-way through the data collection period. Case Three: Buddhist Meditation Centre is located in the same building as the Peace Foundation. As a marketable product, Buddhism was described thus:

You don't have a specifically defined product. You have an idea or a vision and the intention to provide, but you don't have a product as such to sell. You can't put religion in a bottle. (T-3-Ki323-1, p. 3)

While the Buddhism Meditation Centre was not studied with the same depth as Cases One and Two, these discussions gave further credence to the data analysis themes emerging from the previous two cases, and were therefore included in this inquiry.

Prior to entering the field, ethical approval was sought from the Waikato Management School Ethics Committee. This approval was granted under the condition that participants' names were omitted from the study. Therefore, a coding system and pseudonyms are used in writing up this ethnography. In accordance with ethical guidelines, respondents' rights were preserved at all times and informed consent was sought prior to individual interviews. All respondents were informed of their voluntary and confidential involvement. While it is possible that the presence of a researcher may have constrained the expression of interviewees, the wide

range of people interviewed allowed for comparison of results and the identification of key themes shared by the majority of respondents. The inclusion of multiple research techniques – specifically, one-on-one interviews, participant observation and analysis of company documentation – further allowed research findings to be triangulated and confirmed across the data set.

4.3.2 The Fieldwork

For ethnographic cases, the collection of data involves physically entering the setting – the field – and getting to know the people in it. The degree of involvement within the field depends on the case under study, and the extent to which the researcher is able to gain access and participate in daily activities. Ideally, ethnographic research is based on fully immersed participant observation, in which the researcher is completely absorbed in the setting for a length of time, observing and participating in daily routines. However, the nature of our daily lives means complete immersion into a setting for a long period of time is increasingly difficult for most researchers, so a less immersed method of fieldwork is the norm (see for example, Celsi, Rose & Leigh, 1993; Wallendorf & Arnould, 1991; Hill, 1991). While still embedded in participant observation, the ethnographic inquiry becomes a more transient process, with other forms of data gathering (for example, interviews, review of company documentation) also included.

Entry into the field began, in each case, with a personal visit with the head (or project manager) of each organisation. Such figures are often referred to as gatekeepers, since they typically hold the authority to allow access to the remaining organisation. These initial meetings were held to explain the purpose and intent of the research, explore possible participant roles, and

secure access to the organisation. A project information sheet was used during these meetings to consolidate the ideas discussed (see Appendix A). Gatekeepers were requested to complete a consent form indicating their agreement to the study (see Appendix B).

Upon obtaining consent by the gatekeeper of each organisation, the initial process of observing the daily routines occurred. Weekly or fortnightly, visits were made to Case One and Case Two⁶, in the endeavour to develop a preliminary impression of each organisation, to become familiar with the people and events and develop ongoing relationships with key members. Throughout the fieldwork, specific means of data collection included observing meetings, participating in routine daily activities as well as public events, conducting formal one-on-one interviews, and reviewing company documentation.

From the early fieldwork stages, it appeared the richest information was emerging during formal (but unstructured) interviews, informal conversations and observation of meetings. The unstructured interviews in particular, allowed flexibility for respondents to narrate their own experiences, ideas and thoughts, while also providing a framework for addressing key emerging insights. The research design therefore adapted to focus primarily on gathering information via interviews (both formal and informal) and meetings. Other data sources such as organisational reports, memos, minutes and newspaper clippings augmented the research findings. Participation in specific events (for example, the Great Debate and Media Peace Awards events held by the Peace Foundation) also provided insight into ideas marketing.

⁶ Case Three: The Buddhism Meditation Centre did not figure until mid-way through the data collection process. The fieldwork was initially focused on Case One and Case Two only.

Successful fieldwork is dependant on the sensitivity and integrity of the researcher, and the researcher's personal associations and behaviours influence the collection of data. In this way, participant observation cannot be completely impartial. Such immersion in the field implies that, "no researcher can be a completely neutral, detached observer and independent of the observed phenomena" (Emerson, Fretz and Shaw, 1995, p. 3). Being a young female, with relatively liberal interests in areas such as spirituality and social justice, appeared to assist the research process. A natural affinity with the respondents was easily established, affording me a non-threatening stance and the ability to solicit complex and sensitive information.

After the initial year of data collection, as friendships developed, less formal methods of inquiry began to emerge. Some of the most valuable information was relayed on the steps to the organisation, over a herb tea in the sunshine. Such moments illustrated the move from stranger to friend, and climaxed with the request to become formally involved with Case Two as a council member for the Peace Foundation. Ethnographic accounts often mention the possibility of 'going native', and this experience with the Peace Foundation in particular demonstrated this prospect. This event created an opportunity to exit the organisation as a researcher, and therefore conclude the data collection process. By this time, fourteen months into the inquiry, a rich set of data had been obtained across all three cases, and the ongoing process of interpretation and analysis could move towards writing up the thesis.

In all, there were twenty-six transcribed interviews. Visits that centred on observing daily routines, and/or participating in an activity/event were recorded by way of fieldnotes. The use of fieldnotes decreased throughout the data collection process, as participant observation lessened (see Logbook, Appendix C). The interview transcriptions, fieldnotes, as well as

personal memos (see below) formed the hard data for analysis. All primary data is provided on the attached CD-ROM (Appendix D⁷).

During the fieldwork, insights routinely emerged regarding specific issues relevant to the inquiry. Such insights are commonplace for ethnographers as they become increasingly involved in the field, while also continuing to review relevant literature, and to reflect on general observations made in everyday life. These moments were captured as personal memos – often posed as questions regarding ideas marketing; sometimes securing a flash of inspiration or insight. These memos map the research process, showing a development in thinking towards idea offerings. The final characteristics of ideas emerged (one by one) during these personal writings (see Appendix D: CD-ROM).

During the data collection period, all data was stored in secure files, and all names removed to ensure anonymity. Access to these files was limited to the researcher and the research supervisors.

Three times throughout the ethnographic inquiry, formal debriefings were held with the PhD supervisors. These debriefings were aimed towards developing and confirming perceptions and interpretations from the field and resolving any field issues. These debriefings also assisted towards the identification of data analysis themes.

⁷ This CD-ROM has been omitted from the final thesis due to the confidential nature of the material. It was viewed only by the PhD supervisors and examiners. Access to this data can be requested by approaching Suzette Major, Department of Screen and Media Studies, University of Waikato.

4.3.3 Data analysis and constructing an interpretation

Analysis of the ethnographic data was two-fold. Firstly, ongoing data analysis was performed in the field. Regular debriefing meetings with supervisors, together with the personal memos, led to the identification of key emerging themes. Taking these emerging themes continuously back to the field allowed verification from the respondents. This data analysis stage was therefore speculative, but provided the basis for focusing on key issues during the data collection process.

The second stage of data analysis was performed subsequent to the fieldwork. At this stage, all data were gathered – the interview transcriptions, fieldnotes, reviews of company documentation, audio/visual material and personal memos. The extensive nature of this rich set of data is characteristic of qualitative research. There were over 800 pages of interview transcripts, fieldnotes and personal memos, and three foolscap storage boxes of company material.

Analysing this data was guided by the constant comparative method. The constant comparative method “requires the researcher to compare the contents of one interview or observation episode with another and with emerging theoretical concepts in an effort to identify underlying themes” (Pettigrew, 2002, p. 113). This identification and structuring of themes (including corresponding sub-themes) took eight months, and involved manually highlighting the transcripts and constantly reorganising the data into groupings and sub-themes (see Appendix D: CD-ROM for an example). The groupings that emerged could be categorised into three main areas: data that related to the production and conceptualisation issues, data that concerned idea consumption and data which described specific marketing tactics.

The results of this inquiry are presented over the following four chapters. Each of these chapters presents the “first-order stories” (Daly, 1997) of respondents. Their words are used to describe their experiences with idea offerings. Chapter Five provides the background and initial observations of each case organisation. Chapter Six details data analysis themes regarding the production and conceptualisation of ideas. Chapter Seven reviews themes regarding idea consumption, and Chapter Eight describes specific marketing tactics employed by the case organisations.

Subsequently, Chapter Nine offers a synthesis of this data into five key characteristics. These characteristics describe the conceptual domain of ideas. This conceptual domain is formed from both emic and etic perspectives - the participants’ views, as well as the researcher’s interpretation. As explained by Daly (1997),

For qualitative researchers who are generating grounded theory, the challenge is one of preserving participants’ definitions of reality in the process of creating a theoretical meaning system that in some way departs from or supersedes that every day reality. As this would suggest, theory is not a first-order account of actors’ experiences and intentions, for that would simply be a reiteration of raw data. Rather theory is, by its very nature, impositional. By virtue of our role as researchers, observers, commentators and social scientists, we are there to organise, select and construct explanation (p. 350).

In this case, the overall purpose of the inquiry is the development of a conceptual understanding of ideas. This understanding is born from the context of the cases studied, and assembled into the five characteristics of ideas.

In order to understand the characteristics of ideas however, it is first necessary to give a deeper description of the case organisations, and present the themes to emerge during the data analysis. This description and resulting data analysis themes are presented in the following four chapters.

CHAPTER 5

DESCRIPTION OF THE CASE ORGANISATIONS

*A mediocre idea that generates enthusiasm
will go farther than a great idea that inspires no one.*

Mary Kay Ash

5.1 Introduction

This chapter commences with a brief discussion of the New Zealand “concept sector”⁸, to provide some context to the organisations involved in this study. Specifically, the ethnographic inquiry is set within three organisations involved in marketing ideas: the Health Funding Authority (specifically, the Project to Counter Stigma and Discrimination Associated with Mental Illness), the Peace Foundation and a Buddhism Meditation Centre. This chapter presents a background to each of these organisations.

Throughout the inquiry, specific organisational characteristics emerged. Across each of the case organisations, common traits were identified, namely, a degree of self-righteousness and an apprehensive attitude towards marketing. These emerging themes are presented in the final part of this chapter.

⁸ “Concept Sector” (rather than ideas sector) is used here in accordance with the terminology outlined by Fine (1981).

5.2 The New Zealand Concept Sector

Fine (1981) employed the term “concept sector” to describe those organisations involved in marketing ideas. In describing the concept sector, Fine (1981; 1990) categorised all idea-based marketing activities as being the products of either non-profit organisations or government agencies.

Non-profit organisations include:

- Health services
- Education/research
- Religion
- Social services
- Civic and fraternal services
- Other (arts, public broadcasting etc)

Fine (1981; 1990) argues that in each of these cases, the product offering is in essence an idea. For example, health and educational services attract consumers by selling the value of their offerings (i.e. the value of good health, the value of education), while religious organisations market concepts such as tranquillity, security and sociability.

Under government agencies, Fine (1981) categorises idea products as

- informational,
- educational or
- political.

Informational offerings have the objective of bringing important facts to the public’s attention, for example, “information about a change in tax laws or speed limits” (Fine, 1981, p. 22). Educational campaigns include promoting energy conservation or increasing seat belt use, whereas political marketing is intended to enhance the image of a party or politician. Each of these offerings is regarded by Fine (1981; 1990) as an idea offering as opposed to a tangible good or intangible service.

While such a theoretical description of the concept sector is admirable, the decision-making process for the categorisation of these marketing activities is questionable. For example, social services, as the name suggests, appear to be part of the services sector. The inclusion of education and health services is equally confusing. Services marketing literature includes numerous case studies of education and health as example of service offerings (see for example, Oumlil & Williams, 2000; Sheppard, 2002; Tait & van Eeden, 2003). How this listing of *idea*-based marketing activities was generated is unclear.

The merits of Fine's (1981) description of the concept sector also lessen when applied to a real life situation: New Zealand. The size of the New Zealand concept sector is remarkably difficult to establish. The reason for this difficulty is two-fold. Firstly, information stating the number of non-profit organisations⁹ and government agencies involved in marketing ideas is notably lacking. Secondly, the inclusion of service-type organisations, such as health and education, which typically fall within the services sector are difficult to isolate from other similar service marketing activities.

Part of the challenge of describing a concept sector also lies in the non-economic basis of these organisations. Economic statistics rely on financial data. For example, the size of the services sector can be determined by the percentage that this sector contributes to the overall gross national product of a country. However, the significance of financial data to the concept sector is notably less. Indeed, the very term *non-profit* organisations indicate that not only profit, but financial exchanges are less important.

⁹ Or Non-Government Organisations (NGOs)

This problem of economic measures is illustrated for example in the industry breakdown for the Gross Domestic Product. Statistics New Zealand categorises industries contributing to the GDP in the following manner (Statistics New Zealand, 2002):

- Agriculture
- Fishing, forestry, mining
- Manufacturing
- Electricity, gas, water
- Construction
- Wholesale trade
- Retail, accommodation, restaurants
- Transport, communication
- Finance, insurance, and business services
- Government administration and defence
- Personal and community services

The categories closest to organisations involved in marketing ideas (for example, peace) would fall within the final two industry brackets – government administration and defence (for government agencies) and personal and community services (for non-governmental/non-profit organisations). These two sectors increased 4.9% and 7.3% respectively in the three-month period ending December 2001 in relation to their contribution to the GDP (Statistics New Zealand, 2002). However, such statistics are not a clear guide to the concept sector. The organisations included within these two categories are not listed. Not all are likely to be involved specifically in marketing an idea offering. It is unclear whether organisations such as the Peace Foundation are taken into account, and if so, in what regard? If they are measured purely in economic terms, their non-financial contribution to society is not being considered – yet this is the very purpose of many non-profit organisations.

Further to this measurement challenge, the New Zealand concept sector is also difficult to describe quantitatively because of macro-definitional issues. As highlighted in the above listing of industry categories, goods and service organisations fall neatly into one of the brackets. For example, a car manufacturing firm would be considered within the “manufacturing” category; a bank within the “finance, insurance and business services” category and so forth. But idea offerings are not so clearly defined and therefore do not form a specific category. Establishing the concept sector in purely economic terms is therefore not an option.

Employment statistics also appear unsound as the basis for describing the concept sector. Idea organisations such as the Peace Foundation typically rely on part-time volunteers, whose employment status may be defined by other paid work. As such, their association with the idea organisation may not be considered in employment figures.

The New Zealand concept sector therefore lacks statistical descriptors. And as suggested above, until idea organisations are clearly defined and recognised as contributing to society beyond economic outcomes, quantitative measures will continue to be an inappropriate basis for describing this sector. Research focusing on detailing the significance of this sector to New Zealand is certainly necessary. Such research however, must begin with qualitative methods (as argued in Chapter Four), which allow for the complexity associated with idea organisations (such as volunteered time, non-economic exchanges not based in measurable units).

With the lack of clear research in the concept sector, it was necessary to turn to the organisations under study to determine if indeed they were involved in marketing ideas. The conceptualisations of their respective products were

provided in Chapter Four, and indicated each case was an “idea organisation”. Further to these conceptualisations, the background to each case organisation is provided below. These descriptions set the scene for the later research findings chapters, which outline the themes that emerged during the inquiry.

5.3 Case One: Health Funding Authority (HFA) Marketing non-discrimination against People with Mental Illness

The Project to Counter Stigma and Discrimination Associated with Mental Illness emerged as a recommendation from the Mason Report¹⁰. This report reviewed mental health services in New Zealand and identified negative public attitudes toward people with mental illness. The Health Funding Authority’s response to this report was a National Plan for countering this discrimination and stigmatisation.

The National Plan has two components. Firstly, the Health Funding Authority developed programs and networks at a community level for the mental health sector. Specifically, the three key strategic objectives were (Health Funding Authority, 1999a, p. 17):

- To develop infrastructure and networks,
- To empower consumers/tangata whaiora and to encourage consumer/tangata whaiora involvement, and
- To change attitudes and behaviour in the mental health sector.

¹⁰ More specifically entitled, the *Inquiry under Section 47 of the Health and Disability Services Act 1993 in Respect of Certain Mental Health Services*.

This initial response was employed in the endeavour to create a more supportive environment in the mental health sector, particularly at the community level.

The second level of the National Plan dealt with the mass media campaign and was referred to as the “public awareness” component. The specific objectives were (Health Funding Authority, 1999a, p. 17):

- To continue to fund ‘project and sector development’ services at a local level,
- To change attitudes and behaviour in the broader field, i.e. government agencies, through policy development with the agencies involved, and
- To change public attitudes and behaviour through mass media, public relations and health promotion.

The five year project was initiated under the Ministry of Health in 1996, and transferred to the Health Funding Authority in 1998. The project was initially projected to end in 2001¹¹.

Those involved in the Project, and specifically the Public Awareness component, were scattered throughout New Zealand. The Project Manager was based in Auckland in the Health Funding Authority premises; the research firm was based in a different location in Auckland, while the PR team was based in Wellington (in close proximity to the commissioning body – the Ministry of Health). Site visits were made to all three premises.

This inquiry began during the third year of the project, specifically when energies were focusing on the mass media advertising campaign. The particular objectives at this time were to (HFA, 1999a, p. 19):

¹¹ Further government funding was made available during 2001, allowing the continuation of this project into 2002 and beyond. Currently, the project is ongoing.

- Develop and implement a paid media component
- Develop national media awards
- Publish media handbook to assist journalists reporting on mental illness
- Develop media response team
- Develop logo and branding
- Organise activities for Mental Health Awareness week
- Establish and maintaining links with key audience, e.g., MPs
- Develop merchandising materials
- Research and publish health education resources to support public campaign
- Develop and maintain website
- Organise national PR activities.

Involvement with Case One began in June 2000 and concluded in June 2001. During this period, the mass media advertising campaign was broadcasting. The campaign consisted of two 60-second television commercials, featuring a series of well known celebrities (e.g. Mike Chunn, music executive; Denise L'Estrange Corbert, fashion designer; Sarah Smuts-Kennedy, actor; Marcia Read, businesswoman), who have experience of mental illness. The conclusion of the advertisement posed the challenge "are you prepared to judge?" The voiceover states "one in five people are affected by mental illness. How much they suffer is up to you". A 0800 phone number was presented, together with the project logo: Like Minds, Like Mine.

The mass media advertising campaign was launched in Feb 2000 and ran throughout the year. The television advertising was augmented with radio, cinema and print advertising, as well as information leaflets. The aim of the advertising messages was to:

- Raise awareness of the commonality of mental illness
- Show that mental illness can affect anyone regardless of sex, age, culture, education or social status, and
- Challenge judgemental attitudes.

Other marketing activities undertaken by Case One include the Like Minds Media Award, which is one of the awards presented during the annual Media Peace Awards ceremony. The Like Minds Media award is “an accolade recognising media excellence and innovation in the coverage of mental illness issues in New Zealand” (Health Funding Authority, 1999b), and was designed to meet the specific objective in the ‘public awareness’ campaign of “developing a national media award” (Health Funding Authority, 1999a, p. 19). Promotional material, such as a media pack (a resource for journalist and subeditors reporting on mental illness) and merchandising (including T-Shirts and caps) were also designed.

A key informant for Case One was the project manager. The project manager had been involved with the National Plan since the outset. They oversaw all activities, and could grant access to meetings, key personnel and company documentation. Three formal one-on-one interviews were conducted specifically with this informant, while numerous informal conversations were held during site visits.

A debriefing meeting with the entire project team, held in Wellington March 2001, provided an opportunity to meet all other personnel involved with this case. During this meeting, other key informants emerged, and formal one-on-one interviews were held with each of these people.

Company documentation analysed as part of this case included the National Plan, the “Like Minds, Like Mine” Media Pack, pre-test research for the

advertising campaign, and evaluation research indicating response to the advertising campaign.

Participant observation was welcomed in this case in terms of the mass media advertising campaign. Access was granted to meetings discussing the advertising campaign, including the debriefing meeting following the initial public response to the campaign. My involvement was primarily observational, recording conversations rather than offering opinions.

5.4 Case Two: The Peace Foundation Marketing Peace

The Peace Foundation was formed in the mid-1970s. At that time, there were over 60 peace groups working in the Auckland region alone (T-3-Ki302-1). The focus at that stage in New Zealand history was the nuclear threat, and the peace movement was proactive in organising activities (including protests and meetings) and lobbying government. The result was the anti-nuclear legislation passed by the New Zealand government in 1984.

Since 1984, the number of peace groups has lessened dramatically, but the Peace Foundation remained. Nowadays, the focus of the Peace Foundation has broadened to peace issues ranging from international disarmament to peace education in schools. Currently there are eight paid staff (as well as numerous part-time and volunteer workers) including a coordinator, office manager, national coordinator and trainer of the Cool Schools Peer Mediation Programme, a resource promotions person, financial controller, marketing manager, plus staff at the Disarmament and Security Centre (based in Christchurch). The organisational structure also includes a 12-

member council (volunteer positions) who act in the role of governance and policy development for the Peace Foundation.

The overall vision of the Peace Foundation is to create:

A sustainable world where people can flourish, conflicts are addressed through peaceful process and there is tolerance and social justice for all. (D-3-15)

The issues addressed by the organisation range from peace education, to community mediation services, disarmament, social justice, and youth peace initiatives, as well as particular New Zealand concerns such as treaty issues and decolonisation.

The Peace Foundation offices are based in Auckland and Christchurch¹². The Auckland office was the focus of this inquiry, although contact was made with staff at the Disarmament Security Centre in Christchurch. The organisation remains afloat financially through government contracts, as well as fundraising initiatives.

Particular programmes and events organised by the Peace Foundation include: the Cool Schools Programme, the Media Peace Awards, guest speakers/tours, as well as developing and promoting resources such as *Thanks not Spanks* and *Volcano in my Tummy*.

Cool Schools is a peer mediation programme, currently in operation in over half the primary schools in New Zealand. It “teaches students to act as ‘third party mediators’ when their peers are caught up in conflict and want to find

¹² Since exiting this organisation, a Wellington branch has been established.

a resolution; and helps students develop life long conflict management skills” (Peace Foundation, n.d). The Peace Foundation designed this programme, and is contracted by the Ministry of Education to implement Cools Schools throughout the country. During this inquiry, I accompanied the National Coordinator and Trainer for Cool Schools on a school visit and participated in a one-day training programme.

The Media Peace Awards were inaugurated by the Peace Foundation in 1984 and have been held annually every year since. This event seeks to

Recognise media professionals and students who actively contribute towards reducing conflict, addressing differences and counteraction prejudices in our society and the wider world. These awards seek to honour serious journalism and its commitment to shedding light rather than heat. (Peace Foundation, 2001).

Media categories include: print, radio, television/film, internet, public relations and rangatahi/student. The ceremony is regarded as an occasion to address concerns towards media coverage by supporting positive journalism of peace issues.

The Peace Foundation is also involved in speaking tours and organising visits from peace advocates such as John Pilger, Noam Chomsky, and Dr Helen Caldicott. Other activities include a garden at the annual Ellerslie Flower Show, the Great Peace Debate, auctions (usually held as a fundraising event) and exhibitions (e.g. co-sponsoring the Hiroshima-Nagasaki A-Bomb Exhibition in 2002). The Auckland office houses the largest peace education and disarmament library in the country, covering topics from building self-esteem to social justice, nuclear disarmament to peace studies. These resources are actively promoted.

Within the organisational structure are a series of committees, one of which is the marketing committee. The marketing committee comprises both staff (including the marketing manager) and council members. During the inquiry, the original marketing manager resigned. This position was filled by a new appointment – however, that person remained with the Peace Foundation for less than six months. Currently (as at May 2002), there is no specific marketing manager¹³. Marketing responsibilities are now being shared among existing staff.

As part of this inquiry, I joined the marketing committee, and observed all marketing meetings from June 2000 to September 2001. All marketing committee members were interviewed, as well as all other Peace Foundation staff. Events such as the Great Peace Debate and Media Peace Awards were attended, and assistance was provided in terms of organising such activities. A two-day strategic planning session was also attended as part of this study, as well as the Annual General Meeting and all council meetings.

5.5 Case Three: Buddhism Meditation Centre Marketing Buddhism

The Auckland Buddhism Meditation Centre is located in the same building as the Peace Foundation on Princes Street, Auckland. The marketing manager (for a six-month period) of the Peace Foundation was also involved in establishing the Buddhism Meditation Centre, and staff at the Peace Foundation regularly attended meditation sessions. Conversations with this

¹³ This is an indicator of the difficulties faced by anyone attempting to fulfil the role of marketing manager within this organisation. As evidenced by remarks from people who took on this responsibility during the period of this inquiry, marketing a product such as peace creates specific difficulties, and the role of marketing manager for the Peace Foundation is challenging.

marketing manager inevitably led to discussions around marketing Buddhism.

This key informant is also involved with the Free Tibet movement, specifically the Friends of Tibet group. His background however lay in the corporate world, previously managing a rental car company, which involve areas such as sales, financing and leasing. This mix of experience led to interesting discussions regarding marketing and business practices, particularly in the context of non-traditional products such as peace and Buddhism.

All meditations at the Buddhism Meditation Centre, and associated teachings, are offered free of charge. The centre stays financially afloat by donations, while keeping overheads to minimum. Library facilities are available at the Centre, and regular meditation sessions are offered. The Centre also draws on teachings by Thupten Tinpoche and recently (in conjunction with the Free Tibet movement) organised a New Zealand visit by the Dalai Lama.

Three formal one-on-one interviews were conducted with the coordinator of the Buddhist meditation Centre, as well as numerous informal conversations. Site visits were made to the centre, and events such as the Dalai Lama visit were attended.

5.6 Organisational Characteristics

Commonalities, in terms of organisational characteristics, were immediately apparent across all three cases. Those involved in the marketing of non-discrimination against people with mental illness, the marketing of peace and the marketing of Buddhism were similar in their worldview and attitudes towards marketing. These positions influence the design and implementation of marketing strategies, and therefore provide some context for understanding the other data analysis themes presented over the next three chapters.

Theme 1

Self-Assured Position

From the first site visit to each organisation, the sincere passion of respondents was obvious. Organisations involved in marketing ideas such as peace, non-discrimination of people with mental illness and Buddhism seemed to attract enthusiastic people who feel passionate about the concept. This passion was expressed by various respondents,

It [the Peace Foundation] is a really really good example of how most organisations in New Zealand, including this one is set up by enthusiasts. They are very highly motivated and extremely concerned, concerned enough to go to the trouble to create work for themselves and others, because they want to make the world a better place. (T-3-Ki308-2, p. 12)

Essentially they [the Peace Foundation] have passionate committed wonderful people who are clinging on to what identifies them. (T-3-Ki323-2, p. 3)

That passion can become contagious. In my own experience, after spending a two-day session with the Peace Foundation (as part of the annual strategic planning session), my enthusiasm for peace swelled. (Interestingly, I was unaware of this emerging passion until I looked back over the fieldnotes). This incident is demonstrated in my fieldnotes,

Everyone seems very committed, and I would even use the word passionate about their involvement with the Peace Foundation. Even though half the people in the room are volunteers, and they don't actually get paid for what they're doing here. Some of the people have been involved since the early 1970s; some of them are getting quite old now and were real activists during the 1970s, and it was mentioned during that initial session that their reputations really mean a lot. A good example in relation to marketing an idea product, how important reputation is... These people are doing phenomenal work, and literally influencing the daily lives of people throughout the world. They are passionate about peace, and in everything they do; they live and breathe what they believe in. What an honour to be part of it! (FN-3-Kis2a, pp. 3-4)

With such passion embedded within the organisations, those involved appear to find some difficulty to remain open minded. Some respondents spoke of the challenge for such organisations to not become dogmatic in promoting their idea. This issue is portrayed in the following extracts,

If you are going to play this game and win it with marketing non-traditional products you've got to have the best people you can get... A lot of NGO's I think have people who are really passionate about it, they've been doing it by themselves for years, lots of volunteer work and it's sometimes hard I think for people who are doing that to let it go a bit, to open it up. (T-3-Ki302-1, p. 5)

In anybody terms, the Church, is the largest single failed movement for not-for-profit organisations the world has ever known. And it's easy to see why, of course. The distinction really is that when spiritual seeking becomes religious dogma it's very easy to exclude people. (T-3-Ki308-1, p. 5)

This degree of inflexibility (particularly in terms of the product) meant that these organisations appeared self-righteous in their worldview. When the idea is marketed to the public, it appears as if these organisations are attempting to convert others to that worldview. As described by one respondent,

You are obliged to sell this view to others, so go and look at the newsletter, and we [the Peace Foundation] are selling views, we're selling viewpoints, a wide range of viewpoints. But in terms of how many people in the population share that point of view, it's probably very minimal. So there is this kind of conversion, wanting to convert mentality. And it's unfortunate, because it's saying, we know best. And I picked up through this organisation that I or we know best about peace, because we are a peace organisation, and the rest of the world, well not the rest of the world, but most the world's a bit of a mess, and we are going to sort it out. And I think once you start thinking like that, you get into the whole issue of propaganda, idealism and what comes out of that, usually nationalism comes out of that, and then you get ism's come out of that and what happens is there's a self perpetuating myth about your organisation. Like holding walls against a sick society. And that's one of the weaknesses of NGO¹⁴'s who work in this area. They develop this sort of culture of their own, which says that we are out to change the world....Sure we can do headlines on issues, make people aware of them, but it's not our place to convert them to that way of thinking. So we should be educating to provide information for people to make up their own minds, not educating to change a point of view that we don't agree with. And I think it takes a courageous organisation to step back

¹⁴ Non-governmental organisation

from trying to convert people. But I think we would be a lot more effective, if we simply provided information or educated people to make up their own mind....Marketing a point of view is dangerous because I think you are imposing a point of view and I think you need to ask yourself, what's your motive? Is it political, is it religious, do you see yourself as superior in some way so you've got to put your point of view across. So, I think that's a philosophical dilemma for this organisation, just looking at it for a very short period of time. And the same thing happens in religious groups as well. But take away all that and take it back to where we started, essentially you've got people with good motivation, who want good things for other people, so how can we best provide that. (T-3-Ki323-1, pp. 10-12)

As highlighted in this above extract, there appears to be a conversion-like, almost evangelistic attitude within these organisations. It is reflected in such comments as the following extract, taken from a marketing committee meeting,

As an NGO we [the Peace Foundation] have a responsibility to say fuck your contract, we've actually got something that's a much higher priority than you are giving us money for, and that's our responsibility, as a social change agent. (T-3-Kis-6, p. 7)

While such behaviour may appear inward and self-righteous, these organisations also display a concern for the wider picture and the impact of their work on society at large. This socially responsible outlook is described in the following extract, taken from an interview with a member of the Peace Foundation,

Whereas I think the Peace Movement, to its credit, understands some universal principles of existence. One is you just can't screw your neighbour day after day and expect

to survive. And they also understand that constant conflict causes trauma and damage. So they can clearly see the damage from our commercial view of things. So it's how you view the world. And I think that the peace movement and religious organisations, they slow down a little bit. So why are they always represented as the nerd dope smoking hippies? Because they are slow and that's always been represented as a negative. Whereas actually it's a positive, because all these people are taking the time to smell the flowers, understand the world they live in, and understand some universal laws of existence and if you break them, you stuff the world and everything with it... So I think there's a recognition in the Peace Foundation that what we do has an effect, whereas in the commercial world, what we do has an effect but we don't care about it. I can't help but bring it back to my personal view on that, and it's all about Karma. It's all about cause and effect. So if you create a product and don't think about the implications of the dumping of that product, there's going to be negative created that will come back and bite you. You've got to think the implications of what you are doing and take responsibility for it. The commercial world doesn't so much, it's starting to. But in this area we don't need to take responsibility for it because what we are making and doing and promoting and putting out there is a good thing. It fits. We're not creating anything that at odds with the environment we are putting it into. So that's one of the beauties of it. (T-3-Ki323-1, pp. 15-17)

This socially responsible stance ties to a further issue that emerged during the data collection period, regarding the perceptions of business, marketing and commercialism. Those people involved in these organisations seem to hold a particular and common worldview, and that worldview stands opposed to capitalist right-wing thinking, which marketing (in their minds) is associated with. This creates a relatively negative view towards marketing, as discussed in theme 2 below.

Theme 2

Apprehension towards marketing

Within the organisations studied, there is some concern towards marketing activities due to the perceived link between marketing, consumerism and capitalism (for example, in terms of profit seeking motives at the expense of societal issues such as social justice). This apprehension towards marketing was particularly apparent at the Peace Foundation, as expressed in the following extracts,

Marketing isn't decent. Marketing is, you know, the opposite to decent. It really is. I mean we are talking survival, which have been big companies with massive amounts of power, and GDP's, that are bigger than countries like ours, I mean we fit into Microsoft's how many times? (T-4-Ki322-2, p. 10)

Marketing is a new term for the Peace Foundation and a lot of NGO's, there's a lot of fear around it. It means to them McDonalds and Coca-Cola. So, if I go and say 'look I want to change the branding, make it 90s, our products have to have new covers, you know the books, people say 'no no no, that's like the devil's work'. (T-3-Ki302-1, p. 4)

When I think of marketing now you think of McDonalds and the way they are marketing and all that sort of stuff and in your face all the time on the back of buses and cars and I guess that's what I think of it. It's horrible. (T-3-Ki307-1, p. 11)

Well marketing's associated with things like capitalism, consumerism, materialism, big multi-national firms, and that sort of mind set is in complete contradiction to the type of ideas that we are trying to promote.... And it's interesting, in terms of looking at it in terms of budget, my marketing being, probably about two per cent of the total budget; that's marketing spend that I have to utilise. So it's very very

small.... And I guess the challenge is for organisations like ours, is to feel that they're really just sharing information and making it available in a way that's totally not imposing, not trying to be manipulative, not try to be smart and use some sort of clever technique. (T-3-Ki302-2, p. 11)

This final extract highlights a particular slant on marketing that appears evident in the cases studied. In the Peace Foundation, respondents spoke of the need to “stay true” while performing marketing activities. For example,

Yet if we are too slick then people will initially see you know, we are trying to be slick yet we are trying to say let's save the world and be true to ourselves, not cross over that line, stay true to what we believe in. So we've got to be careful what sort of marketing we use. Don't think we would ever get into McDonalds marketing, like peace on the back of a bus – I don't think so! (T-3-Ki302-1, p. 6)

Similarly,

But, I think it is absolutely vital, the way things are marketed. Particularly, in something like the Peace Foundation. And I just had an ethical dispute a little while ago with [Ki302] and [Ki301] over this very thing. Because they were into telemarketing, and I felt it was not a good way to sell the Foundation, and not a good way to sell Cool Schools, which was one of the major things that they were selling on their telemarketing programme. And so, I strongly disagreed with it, and told them so. And it turned out that they had to call the trial off in the end. (T-3-Ki304-1, p. 7)

This is not to say, however, that everyone in the case organisations is against marketing. In some cases, participants spoke enthusiastically about the role marketing can play in getting the idea out there. For example,

The whole activity around marketing? I'm really enthusiastic about it. I've been educated quite a lot in the last few years about what marketing is, and being part of the marketing committee has helped to enhance my enthusiasm for it. But to me it's all about getting out there what peace is and what people are doing to foster or to kill it. If that's marketing, I'm all for it! I still think there are people here, and if you had said it to the council 10 years ago, you would have got a very different reaction. And there are still people here who have to have a rethink about marketing, or button their lip because they know they should be enthusiastic about it, but they still think it's commercially geared. (T-3-Ki301-3, p. 11)

But this enthusiasm also holds a sense of caution, particularly because of the association of marketing with capitalist thinking – because such thinking seems in marked contrast to the ideas being promoted by these organisations.

In sum, two particular traits were identified across the three organisations involved in this inquiry. Each case seemed to attract enthusiastic people who appeared at times to be almost evangelistic. This characteristic is summed up as self-righteous or self-assurance.

Secondly, a degree of apprehension towards marketing was also apparent. In that this inquiry focused on marketing (specifically the marketing of ideas), this meant that initially a degree of caution was necessary. It took some time nurturing relationships through informal conversations and regular site visits before respondents felt comfortable discussing their opinions towards marketing and business practices.

This chapter therefore offers a context for the following research findings chapters. The description provided, both in terms of each case organisation

individually and organisational characteristics identified across all three cases, lay the basis from which to understand the research findings. At this point, focus will therefore shift towards presenting the research, in terms of the eleven themes that emerged during the data analysis.

CHAPTER 6

RESEARCH FINDINGS PART 1: PRODUCTION ISSUES

It's an interesting project, peace.

Trying to get your head around how to market peace.

Ki301

6.1 Introduction

This chapter commences Part Two of the thesis. Having laid the conceptual, theoretical and contextual foundations of this inquiry, the thesis now presents the field data as a series of research findings. As explained in Chapter Four, the research findings have been divided into three main areas. With the immensity of the data, from interview transcripts to fieldnotes, recorded meetings to documentation, the pile of notes was enormous. In immersing myself within this mountain of data, it became easier to separate emerging themes into three categories: those relating to the product, themes regarding the consumption of ideas, and thirdly, specific marketing activities undertaken by the organisations under study. The three research findings chapters are presented as such: Chapter Six deals with themes that emerged regarding the product offering; Chapter Seven covers themes concerning idea consumption, while the specific issues and activities associated with marketing an idea offering are outlined in Chapter Eight.

These three research findings chapters are first-order accounts from those involved in marketing ideas. Their stories and experiences are presented as a series of themes. Specific extracts have been taken from interview transcriptions, meetings and fieldnotes to substantiate the theme. These eleven themes to emerge during the data analysis are the basis from which the characteristics of ideas – presented in Chapter Nine – have been generated.

6.2 Research Findings: Production Issues

The production themes to emerge from the data analysis relate to the inherent qualities of peace, non-discrimination of people with mental illness and Buddhism. Specifically, three themes were identified: there appears to be issues regarding extreme intangibility of ideas, their holistic nature and their idealistic disposition. Each of these themes is discussed below.

Theme 3

Extreme intangibility of idea offerings

The most striking theme to emerge across all three cases is the extreme intangibility of the offerings. In the primary case of the Peace Foundation, the intangible and nebulous nature of peace was recalled or reflected in interviews and meetings, fieldnotes and documentation. From the first encounter – a discussion negotiating entry into the organisation – the issue of intangibility was raised:

It's an interesting project, peace. Trying to get your head around how to market peace. It's so intangible. And so abstract. People find it really hard to grasp what you're on about. (T-3-Ki301-1, p. 4)

During discussions on the marketing challenges facing the organisation, the intangibility of peace was typically the first point mentioned. For example, a member of the marketing committee commented,

Firstly it's [peace] an intangible concept; people don't know what it means. It's not something that you can see or buy or wear or anything...On the one hand it's trying to market a way of thinking or a belief system or values and on the other hand values that aren't seen as particularly relevant, and they can't really see it anyway. (T-3-Ki309-2, p. 1)

Intangibility is also reflected in the following extracts, taken from one-on-one interviews with various members of the Peace Foundation marketing committee,

It's a state of being; and that's something that is basically invisible. (T-3-Ki308-2, p. 1)

It is a concept, so it's much less tangible, you're not asking people to buy something or use something or watch or read something. (T-3-Ki309-1, p. 3)

And it's so intangible. When you say peace, like what does that mean? It's not like you and I can hold up this glass and say this is a glass, and we'd both see it and we'd agree, this is a glass. But peace? How do I hold up peace? (T-3-Ki302-2, p. 2).

The extreme intangibility of Buddhism was also raised. In this case, intangibility was seen as a positive,

The beauty with us is that we don't have to deal with physical. We don't have to deal with putting it somewhere, storing it, disposable, environmental impact, our product, one of its benefits is intangibility. Cause we don't have to deal with all the issues that arise when dealing with something solid. (T-3-Ki323-1, p. 16)

Due to the intangibility of the offering, some respondents used analogy or metaphor as a way of describing the idea being marketed. For example, in relation to peace, one respondent commented,

The more tangible you can make it [peace] the better. It's as though we've got to draw a picture for people. And the nearest I can get is saying something like it's like a garden, which has gone to ruin and you want to go in there, you want to take the weeds out and generally tidy it up. But then you've got to start putting things in. You've got to feed the soil. You've got to feed the plants. You've got to plant the plants. You've got to nurture it. And that's what you've got to do with society. (T-3-Ki301-2, p. 11)

The intangible nature of ideas was also identifiable in the mental health case. Case One appeared to address the intangibility of their offering, by developing tangible material to help communicate their idea. This included a media handbook, Like Minds' newsletter, project balloons, stickers, T-shirts and caps. Indeed, in each case, such marketing techniques are routinely employed as a way of materialising the offering. These marketing tactics are discussed with some detail in Chapter 8 – Research Findings Part 3: Marketing Issues.

Theme 4

Holistic nature of Ideas

The fourth major theme to emerge from the data analysis relates to the holistic and broad nature of the offering. Throughout the data collection period, the broadness of peace, non-discrimination of mental illness and Buddhism was regularly discussed. For example, during interviews at the Peace Foundation, respondents commented,

It's [peace] a huge concept. It's a vague concept. It's broad, it covers heaps, yet it's something that is really difficult to say this is what it means to me today. (T-3-Ki309-2, p. 4)

Similarly,

Because this [peace] is like a concept or a way of thinking or a way of life or a philosophy it's incredibly broad. So one of the difficulties that the Peace Foundation has internally, let alone trying to market itself externally, is where you draw the line. (T-3-Ki309-1, p. 4)

You can break down peace to its components, which is much easier jargon for people to comprehend. Like violence prevention, conflict resolution, mediation, social justice - those sorts of things people can swallow. But as soon as you say "peace", it gets into the too hard basket. People have different interpretations for what that means from the absence of war through to a very holistic sort of making the world a better place to personal relationships and stuff. (T-3-Ki302-1, p. 3-4)

This theme – the holistic nature of ideas – shone through particularly at the Peace Foundation. Marketing committee meetings often focused around this characteristic, and discussion emerged on how to narrow down the product of peace. For example,

The issue is over how do we sum up what we're doing, and in terms of our public perception, how do we convey it? If we chose anything to try and describe it, its kind of limiting. It's like well it covers this and that but what about this other thing. And it was almost like, instead of trying to be limiting, we could keep it very broad and open. Which is what the "one-stop shop" could be. It would be like we are actually not trying to define it. We're not trying to say this is what the Peace Foundation does, because it appears that to do that we would have to cut off different parts because it's too hard to bring together everything under the concept of peace. So leave it broad, leave it open and then the marketing function becomes one of what we do is contribute towards making the world a better place, more peaceful communities and that sort of thing. And that's very broad. (T-3-Kis1, p. 4)

This "one-stop-shop" proposal was raised by the marketing committee as a way of addressing the broadness of peace. As noted, efforts to limit peace into a specific and narrow term were proving ineffective (in the sense that no agreeable conclusion could be reached). As such, the marketing committee considered discarding their efforts to narrow peace, and instead embrace the broadness of the idea. The entire two hour marketing committee meeting was devoted to this issue,

Ki302: Well the one-stop shop idea ... basically we felt that conflict resolution was too restricting for what's the Peace Foundation activities, it's one aspect, but it didn't really encapsulate what we are really about.

Ki309: So what did you feel it didn't include?

Ki302: Everything else, and that's the problem.

Ki309: Well what is everything else?

Ki302: Social justice, which you could say is conflict resolution in some ways, but then there's the stuff like creating positive families. Which is much more about the creation of positive families before conflict happens as opposed to resolving conflict. Like the conflict's here what do we do with it, what's the step before that. It's a part that the Peace Foundation wants to get involved in.

Ki308: Now, see this is the problem with the concept of peace. Until we can turn it into something that is an affirmative action, we are forever going to be saying "oh yeah and then there's this".

Ki302: Well what's sort of happened around that, I think if we could nail that on the head that would be awesome. But it seems to be really difficult to get any sort of consensus, let alone a definition. So with the one-stop shop idea, and how that came about is like, okay, perhaps instead of trying to restrict ourselves to a definition we say that, the other issue was if we make it too broad then the Peace Foundation does everything and anything which is really difficult to try and manage in terms of operations and taking on this project and not that project. (T-3-Kis-1, pp. 1-2)

After discussion around the "one-stop-shop" approach, the marketing committee eventually discarded the idea. The predicament of such an approach was that the Peace Foundation felt unfocused in their activities. They argued that the organisation needed to consolidate their focus in order to effectively communicate the idea of peace to outside groups (for example the general public, politicians, the media). So, after a two hour meeting, they arrived back at the original dilemma of how to deal with the holistic nature of peace. The issue was never resolved.

A subsequent marketing committee meeting again approached discussion on the holistic nature of peace, this time by attempting to find its “brand essence”¹⁵. Again, this process was conducted as a way of narrowing the broadness of the idea. The background to this meeting is outlined in the following extract,

Ki309: Well what I would like to suggest is coming up with an essence. And what we can do is define what our values are. And then we can see more of these words and see if it captures it and then come to the essence. So the model that we use takes more of a step by step, work out who your target market is and what they want and how you want them to feel. Then work out what is it you are going to rationally, functionally going to offer, how is that going to make them feel, how is going to make them look and what the personality of the brand. Then work through what the core values are, maybe three core things which is kind of what the brand stands for, and then you work out the essence. (T-3-Kis 5, p. 2)

As the “brand essence” meeting unfolded, people offered an array of terms and phases on the personality to the core values of the Peace Foundation. The result of this discussion, taken from my own fieldnotes, is outlined below:

How the Peace Foundation makes you feel

- Confident
- Informed
- Motivated
- Creative
- Enabled
- Inspired

¹⁵ Whether or not this meeting was indeed dealing with the product’s brand essence is disputable. However, brand essence was the term used at this meeting.

How the Peace Foundation makes you look

- On to it
- Enlightened
- Assured
- Insightful
- Positive/optimistic
- Leading edge
- Have conviction

The personality of the Peace Foundation

- Energetic
- Positive
- Visionary
- Caring
- Practical
- Assertive
- Well balanced
- Experienced
- Grounded
- Approachable

The functional purpose of the Peace Foundation

- Reliable, dependable
- Flexible
- Innovative
- Achieving
- Leading edge
- Experienced

Core Values (what the Peace Foundation stands for)

- A hunger for justice
- Conviction
- Innovative
- Action

(refer to F-3-Kis 5)

After this lengthy process, the marketing committee arrived at the heart of the discussion – the brand essence of Peace Foundation. And their conclusion: peace.

Ki309: Well I think that actually our essence is peace.

[laughter]

Ki302: After all this, we're back at peace. The brand essence is peace!

Ki309: Really. Like the proposition is inspiring peaceful solutions through research, education and action, that's actually how we deliver peace. But the essence of peace is peace. Peace is the overriding thing; it's the commonality of all these words.

Ki302: Right.

Ki308: OK, I'm fine with that. And I like it because here we are talking about what peace is and we're getting an understanding of it and we create peace in the Peace Foundation. Peace is what we are about. (T-3-Kis 5, p. 16)

Again, the marketing committee meeting arrived back at the same impasse. Any attempts to focus peace by using more specific terms resulted in a limitation that negated the very nature of their product. Peace is a broad concept and simply cannot be limited. That is its essence.

An external design company also faced the same challenge. Daswoods Design worked with the Peace Foundation (and more specifically the marketing manager) in developing a style guide for their marketing communication materials. Through this process, they attempt to find a term, other than peace, to more effectively market the work of the Peace Foundation. The result: "conflict resolution". However, this again caused

debate, as it was too restrictive and did not encapsulate the broadness of peace. This debate is reflected in the following extracts,

Basically we felt that conflict resolution was too restricting for what's the Peace Foundation activities. It's one aspect, but it didn't really encapsulate what we are really about. (T-3-Kis1, p. 1)

But we got to the essence of what it was that we saw as our characteristic that kind of distinguished us from anything else and this was the synthesis of everything that we stood for and they got 'conflict resolution'. And sure, we do that, and it's one of the easiest things to convey, and for people to understand. And you do that so often because if you are trying to get a message across to somebody, you do it the easy way. But you are almost betraying the rest of what you do. Because you are not making the attempt to convey it and so we had to stop and think well what is it that we do? If you had to really bring it down, what would it be? (T-3-Ki301-2, p. 12)

We are doing our style guide at the moment, which is the document we are going to use for all future and existing documents and getting some consistency, branding of the Peace Foundation... The brand essence which was what are we, who are we, which relates to this question on peace. The temptation is to make it very specific because it's easier to communicate, like conflict resolution but peace is such a big word and to take one part of it obviously has ramifications. If we were to say, "OK, the Peace Foundation is about conflict resolution", then there are a lot of activities we are currently engaged in that we would have to leave aside. (T-3-Ki302-1, p. 7)

In the history of the Peace Foundation, such discussions surrounding the holistic nature of peace appear commonplace. There have been occasions however, when the broadness of peace has been limited to a single issue – most notably, nuclear disarmament. Unlike peace, nuclear disarmament is a

clear specific term, which can be easily articulated and understood. As noted by one respondent,

So often the peace movement in New Zealand has been successful when it's been a single issue topic like "nuclear weapon". That's something everybody can understand. It's a clear goal. Start getting this legislation through. It's about stopping these ships coming in. (T-3-Ki309-2, p. 2)

In the Buddhism case, the holistic nature of the offering was also highlighted. This holism not only relates to the product (and the resulting effect on articulating Buddhism), but also the nature of the experience itself,

Because when people come to Buddhism meditation they open up, meditation brings up a lot of stuff, they become very open and quite vulnerable in a way... It's like a little place they can come when they need an emotional intellect nesting top up, spiritually, everything. It's about the whole person. (T-3-Ki323-2, p. 9)

The holistic nature of ideas was not so evident in the mental illness case. Non-discrimination of people with mental illness is a more specific and narrow concept, which is more easily articulated than peace or Buddhism. However, in this case, evidence emerged as to the broadness of concept in the eyes of the consumer. This issue is discussed in Chapter Seven, sub-theme 6.3: Holistic and ill-definable nature of idea offerings.

The holistic nature of idea offerings relates to a further product theme. Idea offerings are not only innately holistic, but also seemingly endless. Coupled with these traits is a future-orientated outlook. Ideas, by their nature, do not relate to an event, situation or circumstance apparent now – rather the core

of an idea offering is idealistic, describing a state that only exists in a utopian future. This issue is discussed in Theme five below.

Theme 5

Idealistic nature of idea offerings

The fifth major theme to emerge during the data analysis relates to the notion of idealism. Idealism was raised throughout the data collection period, particularly in one-on-one interviews and during meetings. This theme is two-fold. Firstly, it concerns the idealistic nature of the organisations and personnel involved. Secondly, and more important, this theme relates to the idealistic, future-orientated character of the product itself.

Respondents within the organisations appear to take an optimistic outlook with regard to their work. This is most evident in the organisations' vision statements.

The vision statement at the Peace Foundation for example is,

A sustainable world where people can flourish, conflicts are addressed through peaceful process and there is tolerance and social justice for all. (D-3-15)

Similarly, idealism is inherent with the Project to Counter Stigma and Discrimination against Mental Illness. In that case, the vision statement is as follows,

The vision for this project is working towards creation a nation that values and includes people with mental illness (D-1-1, p. 8)

Consequently, an overall objective of these organisations is that there is no longer a need for them to exist. That is, the idea they are promoting is reached and society has adopted that worldview. During a strategic planning session for the Peace Foundation, this issue was succinctly summed up when a participant answered the question ‘how do we recognise peace?’ by answering, ‘when we can all retire!’.

The second part of idealism relates to the offering itself. The optimism within the organisations appears to emerge as a result of the idealistic nature of peace, mental health and Buddhism. Non-discrimination of people with mental illness, for example, is an idealistic statement, as is peace. With each case, the offering encapsulates an ideal of “how the world should be”. This characteristic of ideas is reflected in the following extracts,

It’s [peace] just quite a strange word. It’s an overall utopian vision really (T-3-Ki307-1, p. 7)

An interesting analogy is with say vegetarianism, you could argue that this [peace] is the same thing; vegetarianism is associated with the hippy movement, as is the GE movement, and it’s all seen as highly idealistic. (T-3-Ki308-2, p. 1)

Dealing with such an idealistic offering however presents challenges. Respondents spoke of the difficulty inherent to their product, in that it may appear non-realistic and unachievable. This negative side of idealism affects not only consumers of ideas (discussed under Theme 6.4, Chapter Seven),

but also those involved in the organisations. As explained by one respondent,

I think there is a utopian view of the world that prevents them from accepting some sort of everyday reality to their existence. In other words, the world does have conflict, you can put programmes in place, but you can't resolve every conflict in every part of the world and that sphere of existence as an organisation. It's impossible. Jesus tried it and it didn't work. Mohammed tried it, Buddha tried it. Everybody's set out to try to solve mankind's illness, but it's not possible. (T-3-Ki323-2, p. 3)

Similarly,

So I see the overall idealism throughout the place, I see all the issues, and I see there are limitations to how far we can actually go with those issues in terms of getting results, the ideal result, so I have to say, well I can only really, effectively with my skills, achieve a certain amount. (T-3-Ki323-1, p. 6)

This limitation – an unachievable ideal – may also be evident in the consumers' outlook, as explained by another respondent,

Ki307: It's [peace] just sort of an overall peaceful existence, where there's never a conflict. So you wouldn't even need conflict resolution, everybody lives happily. It's just that fairytale view of peace.

Res: Do you think it's achievable?

Ki307: Might be. I don't know if people would want it to be achievable.

Res: Why?

Ki307: Because it might get a little too boring. We like conflict. You know sometimes challenges in life are quite good and we are stimulated (T-3-Ki307-1, p. 8)

While idealism may appear an obvious outcome of working with ideas (each term is born from the same etymological root), evidence in the data suggests idealism is a significant issue when dealing with idea offerings. Idealism is evident in the attitude and behaviour of those working with ideas. It means idea consumers may perceive ideas as unachievable and therefore irrelevant. This issue is discussed further under Theme 6.4 (Chapter Seven).

Each of these three themes – the extreme intangibility, holistic and idealistic nature of ideas – relates to the products under study. Each theme was evident in all three cases. The Peace Foundation in particular seemed to grapple with these three issues – they recognised the intangibility of their offering, they regularly attempted (unsuccessfully) to narrow down peace to a single clearly articulated concept, and they recognised that inherent idealism of peace meant a lack in consumers' interest. The mental illness case has dealt more successfully with these three issues. The product was more clearly defined; they proactively tangibilised their offering through marketing tactics such as events and publications; however they equally had to wrestle with the inherent idealism of the product. The Buddhism case seemed less concerned about these three issues. However, they recognised their offering as being intangible, and essentially spiritual.

A term that did not emerge during this inquiry, worthy of consideration, is “production”. While this Chapter concerns themes regarding “production issues”, production itself was never mentioned. The ideas seem to exist beyond any production processes. The case organisations were more concerned with the product itself (and its inherent characteristics such as intangibility, holistic and idealistic), rather than how to make or produce the idea.

Other than intangibility, holism and idealism, other themes emerged during the data analysis specifically concerning the consumption or marketing of an idea. These themes are outlined over the following two chapters.

CHAPTER 7

RESEARCH FINDINGS PART 2: EXCHANGE & CONSUMPTION ISSUES

The value of an idea lies in the using of it.

Thomas A. Edison

7.1 Introduction

In accordance with the method outlined in Chapter Four, this inquiry centred on those involved in marketing ideas. However, during the research, themes emerged concerning idea consumption. The knowledge and experience of respondents provided the opportunity to also learn about the consumption of ideas. These exchange and consumption themes offer further insight into ideas marketing, and are therefore reported as part of the research findings.

In the context of ideas, exchange refers to the process of reaching the general public, or specific target markets, with the idea of peace, non-discrimination against mental illness or Buddhism. Consuming the idea means to “take on” that perspective; to adopt that worldview. Such a process results in a fundamental change towards others, towards people with mental illness, and/or towards life in general. This understanding of ideas exchange and consumption is based on the findings of this inquiry, and can be understood through the following themes.

7.2 Brief overview of themes

In relation to exchange and consumption issues relevant to idea offerings, three major themes emerged. Firstly, and most significant, is the theme regarding the difficulty idea consumers have in understanding and visualising the offering. This theme consists of four sub themes, including: preconceptions consumers hold towards the offering, the influence of the media in the formation of those preconceptions, the holistic and ill-definable nature of the offering, and the perceived irrelevance of the idea. These sub-themes suggest idea consumers struggle to recognise what the offering is, and how they may be a potential consumer of it.

The second major theme to surface during this data analysis is the need for idea consumers to make a fundamental shift in their worldview in order to consume the offering. The third theme to emerge concerns the benefits consumers enjoy from consuming idea offerings. These benefits are multiple and appear transferable from one consumer to another.

Notably, each of these themes (and the corresponding sub-themes) reinforce the production themes discussed in the previous chapter and provide further evidence for, in particular, the inherent characteristics of idea offerings.

7.3 Research findings

Theme 6

Idea consumers have difficulty understanding and visualising the offering

A central challenge for organisations involved in marketing ideas is the difficulty associated with articulating their offering so that consumers clearly understand the idea. At the heart of the marketing strategy lies a product that is highly intangible, holistic, and idealistic. These characteristics (as identified in the previous chapter) create difficulties for the consumers of ideas. Theme Six reflects those comments and observations that relate to this difficulty.

This theme comprises a series of sub-themes. Each sub-theme describes a particular issue which, taken together, add to the complexity associated with the consumption of ideas.

Sub-theme 6.1: Preconceptions of the idea offering

Across all cases, comments were regularly made regarding the preconceptions that consumers hold towards their idea. These preconceptions influence a consumer's perception of the offering, and can create difficulties in consuming the idea. In the primary case of the Peace Foundation, this issue of the preconceptions of peace consistently emerged. For example,

So in 2001 it [peace] still has that unsexy, grandma, out-of-date, not-relevant, woolly cardie Brigade, hippy, soft image... And then once you understand where their [consumers] heads are at and how they see peace, then you should try and break down those barriers. It's kind of like these people will just have a misconception of Peace. It's not like you have to change what we are doing. It's like we have to address those misconceptions that they have about it, and let them to understand what it is that we are talking about and show to them that it is cool and it is sexy or whatever... Whereas I think most people consider peace to be the absence of war, therefore it's all about international relations, big country stuff, weapons and all that kind of thing, as opposed to how I treat my workers, my colleagues, and all that kind of stuff. (T-3-Ki309-2, p. 1-4)

Similarly,

One of [the challenges] is that peace is still associated with the 60's, and the counter-culture, pretty strong in most people's minds. (T-3-Ki308-2, p. 1)

Sometimes I've said I work for the Peace Foundation and people go what? Oh hippy. You know you get that connotation that goes with the word peace. (T-3-Ki307-1, p. 7)

Because peace was an airy-fairy hippie thing and people think it's not very serious, and people don't know what peace really meant. (T-3-Ki303-1, p. 7)

In each of these extracts, reference is made to the "out-of-date" image of peace, and the association of this idea with the 60s hippy culture. The Peace Foundation actively promotes an alternative (and broader) view of peace, with the aim of countering this preconception. An objective of the

marketing committee for example is “popularising peace”, as reflected in the following extract,

We aim to make peace more popular. It’s like a concept that is stuck in the 60’s and 70’s. And we want to bring it alive, so it can take on a sense of popularity. So that it doesn’t have a sense of un-coolness about it. (T-3-Ki309-1, p. 7)

“Popularising peace” was identified as a priority during the 2000 strategic planning meeting at the Peace Foundation (see D-3-11). This approach was designed to move the concept of peace from its association with the 60s hippy movement to a relevant and active movement of 2000, and thereby, “help dispel the image of woolly cardies” (D-3-11, p10).

The challenge of preconceptions was also evident with the idea of Buddhism. Similar to the Peace Foundation, this case organisation faces a multitude of preconceived notions regarding Buddhism. As part of the marketing strategy, efforts were made to provide information to dispel these preconceptions. For example, in the Buddhism case,

What I’m trying to do with this centre is dispel the myth about meditation, particularly about Buddhist meditation. That if one shaves ones head, wears robes, says certain rituals and certain prayers and one becomes a wholly spiritual being. Not! (T-3-Ki323-2, p. 9)

In terms of mental health, a central tenet of the marketing strategy was to encourage the public to think more openly about the idea and to counter the preconceived notions people have regarding mental illness. As mentioned by one respondent in Case One,

They talk about unlearning and then learning again, and that's quite right. With mental illness, most people are not able to distinguish between mental illness, psychiatric condition, and neurological conditions and intellectual disability... people said that they found the whole idea of mental illness scary and that that scariness was made worse by the media's focus on the tragedies. (T-3-Ki101-3, pp. 8-12)

This issue regarding the preconceptions of mental illness was also reflected in research conducted for the Ministry of Health (both before and after the advertising campaign), which attempted to evaluate the impact of the national media campaign (see D-1-4; D-1-5). The pre-test identified that consumers saw mental illness as,

Scary, unknown, fearful; [and also there was some] confusion between mental illness and intellectual disability. (D-1-3)

In light of such preconceptions (and misconceptions) about mental illness, the research team specifically included questions in the pre- and post-evaluation research, which explored such beliefs. These questions revolved around the current awareness and perceived incidence of mental illness. An aim of the advertising campaign was to shift these current misconceptions toward a more accurate understanding of the incidences of mental illness. With regard to awareness, participants were asked (unprompted) to recall various types of mental illness. The responses included schizophrenia, depression, bi-polar, Alzheimer and so forth. The highest result was 63% for those who recalled schizophrenia, while psychosis, obsessive-compulsive, dementia and Parkinson were only each mentioned by 4% of participants. The results for the perceived incidence of mental illness also reflected

misconceptions about mental illness. When asked to estimate the number of New Zealanders who have a mental illness, the most often estimated proportion was 1 in 20. The actual proportion is 1 in 5. Both these questions indicate a lack of understanding on the part of consumers about mental illness. The project team attributed this lack of understanding about mental illness to misconceptions (formed partly through the media). The advertising campaign was designed specifically to address such misconceptions.

Preconceptions about mental illness are also reflected in the experience of the project manager in dealing with local authorities. As explained,

You see that [preconceptions of mental illness] reflected in the issues that have been preoccupying me over the last couple of months. It has been over local authorities trying to change their district plans to make it more difficult for community based housing for people with mental illness. And these are all based on fear. Where there are houses for people with mental illness, there are no problems. But where you talk about setting one up there are public meetings. If people have not actually experienced a real problem of people with mental illness, they buy into what they perceive, which is that mental illness is scary. (T-1-Ki101-3, p. 8)

In order to counter the preconceptions of peace, Buddhism and mental illness, each organisation spoke of how these preconceptions have been formed. By far, the primary source of information regarding these ideas was perceived as being the media. Other lesser influencing factors included historical events and personal encounters, as explained in the following extracts,

Mental illness has, all through my life and for generations previously, been something which was institutionalised.

Anyone with a mental illness was shut away from society and put into the care of people who were supposedly experts. Now, the message that gave to ordinary people is you can't deal with that mental illness, leave it to the experts. So we formed a perception that we couldn't cope with mental illness. That if somebody exhibited the symptoms of mental illness at any time, they needed to be put away. We have abandoned those institutions, and actually said people don't need to be lock away. But the community hasn't understood well what we do now. And in fact what we need to do is just treat people with mental illness as if they were anybody else. (T-3-Ki101-3, pp. 9-12)

Similarly, with peace,

Until recently, our education system and our dialogue, conversations we have with ourselves, as a community and as a society, didn't actually look at the things that are conspiring to allow us to live in peace. They look at the problems. They look at the end result. But they don't actually look at why they're being generated. If you look at history for instance, history is a classic, because if you study history it all about the wars that have happened and not about what's happened in between. Very rarely about what happened in these times of peace. So there's a kind of general definition of peace as the absence of war. Therefore it's not very interesting. It's only been in the last 20-30 years when people have been studying peace, people have been studying conflict resolution, and there's been some different thoughts developing about it. And there's been discussions and books produced, so people have actually started to think about it. Until then, I think it was something that was regarded almost universally as something that occurred by accident. Like if you weren't at war, you were at peace. (T-3-Ki301-3, pp. 6-7)

But the media's portrayal of ideas such as peace, mental illness and Buddhism, was alleged as having the greatest impact in the formation of

preconceptions. The impact of the media on idea offerings is outlined in sub-theme 6.2 below.

Sub-theme 6.2: Impact of the media on
preconceptions of idea offerings

In both the news and entertainment media, ideas such as peace, Buddhism and mental health are regularly portrayed. The association of peace with the hippy movement, Buddhism with people in robes, and mental illness with violence is often how these ideas are represented¹⁶. Subsequently, these images form preconceptions in the publics' mind towards these ideas.

In discussing the formation of preconceptions, a respondent at the Peace Foundation commented,

I think that [preconceptions] come from the media. It comes from popular culture, the movies and TV programs. Stuff like that. It's really really similar to...misconceptions about Quakers for example. And I come across this because my mother's a Quaker, so I mention that and people go "oh, really, so they are strict and wear all black and funny hats". And that's because there have been some movies made that featured possibly Quakers, although it may have been Amish or whatever, but it's very confusing and people get them muddled up. And there were some Quakers in the States who really took on the 15th century values and didn't kind of modernise. And those movies are so much more powerful than the reality, because the reality is Quakers don't advertise, they don't get out there, they don't prophesise, they don't go and shout themselves and so you've got no idea what it's really like. You go to a movie and it reaches much

¹⁶ See for example the work of Wilson, Nairn, Coverdale and Panapa (2000; 1999a; 1999b), and Allen & Nairn (1997) in relation to media depictions of mental illness.

more people. The same with Peace. You know there are lots of movies about drug taking hippies, and so that's what is visible and all the stuff that happens with the kind of people who are working towards peace is mostly invisible, because they don't market themselves. They just kind of do the work and we don't really get to see much of them. (T-3-Ki309-2, pp. 2-3)

The impact of the media in the formation of preconceptions, and the need to counteract its influence, is recognised in events organised by the Peace Foundation, such as the annual Media Peace Awards,

The media deals with conflict and the Media Peace Awards is a classic example of how we are not trying to buy into that. (T-3-Ki302-1, p. 13)

In attending the 2000 Media Peace Awards, it became evident that this event was primarily organised to counter the often negative portrayal of peace in the media, through acknowledging and celebrating positive media coverage instead. During the closing interview by John Campbell with the guest speaker, John Pilger, such issues were raised,

The way so much of the media is constructed these days, it is about putting a bottom line on every human endeavour. It is about selecting stories subliminally along the idea that it has to have some monetary value in society. It's like a virus, it's in everything and it's particularly in the media. (D-3-23)

We're in a world where there appears to be a saturation of information, when in fact there isn't. There's a saturation of media. (D-3-23)

John Pilger congratulated the Peace Foundation on organising the Media Peace Awards and their efforts to address media coverage. This public event was seen as a way to address preconceptions and offer an alternative view of peace.

While such efforts are admirable, the Peace Foundation is aware that they are just a small voice up against large conglomerates. The struggle of dealing with the media's depiction of peace is reflected in the following extracts,

The media, working with the media and through the media is a major challenge for us. Because, particularly the news media, the sort of criteria that's applied to what's newsworthy and what isn't newsworthy, it's like a counter to what we are talking about. The old thing about "if it bleeds it leads", is absolutely true for people in the media, for the people that are making decisions it's true. So, it extremely difficult for us to get a voice heard. And that's a real conundrum...But generally speaking it's extremely hard to get into the news media. It's much easier to get things into features. It's much easier when we have people over here like Noam Chomsky, John Pilger, and they can act as mouthpieces. But with the sort of messages that we are trying to get out it's an up hill battle. Because the kind of environment that we are trying to get into, or the channel we are trying to get through, is constructed in a way that is almost diametrically opposed to what we are doing. (T-3-Ki301-3, p. 4)

Similarly,

If you waited until you've deconstructed the media's messages about what you are trying to market, then you would never get anywhere. I think you need to constantly work on that, along with everything else. And I think it would be really difficult and it would just take a huge

concerted effort to change that. Because we are not just talking about journalists, editors and people like that. We are talking about Hollywood, and you know. How could you ever get to the point where they start making movies portraying people who are into peace in a different way? (T-3-Ki309-2, p. 10)

The media is exactly like that. It's a necessary evil. I mean if we limit ourselves to something like good media, it's probably like one print publication or two in New Zealand. You get into maybe a radio station here or there. That would be fine; we would just have to take the good with the bad. And the bad would be that we wouldn't really get much publicity, or whatever. (T-3-Ki309-1, p. 6)

Further evidence as to the challenge of working with the media also lies in how Peace Foundation events are reported. For example, the *Waging Peace* study – a report conducted in 1995 on a number of peace issues such as nuclear disarmament – was reported unjustly in the media. Media coverage focused on the negative (but newsworthy) issue of military service. As explained by one respondent,

The last time I can remember us being involved with an instant news thing, was when our *Waging Peace* report came out, the book I gave you based on the survey. The reason we were newsworthy was the results of one of the questions that said that people wanted to see the compulsory military services brought back. “Peace Foundation says people want to see...” And they didn't go into the complexities about why people want to see compulsory military services brought back. (T-3-Ki301-3, p. 4)

In the other two cases, the impact of the media in forming preconceptions about Buddhism and mental illness was also raised. Again, the challenge of dealing with the media appears to be two-fold. Firstly, these case

organisations have some difficulty accessing the media, because the ideas they are promoting seem counter to the ideas that dominate the media. Secondly, the media's depiction of mental illness and Buddhism is seen to influence consumer's preconceptions towards those ideas.

In relation to media access, and with regard to the Buddhism centre,

Access to media or organisations like this is difficult. Difficult in that the media is commercial. There's no return to the media for organisations like ours, in terms of newsworthiness that supports advertising. So, our issue is that the kind of things our organisation wants to talk about tend to be tag-ons, they are not centre stage. An example I'm familiar with, if you take the Free Tibet protest and the Chinese president, nobody wanted to know about that until there was conflict. And when there was conflict it was all over the news. And since that conflict has died down, not one media organisation has said they will come to the Free Tibet movement and ask why are you doing this? There's been no interest whatsoever. Despite the fact that we actively pursue the media to get them to look at the whole issue in depth. So what it says is that the media is driven by conflict. And so that's difficult for us to be attractive to the media. (T-3-Ki323-1, p. 14)

Accessing the media was also evident in the mental health case. For example a television documentary, *Sticks and Stones*, produced by the project team was not reported in print media such as the *Listener* or *The New Zealand Herald*. The incident was discussed during a one-on-one interview with the project manager,

Ki101: We did all the usual stuff with media statement for print and it was picked up in the provinces, but it was ignored by *Herald* and even the *Listener*. The *Listener* did not even include it in their highlights for the week. What they put was this new teenage American junk soap thing that was starting

that night and basically filling up a space over summer, and that's what the Listener promoted as the highlight. Then the *Herald* on the Friday of the screening, their half page television review focused also on that teenage thing, but telling us not to watch it. So writing a story about why you shouldn't watch it. Again, absolutely no mention of this documentary.

Res: Have you followed up and asked either the *Herald* or the *Listener* why?

Ki101: I asked Ki102 to contact. I have a suspicion that they might feel that because this was a government production that they wanted to distance themselves from it to some extent. There is this attitude towards government messages. So I thought if I rang up I probably won't get straight answers so I thought it better to get Ki102 to do it. So Ki102 rang Finlay McDonald and he never returned her calls. The next person I spoke to about it was Patrick Smelly. He's a journalist, he used to work for the *Sunday Star Times*; I think he's independent now. He's taken a special interest in mental illness and this project and went on a sabbatical to the US to look at media reporting on mental illness and has written some very interesting stuff. We were in touch by email and I said to him in one of my messages what I was concerned about and if he had any idea if this was an attitude problem that we were dealing with and he never answered my question. So. (T-1-Ki101-3, pp. 2-3)

The media also appears to influence consumers' preconceptions towards non-discrimination against people with mental illness and Buddhism. This affects the consumption of the ideas being promoted by these case organisations. For example, with the project manager of the mental illness campaign commented,

Over June I was looking hard at the literature on the media's role in forming attitudes and one of the things that I searched out was that there's quite strong literature on this. Other than people who have had a personal experience of mental illness,

either their own or close contact with somebody, the primary piece of information about mental illness is the media. People's confidence in that information is very ambivalent. And in some studies it suggests an indication in that they have more confidence in what the entertainment literature tells them than what the news media tells them. The New Zealand surveys don't strongly support that, but nevertheless, people are referring to both the entertainment media as well as the news media for information. And I think because in the entertainment media you can look in depth, a fictional, a film, a novel gives you the whole story, whereas the news distances you from the person, and it draws on stereotypes, and reinforces stereotypes to communicate. Then you look as well what are the dominant images of mental illness in the entertainment media, and people with mental illness are portrayed as a threat. Well threat outweighs everything else, then comes joke. (T-1-KI101-2, p. 2)

Similarly,

People said that they found the whole idea of mental illness scary and that that scariness was made worst by the media's focus on the tragedies...if people have not actually experienced a real problem of people with mental illness, they buy into what they perceive. Which is that mental illness is scary. And where do they get their ideas from? Well, we know they get them from the media. Apart from personal experience of mental illness, most people's primary source of information is the media. And in some surveys, not all, but in some surveys people say that they find fiction a more reliable source of information than the news. In other words, they don't trust what they have been told on the news. And of course, what happens in fiction is that the thing is explored in more depth, so the characters seem more real, and so what people take to the news is their preconception about the person who flashes on and off their screen, in the role of usually perpetrator of some criminal act. (T-1-Ki101-3, p. 9)

In this case, similar to the Peace Foundation, efforts were also spent on addressing media coverage of the idea, and trying to change the continual association of mental illness with violence (or other such negative traits). Such efforts included becoming involved with the Media Peace Awards¹⁷,

We're doing some other things, like there's a media award in collaboration with the Peace Foundation Media Awards. So this is a way, we do this as a carrot and stick approach to the media so that we're encouraging people to complain if the media reports things badly, but we also want them to recognise good media coverage on issues as well. (T-1-Ki101-1, p. 6)

The Like Minds Media Award is presented each year to media professionals who expose the misconceptions perpetuated about mental illness and offers an alternative view towards mental health. As explained in the Like Minds, Media Peace awards brochure,

This award is a commitment to working constructively with the media to debunk the myths and stereotypes around mental illness and to provide news coverage that sheds light, not heat, on mental health issues. (D-1-2)

A further example of addressing media coverage is the media handbook. This handbook has been designed to assist the media towards portraying an alternative view of mental illness by providing information that dispels preconceived notions. As highlighted in the media handbook,

The media has a significant role to play in shaping the public's attitudes towards people with experience of mental illness. (D-1-2, p. 3)

¹⁷ Organised by the central case – The Peace Foundation. Two of the three Cases involved in this inquiry became associated through the Media Peace Awards event.

This handbook provides general information and discusses some key issues for reporting on mental illness and interviewing people with experience of mental illness. It lists mental health organisation that can provide background and comment, and contains a glossary of terms. (D-1-2, p. 3)

The effect of such efforts may be limited, as explained by one respondent,

You just have to plug away at these things over a long period of time. I keep saying to people, you've got a couple of thousand years of culture here to change. A sixty second television ad is not going to do it. (T-1-Ki101-1, p. 6)

However, there is some evidence that the efforts of those involved in the mental illness case are creating some impact. For example,

A success that I loved was in mental health awareness week in October when the *Holmes* show did their piece. First of all to run a piece acknowledging mental illness; secondly, they did it without any reference to us, didn't ask us for advice, they did it all from their own initiative; third they used the format of the ads to frame their story. The story was about employing people with mental illness. They went to an advertising agency that specialises in placing people with mental illness, and interviewed employees, who said best thing that's happened to me in my whole life. They started the story using the song from the ad, the image, the name and the occupation, so they framed the whole thing using our example. So it was wonderful to give them something positive to frame, when looking at mental illness. The axe murderer is not the only frame for looking at these issues. (T-3-Ki101-3, p. 5)

Overall, the general attitude of respondents towards the media appears fairly negative, due to the continual portrayal of mental illness with negative traits (such as violence). This negativity is highlighted in the following extracts,

The power of the media just increases all the time. And what I see now is its power to almost supersede the power of the judiciary in deciding what's right and what's wrong. And hence these things and attitudes towards mental illness and intellectual disability and so on are being influenced quite irresponsibly... there are no rules anymore, for what's acceptable and what's not. (T-1-Ki101-2, pp. 5-6)

I get angry that the marketplace for ideas is so dominated by a small group who control the media, and who control the marketplace. It's not a level playing field, we don't have access. That's what makes it unfair. (T-1-Ki101-2, p. 17)

In discussing the influence of the media, respondents across all cases tended to take a distrusting and negative stance. In the mental illness case, a respondent commented,

I believe the media has become the 20th, late 20th and 21st century version of the medieval church. Their absolute belief in their infallibility. And a complete imperviousness to criticism. (T-1-Ki101-3, p. 11)

A respondent at the Peace Foundation similarly summed up their opinion of the media in stating,

We're trying to survive on a board game where people are playing by certain rules and we're trying to play by different rules and we're not determining the rules. It's easy if we're determining the rules, but we're not. So it's going to be one of the challenges. (T-3-Ki302-2, p. 17)

This attitudes towards the media was further summed up by another respondent at the Peace Foundation,

Generally I believe the media have played and will continue to play, a very very significant role in developing the consciousness of our planet. (T-3-Ki308-2, p. 13)

At the Peace Foundation, there was only one positive comment was made about the media,

With *Thanks not Spanks*, I rang up and said we've got a book about positive parenting. I approached different magazines that I knew would be interested. And they were all very positive, and they all said we'd love to do a review. Actually I contacted TV as well, and for the *Breakfast Show* they had it as well, and they were really positive about it. So I haven't actually had to deal with the negative side of the media. I've found them OK. (T-3-Ki307-1, p. 6)

Other than the sub-themes regarding preconceptions and the impact of the media, the consumption of an idea also appears to be difficult due to the holistic and ill-defined nature of the product. These issues are captured in sub-theme 6.3 below.

Sub theme 6.3: Holistic and ill-definable nature of the idea offering

The consumption of idea offerings such as peace, Buddhism and non-discrimination towards mental illness is further complicated by the holistic

nature of the product. Unlike goods and services, ideas tend to be relatively broad. Peace, for example, is not something you can hold in your hand, or define easily. These characteristics were outlined in the previous chapter. Coupled with the preconceptions consumers have of the idea (as influenced by their representation in the media), as well as the ill defined nature of the product itself, consumers often have difficulty understanding what exactly the offering is. This challenge is reflected in the following extract,

The message that we're getting, from a variety of people is still how restricted the concept of peace is, the definition of peace is. And a number of people have come up to us and said "I never have thought the Peace Foundation would be the place to go if I wanted to find out about community mediation or blah blah blah". And you think, gosh, people don't actually realise that it affects their daily lives. They think it's international. It's nothing to do with us, not on a daily basis. (T-3-Ki301-1, p. 2)

The perceived holistic and ill-defined nature of peace (in the eyes of the consumer) is evident through strategies employed by the Peace Foundation such as the "peace is" campaign. This event occurred in conjunction with the arrival of the Peace Boat¹⁸, in which a sail from the Rainbow Warrior boat was taken to Aotea Square, Auckland, and the public were encouraged to complete the sentence "peace is..." on the sailcloth. Rather than the Peace Foundation offering a definition of peace, they encouraged consumers to contribute their own interpretation. This event was discussed during a one-on-one interview,

¹⁸ The Peace Boat is a cruise ship that travels the globe, and is involved in "the development of education and networking activities in the area of peace, human rights, the environment and sustainable development" (D-3-12)

It's very hard to condense peace. There are so many different aspects to it. Have you seen the sailcloth from Rainbow Warrior we've got with the two hands, and we've got people, inside the handprints we've got "peace is..." and get people to say what they think peace is? And the different definitions of peace are very interesting. I did mine this morning and I said, "peace is a way of being", because its all about the whole approach, and trying to assess everything you do and think and say, and think how peaceful and constructive it is. (T-3-Ki301-3, p. 5)

This strategy is also planned for their website,

One thing we want to do with the website is to have a "peace is..." page and get people to contribute ideas. We can put on a competition with schools, and just instead of saying this is what it is, just acknowledge the fact that it is a very broad concept, people can approach it from different areas. I guess one of the fundamental things about it is improving things from what they are. And to run a "peace is..." campaign, the idea is to get people like Bob Harvey, mayor of Waitakere and other people, Neil Finn get a quote from him and start putting that in there and showing how it's very relevant at different levels to different people. (T-3-Ki302-1, p. 10)

These extracts point to the holistic and ill-defined nature of peace. Rather than the Peace Foundation's imposing their definition of the term, their strategy is to allow consumers to form their own definition.

A further example of the ill-defined nature of peace is the absence of the word "peace" on Peace Foundation documentation. The Peace Foundation brochure avoids using the word peace, since they perceived peace may not be well understood by consumers. Rather, the Peace Foundation uses specific terms such as "building self-esteem, cooperation and conflict resolution, anger management, nuclear disarmament" on their

documentation and publications (see D-1-1). As explained by the marketing manager,

What you do is, you do a brochure which is your framework. But you don't take the idea of peace and put it on a form because it's too difficult (T-3-Ki323-1, p. 3)

Publications, such as the *Thanks not Spanks* book (and the corresponding advertising flyer – see D-3-31) also employ this strategy. As explained by one respondent, avoiding the word peace is a conscious decision when conversing with consumers.

Ki307: But like with *Thanks not Spanks*, and with *Adolescent Volcano* I focused on what they were about, and their points, like this book is on anger management. So when I'm trying to sell that I focus on those points; not this will give you a peaceful existence if you buy this book. So I guess I haven't tried to market the whole peace aspect of it, I'm only marketing certain things....: I've used peaceful. But I don't often use peace.

Res: So just clarify that for me, the reason you don't use peace is?

Ki307: I think it could be quite confusing for people reading it. Whereas when they read anger management they know exactly what we are talking about. If they just read peace and look at this book it could be about numerous things. (T-3-Ki307-1, p. 13)

As suggested in these extracts, The Peace Foundation has recognised that the language used to describe peace can alienate consumers, as further evidenced in the following extract,

We've got to be aware of jargon. If we called this [a publication from the Peace Foundation] Peace Education 101 for Mothers, no one's going to buy it. In fact you probably won't find the word 'peace' in that book at all. So a marketing challenge is the language we are using. With that book we got contracted from the Health Funding Authority in part to pay for it, but for them to be involved, they're not going to want to fund something that's about peace education necessarily. But if we frame it in a way that says look, your objectives are to promote public health, hitting of children by parents is a public health issue then we get their buy in. (T-3-Ki302-1, p. 7)

The potential confusion with terminology, due to the holistic and ill-defined nature of the product, is also evident in the mental illness case. For example, the evaluation research conducted to assess the mass media advertising campaign faced some difficulties with consumers confusing this campaign with another advertising campaign, focused around a similar idea – schizophrenia. As explained in the research findings,

It is possible that there was some confusion between the current campaign and a campaign that has been running for the Schizophrenia Fellowship, featuring April Ieremia¹⁹ and sunflowers. (D-1-4)

To add to the complexity, some mental illnesses are not only difficult for consumers to understand, but in some languages there is no translation for words such as schizophrenia. This created problems when researching Maori and Pacific Island consumers. (see D-1-6)

¹⁹ April Ieremia is a well-known sports presenter.

The difficulties created by the holistic and ill-definable nature of ideas such as peace and non-discrimination of mental illness relate to a further issue evident in the consumption of such products: relevance. The case organisations suggest that consumers of ideas can struggle to find what relevance peace, mental illness or Buddhism have in their daily lives. This issue is outlined in sub-theme 6.4 below.

Sub-theme 6.4: Relevance of the idea offering

Throughout the data collection process, respondents often spoke of the difficulty consumers have in relating to the idea being promoted. With a good or service, a consumer is generally able to clearly visualise what the organisation is offering and can therefore recognise whether that product is relevant to them. With ideas however, consumers appear to struggle to make that connection between the offering and their needs. This issue was particularly evident in the Peace Foundation case,

In actual fact there's a whole world out there that we are not really reaching. And they don't know the Peace Foundation exists. They don't know what we are doing and what we do is irrelevant in their lives. (T-3-Ki323-2, p. 4)

It's [peace] generally understood to be the state of inertia, or inaction.... People find it extremely hard to grasp... For one thing people simply cannot grasp that peace is an activity that we will enjoy almost all the time... And we have a responsibility to define Peace as an exciting process that is not only results in something wonderful but it's actually really fun to do. And we have a responsibility to turn it into something visible and make people realise that there are many many many peaceful moments... So I believe we actually live in a very peaceful culture, and therefore people aren't interested in peace. (T-3-Ki308-2, pp. 1-2)

Once we start explaining what the Peace Foundation does and what peace actually means, there's real interest in that. So it then becomes for us, how do we tap into that, help them direct it or to use it. (T-3-Ki301-1, p. 5)

As suggested in these extracts, the limited interest shown by consumers relates to both the product (e.g. peace), and a lack of knowledge towards the very existence of the organisation (i.e. the Peace Foundation). The challenge of consumers not knowing of the Peace Foundation emerged in various interviews,

I saw the challenge being one of, well the first one was that no one knew who the Peace Foundation was. That to me was an immediate priority.... in terms of marketing, the profile was really important. So thinking about what is the Peace Foundation what are the issues around that. (T-3-Ki302-1, p. 3)

People still don't know who the Peace Foundation is. I've had times when I've said I work for the Peace Foundation, and people come back and say how's your work with Greenpeace. Greenpeace has a much bigger profile than us. (T-3-Ki309-2, p. 12)

This issue regarding organisational profile is also evident in the motivation behind Inspire. Inspire was a multi-media event, aimed at youth (18-30), organised as a way of attracting people into the peace movement, profiling the work of the Peace Foundation and raising awareness of peace issues²⁰. Inspire portrayed peace as a relevant and important issue for youth.

²⁰ Discussion of the Inspire event is outlined in T-3-Kis-4

The Inspire event coincided with an overall push by the Peace Foundation of making peace relevant and interesting. This marketing strategy, referred to as “popularising peace”, became a priority strategic objective of the organisation through 2000-2001. During this period, the youth section of the organisation flourished, through a variety of events and activities (including conferences, concerts, protests etc). As outlined in the “popularising peace” brief (D-3-11), the marketing committee recognised the need to,

Increase the awareness and understanding of peace; to make peace more relevant, applicable, accepted and do-able (D-3-11).

The need to popularised peace is because the idea is perceived as largely irrelevant to the daily lives of consumers. As explained by one respondent, consumers struggle to understand what peace means,

Something I’ve wanted to see happen and probably pushed it, is wresting the concept of peace away from ivory white towers and making it tangible and real to their human daily lives and saying look, “here’s what you can do”, “here’s what you are doing on a daily or hourly basis that is actually contributing to it or detracting from it” and “these are the things that you can use in your daily lives that will contribute to it if you want to contribute to it”.... So it’s been an ongoing debate about how we actually convey what we are doing. How we label what we’re doing. We would call it peace education, but you say peace education and people either look at you blankly or they think that you are talking about weapons and warfare or it’s a turnoff...It’s about creating the kind of environment where people can grow and reach their full potential and it’s about social justice. It’s as though we need a whole series of coat-hangers, violence prevention – fine because it’s acceptable; conflict resolution – fine, people understand that you know. But what do you do with creating the right environment to foster people’s growth.

What do you call that? And how do you articulate it so people understand it? (T-3-Ki301-2, pp. 11-12)

This sub-theme regarding the perceived lack of relevance also emerged in the mental illness case. Like the Peace Foundation, those involved in the project to counter stigma and discrimination against people with mental illness also recognised that the public did not regard their idea as highly relevant,

With most approaches to marketing, you can assume that you've got a product that people would like to know about, and might like to obtain. We're actually trying to persuade them to like a product which they are not predisposed to like at all.... The first thing you guys have got to remember is that you're trying to sell things to people they don't want. We are trying to sell something they do not want. (T-1-Ki101-3, p. 13)

This point was reiterated in further interview with the same respondent,

I can remember a seminar on social marketing and the guy from Saatchi and Saatchi saying the really important thing that all of you people in health have got to remember is you're trying to sell something to people they don't want. (T-1-Ki101-1, p. 6)

Each of these sub-themes: preconceptions consumers hold towards the idea; the influence of the media in the formation of those preconceptions; the holistic and ill-defined nature of the offering; and the perceived lack of relevance of the idea, contribute to the consumers' difficulties in understanding the idea products of peace, Buddhism or mental illness. A further major theme to surface during the data analysis (through the lens of

idea consumption issues) is the objective of idea marketing strategies of changing fundamental beliefs. This theme is outlined below.

Theme 7

Idea consumers are being asked to shift fundamental beliefs towards the offering

For each case organisation, the ultimate aim of their marketing efforts is a change, at a societal level, towards the idea (or ideal) they are advocating. For example, the aim of the Peace Foundation is world peace, and for this to be achieved, they operate at a number of different levels from international disarmament to peace education in schools in the endeavour of “switching people on to peace”. The shift that is required however concerns not only a change in attitude and/or behaviour, but is more fundamental. It concerns a change in the worldview held by the consumer. To “buy into” peace, for example, would result in a change as to how the consumer views the world and his/her role within it. This fundamental shift would then influence their attitude and behaviour within that world. This issue is expressed in the following extracts,

I think it’s essentially about touching people in some way that I guess, at the least, or lowest kind of level is in some ways getting people to think about something, in a different way. And at the other end of the spectrum, the desire is that we, in some way, facilitate people to make some quite significant changes in the way they relate to other people, or to the world. (T-3-Ki309-1, p. 6)

We’re asking them to think differently and to act differently; and that fundamentally is a harder thing to do anyway

because you are asking people to not just change one small bit of their behaviour, but quite a fundamental change. Well obviously we're not saying that everybody out there is a kind of raging psychopathic warmonger. But it's quite a fundamental shift. It seems we are quite a small voice in a much more violent kind of world. (T-3-Ki309-1, p. 4)

It involves so much of a person really when you get down to it. To get real buy-in. In some ways, a person's either there because of their belief system or they're not. And that can take years obviously, to come to that in some people, it is very complicated. It's to do with how you view life, and understanding peace and what that really means, is part of it. It changes everything....and it's one of the big challenges. Connecting with people; it's summing it up, putting in something people can relate to. It's almost you're trying to sell a belief system, and that's a huge challenge. I mean it's hard enough in families where parents may have decided they want their child to be raised a Christian, for example, and they get years of one on one, to lead by example, or however, thrust down their throats, and they may or may not get the result from that they desire, with God. Depending on the medium, a couple of seconds if it's an ad, maybe a bit longer if they're at one of our events, and so, the degree which you can actually hope to convince people in that way is very difficult. (T-3-Ki302-2, p. 1)

The fundamental nature of the change is further hinted at in the repeated use of the word “understanding”. In the Peace Foundation brochure and other publications, as well as conversations and interviews, respondents often spoke of the need for consumers to “understand” the concept of peace. This appears to be the very essence of idea consumption. For example, one of the most visible promotional materials for the Peace Foundation – their brochure – draws on the quote from Albert Einstein:

Peace cannot be kept by force. It can only be achieved by understanding. (D-3-1)

Such quotes are used repeatedly in Peace Foundation material. For example, in the *Waging Peace* publication:

Peace does not rest in the charters or covenants alone. It lies in the hearts and minds of all people. And if it is cast out there, then no act, no pact, no treaty, no organisation can hope to preserve it. So let us not rest all our hopes on parchment and paper. Let us strive to build a desire for peace in the hearts and minds of all our people. (John F. Kennedy, cited in Levine, Spoonley & Aimer, 1995, p. 13)

In the *Aspects of Peace* publication, this notion of understanding, which leads to a fundamental shift in the consumer's worldview, is also highlighted,

Einstein's statement that the atomic bomb had changed everything but our way of thinking has been quoted often enough, but it still remains a crucial issue. It also ties in with the sociological belief that the way in which we construct reality, the way we see the world, is culturally determined. It is a process that starts in our earliest days. These conditioned ways of seeing become so deeply embedded as to be part of us; they are what we see as right and normal. Language is a particularly potent carrier of these cultural thinking patterns.

However, we are coming to realise that this cultural conditioning is a kind of human artefact; and, as we learn how the process works, so we begin to understand how the pattern may be changed.

One of these conditioned ways of thinking is our acceptance of militarism... (Pacific Institute of Resource Management, n.d., p.1)

In the *Culture of Non-Violence* publication, this issue is again raised and made even more poignant with the term satyagraha²¹, which relates to the very nature of being,

Gandhi described non-violence as a great moral force based on truth and love, the combination of which he called satyagraha. He considered it a force so strong as to be totally transforming, and over the course of this truly amazing life he proved it to be so. Martin Luther King described non-violence as a crisis force whose aim was to bring a community to confront issues which it would rather avoid. The struggle for justice involved a greater degree of live the power of love than the countervailing forces of violence. (Vallentine, 1993, p. 8)

Implicit in each of these extracts is the suggestion of understanding and conscious change. This change is at a fundamental level and would ultimately affect the consumers' worldview,

We have to take on the huge task of actually turning people's minds around, and getting into [peace], buy into our story, and gain their loyalties (T-4-Ki322-2, p. 2)

I think what we are trying to achieve is a society that thinks that violence is unacceptable, in all its forms. So that's a huge consciousness raising exercise. (T-1-Ki301-3, p. 9)

²¹ "The word Satya (Truth), is derived from Sat, which means being. And nothing is or exists in reality except Truth." M.K. Gandhi, Young India, July 30 1931. "Truth (Satya) implies love, and firmness (Agraha) engenders and therefore serves as a synonym for force. I thus began to call the Indian movement "Satyagraha", that is to say, the Force which is born of Truth and Love or non-violence, and gave up the use of the phrase "passive resistance". M.K. Gandhi, Satyagraha in South Africa (as cited in Spakbacken, 1999)

This need for the consumer (and ultimately society at large) to make a fundamental shift in their worldview also emerged in the Buddhism and mental illness cases.

In terms of Buddhism, the very nature of the idea prompts consumers to question their view of the world, and their existence as a human being within that world,

People come because it's of core importance to them. The issues that are troubling them, or the issues they have some interest in, are usually core issues. It's usually to do with their existence and their relations, how they view themselves, their spirituality, or some awakenings of other than physical needs. And so they come to see whether this is the answer... and it provides something that has a real meaning to people that it's almost impossible for it to collapse...here's something you can do that's quite meaningful. (T-3-Ki323-2, pp. 7-9)

For the mental illness campaign, this theme emerged,

You're not just trying to get somebody to change their brand. And you are not even trying to make people feel guilty about doing something they know is naughty like speeding. You are actually trying to reconstruct cultural attitudes to mental illness, which means that you may not change individual behaviour very much, at least in the short term. What you are trying to change is the cultural norm about what's acceptable. (T-1-Ki101-2, p. 9)

For the mental illness campaign, that fundamental change relates to how the consumer relates to people with a mental illness,

What we wanted to do is shift people's thinking from someone with a mental illness, I can't cope with that, I can't cope with them, they're sort of a write-off, to the idea where someone with a mental illness, oh OK, how can I help? (T-1-Ki101-2, p. 2)

In the mental health case, attitudinal and behavioural change was also mentioned,

What we are selling is an attitude. I guess we are wanting to change behaviour. The literature on how to change behaviour is not terribly prescriptive. It doesn't give you simple answers. I mean there's a kind of traditional approach where you look at knowledge, attitudes, skills, behaviour, but then there is also literature that suggests that you can simply short circuit all that by changing behaviour. And that people's attitudes follow behaviour. I think that's why we take a multi factorial approach to it. You've got to hit at a whole lot of different points all at the same time. (T-1-Ki10101, p. 2)

Indeed one of the three strategic objectives of the campaign was:

To change public attitudes and behaviour through mass media, public relations and health promotion (D-1-1, p. 6)

In this case, the importance of understanding (as the basis for subsequent attitude and behavioural change) also emerged. For example, as stated in the evaluation research,

There has to be an element of understanding – before attitude change or behaviour change. (D-1-6)

While attitude and behavioural change was mentioned in the data, as suggested in the above extracts, the case organisations appeared to be working a step back from that change to a more fundamental shift in consumers' understanding or worldview.

In analysing the data with an eye on consumption issues, a further major theme emerged: the benefits associated with consuming idea offerings and the transferable nature of those benefits. This theme is discussed below.

Theme 8

The consumer benefits of idea offerings are broad and transferable

The result of consuming peace, not discriminating against people with mental illness and Buddhism appears to benefit not only the individual consumer of that idea, but also those within the world with whom they interact. The consumption benefits appear multi-layered and transferable. As discussed by a respondent at the Peace Foundation,

I think it almost comes down to saying how something has benefited you, and then wanting to know about it. So it's not about telling someone, but people seeing your daily actions and how happy you are, and thinking well that's a good positive thing, and so everyone becomes a role model for everyone else. So everyone is willing to interact and get on well without conflict. (T-3-Ki323-1, p. 12)

While this extract suggests that the benefits of consuming peace are explicit (to the degree that they, in turn, can influence others to “switch on” to peace), other respondents spoke of the difficulties associated with demonstrating the benefits of peace,

It's really hard to demonstrate how it [peace] can benefit people. And I think the way society's gone, like we are so much less interested in the collective let's make the world a better place, let's do good for our neighbours. Those values are not high on our list anymore. It's all about I want to get ahead. I mean I know I've got so much more caught up in that, it's like a continuum. I probably started out here, and I'm much more over here now. I'm probably still left of centre if you consider left to be more collective, but working in the business environment is so much more nasty. (T-3-Ki309-2, p. 12)

Similarly,

I think the biggest challenge is if you're marketing a piece of chewing gum its very easy to talk about the benefits, taste the benefits, realise those benefits, compare it to other things, know when you want it, why you want it, it's all pretty simple. But when you're talking about peace, you're really getting into the realm of spirituality, philosophy, religion, belief systems, and it's not something you can turn into a sound bite. (T-3-Ki302-2, p. 1)

Part of the reason for this difficulty, is that consuming an idea may require substantial effort and sacrifice. For example, to consume peace,

It's almost more of a sacrifice. It's like the green movement, you've almost got to make sacrifices to do something about it, like get off your chair and turn the lights off, even really little things like that. Walk down to the compost and chuck

the veges out rather than chuck them in the bin that's right by the sink. Stuff like that. And peace is the same, it's almost, well I might actually have to start speaking a bit nicer to people. I might have to do something. And I think the benefits are again quite hard to recognise. And then in the broader sense, the benefits just seem almost unrealistic, how can you really stop the nuclear arms race, I mean really, there's that side of it as well. (T-3-Ki309-2, p. 4)

A further issue relating to the benefits of consuming ideas is the transferable nature of those benefits. In that ideas such as peace, not discriminating towards people with mental illness and Buddhism are extremely intangible in nature (as discussed in the previous chapter), such ideas are essentially portable from one consumer to other potential consumers. In the process of transferring the offering, no one loses the benefit of the original idea (yet each new consumer would need to make the respective sacrifice). This is best summed up in an analogy used during an informal conversation at the Peace Foundation, in which a respondent suggested,

If I had \$1, and you had \$1 and I gave you my coin and you gave me your coin, we would both have \$1. But if I gave you an idea and you gave me an idea, we would both end up with two ideas. (FN-3-Ki309)

This respondent further highlighted a negative side of this portable character of ideas. As stated, the offering may change as it moves from consumer to consumer,

A good example of how that happens is if you look at Religion, or other kind of movements like Socialism and stuff like that. I remember during the Gulf War project, the socialist communist party type people, Socialist Workers Party in particular, were really really active in the groups and stuff. And we ended up splitting off and getting rid of them

eventually because they were quite destructive. It was as though they have taken the message, and the initial message of socialism, I believe, got a little bit perverted. And that is the same sort of thing where it kind of gets passed on. Quakerism is the same. If you look at what George Fox who was the first person who founded Quakers back in 15- whatever talked about, and then they went off to the United States and then a group of them then kind of took that message of simplicity, when at the time in the context it was about, not having lots of lavish finery and all these amazing clothes and stuff and it was about living simply so others may simply live, but they hung on to that and they kept wearing those outdated clothes way beyond when it was appropriate, therefore completely changing the concept. And then another group of Quakerism had developed from that which has become evangelical and I mean I can't tell the difference between that and any other Bible bashing bunch of people who going around trying to convert people in America, and I have virtually got nothing to do with you guys. It's exactly the same thing. And I think it is just one of those things I mean you can't really do much about it. (T-3-Ki309-1, p12-13)

Therefore, while respondents spoke of the advantages of marketing a product that can be easily transferred, there are challenges associated with this portable nature of ideas. This characteristic emerged primarily in Case Two (The Peace Foundation), but is worth noting as a particular distinctive quality relative to both goods and services.

This chapter focuses on the themes to surface during the data analysis that relate to exchange or consumption issues. Chapter Seven dealt with the alternative side of the coin from Chapter Six, which focused on the production and conceptualisation issues. The next and final data analysis chapter bridges this gap. Between the producers and consumers of ideas lies

marketing, and the issues regarding the specific marketing strategies employed by these case organisations are summarised in Chapter Eight.

CHAPTER 8

RESEARCH FINDINGS PART 3: MARKETING ISSUES

*An idea that is developed and put into action
is more important than an idea that exists only as an idea.*

Buddha

8.1 Introduction

The previous two research findings chapters outline issues relating to the production (Chapter Six) and consumption (Chapter Seven) of idea offerings. After analysing the data through each of these two lenses, a final analysis was performed with an eye to marketing issues. This chapter deals with those marketing strategies and techniques employed by the case organisations in their efforts to market peace, not discriminating against people with mental illness, and Buddhism. The themes presented in this chapter therefore concern those issues that are considered by the case organisations when designing their marketing strategy.

8.2 Brief overview of themes

This chapter deals with three themes regarding the marketing of ideas. Firstly, the broad time horizons characteristic of idea marketing strategies,

which include a combination of interventions, is discussed (Theme 9). Secondly, Theme 10 deals with the measurement challenges associated with idea marketing strategies, and thirdly Theme 11 covers the various ways the case organisations market and materialise their idea offering including events, programmes, publications and speaking tours.

8.3 Research findings: Marketing Issues

Theme 9

Idea Marketing Strategies require long time horizons and include multiple interventions

Across each of the cases, respondents spoke of the importance of taking a long-term perspective when developing a marketing strategy. The need to take a long-term perspective is a result of the idealism inherent within idea offerings (see Chapter Six, Theme 5), coupled with the fundamental buy-in required of consumers (see Chapter Seven, Theme 7). The marketing implication of this idealism and fundamentalism is that a strategic approach must be taken which allows for distant time horizons. This theme was evident in both the Peace Foundation,

To me it's an evolution towards a better way of being for people in communities and across the world. But it's also about making people aware of what they are doing right now.
(T-3-Ki301-3, p. 7)

And in the mental health case,

You just have to plug away at these things over a long period of time. I keep saying to people you've got a couple of thousand years of culture here to change. A sixty second television ad is not going to do it. (T-1-Ki101-1, p. 6)

The evolutionary nature of the marketing strategy alluded to in this extract portrays well how these organisations view their role towards the achievement of the idealistic goal. One respondent specifically referred to this long-term process as a series of “little green steps”,

I particularly like the phrase, little green steps, because it really helps me to stop freaking out about the size of this thing because it is, I mean you can just get, fried by trying to take it all on. (T-4-Ki322-2, p. 4)

While the focus within these organisations is on slowly building towards the idea over a long time period, the need to consider the immediate activities (or each “little green step”) is also apparent. In particular, the need to link the current to the future was discussed in each organisation. For example, at the Peace Foundation,

I think there is a timing issue here, and so over the long term I think what we've got to do, as an organisation, is look to the next generation for measurement. In some ways the Peace Foundation has got a balancing act in terms of addressing the needs of the now, without compromising the needs of our future; of where we want to be in the Peace Foundation. (T-3-Ki302-2, p. 7)

Similarly, for the mental illness campaign, one of the objectives was to lay a foundation stone of awareness, which could then be built upon for future activities,

It was important to us that we had something that was going to whet people's appetites, want more, and it's worked. The curiosity in the lives behind the images is really there. (T-1-Ki101-2, p. 1)

A further respondent in the mental illness case used the analogy of a steam train to describe this step-by-step, long-term timing issue,

It's like a steam train, which I think is quite a good analogy. To get it going is quite a bit of effort and the thing might not actually even start moving. And once it starts moving it starts a momentum, and if you keep that momentum going, you're fine. But what I see is that...they don't even get the train moving, they can't impact on enough people to get the train moving. And even if they do get some movement, then the money runs out. And I think there's also a temptation to not have consistent enough messages long enough, so there's no kind of build up of understanding. (T-1-Ki103-1, p. 4)

In continuing this respondent's analogy, the challenge of keeping the train moving can appear overwhelming. Respondents spoke of the difficulty of maintaining momentum over such a long period of time, and the concern that all the effort may be in vain. For example, in the Peace Foundation Case, a respondent commented,

I think it's a timing thing in some ways...and it's one of the big challenges. Connecting with people; it's summing it up, putting in something people can relate to. It's almost you're trying to sell a belief system, and that's a huge challenge. I mean it's hard enough in families where parents may have

decided they want their child to be raised a Christian, for example, and they get years of one on one, to lead by example, or however, thrust down their throats, and they may or may not get the result from that they desire, with God. Depending on the medium, a couple of seconds if it's an ad, maybe a bit longer if they're at one of our events, and so, the degree which you can actually hope to convince people in that way is very difficult. (T-3-Ki302-2, p. 1)

Nevertheless, each small effort may create an impact large enough to gain the consumer buy-in that each organisation is looking for. Again, respondents from the Peace Foundation used analogy²² to describe this issue,

You started in the middle of this very big, big pond. And we're going to make this little ripple. And somehow got to make that, you know, keep going out, or, pushing a larger amount of wave that it should really have for the size of the stones. (T-4-Ki322-2, p. 2)

As this step-by-step strategy unfolds over a long period of time, a series of interventions come into play, which includes, but is not restricted to marketing techniques. Other interventions respondents spoke of include education and the law. A combination of interventions is characteristic of idea marketing strategies. This issue was particularly evident in the mental health case,

The basic rule is no one thing works and everything works. No single intervention ever does more than scratch the surface. It's a combination of interventions that brings about the change. So if you look at things like drink driving or

²² The constant use of analogy in these extracts points further to the extreme intangibility of the offerings.

smoking, the big changes have occurred because of a whole range of things that are occurring at the level of public information right down to individual counselling. And things like the law and taxes are part of the package... So therefore, marketing needs to be taken into account too. You don't put all your money into one intervention. It is very difficult. So what you do is you build a best practice approach based on knowledge on a whole lot of things that can contribute and you put them all together in a package...you have to square off a whole range of other influences on what constructs cultural norms, which is why we've got this wide ranging package of things that go from policy level, down to trying to change individuals. (T-1-Ki101-2, pp. 8-10)

The issue of multiple interventions was regularly raised during one-on-one interviews,

I guess that the project's primary focus is at the supportive social environment, in that its purpose is to counter stigma and discrimination which is a social phenomenon. So we're in the business of changing social ideas and attitudes. But, in order to achieve that objective you have to back that up with public policy that supports that purpose; with action at community level to interface with the people and agencies, key influences that construct or change social attitudes....We have identified in our plan a range of settings. In the first instance, people who actually work in the mental health services, secondly, people in government agencies that have direct and frequent contact with people with mental illness, thirdly, other key influences at community level like local authorities and local media, schools, churches, other kinds of opinion leaders, and then and only then do we look at the wider public. So the television and radio advertising that's currently on has come in at the fourth year of a five year project. Because we've taken the first three years to build an infrastructure to deliver all that other stuff. (T-1-Ki101-1, p. 2)

This approach – targeting policy makers to the general public through a variety of interventions – is also reflected in the overall marketing objectives of the mental health campaign:

The three key strategic objectives in the “public awareness” component are:

- To continue to fund project and sector development services at a local level
- To change attitudes and behaviour in the broader field, i.e. government agencies, through policy development with the agencies involved, and
- To change public attitudes and behaviour through mass media, public relations and health promotion (D-1-1, p. 6)

Another respondent involved in the mental illness campaign particularly emphasised the importance of the law, as one of a combination of interventions forming the overall strategy,

So you come to the question, what does make a difference? In the alcohol field, it’s pretty clear that what made a difference is in the policy area. Keeping the price of alcohol up, having plenty of compulsory breath testing, so people know if they do drink and drive they will get caught, controlling the availability of alcohol, so those are the things that complement alcohol advertising. And it’s those sorts of things that will really make the difference. (T-1-Ki103-1, p. 5)

Similarly,

So if you change people’s behaviour through a policy change or something, like you bring in a new law and it requires people to behave in a certain way, then their attitudes will also change. (T-1-Ki103-1, p. 7)

A further example of policy/law intervention is the submission made to Film Censorship Office regarding the movie *Me, Myself and Irene*, by the Manager of the Project to Counter Stigma and Discrimination Associated with Mental Illness. The aim of this submission was to change the PG rating of the film, due to the inaccurate (although stereotypical) portrayal of a person with mental illness,

Well that was the first time I'd made an effort to put down these ideas on paper and it was marginally successful in that they did change the rating for the film. But they really rejected my argument. Well they didn't accept my argument, they didn't reject it, but they didn't accept it. But they did accept the association of violence, and there was violence in the film that they felt had, well what I learnt along the way was that the censor's office is extremely constrained by the Act, which really requires them only to consider sex and violence. And although there is a nodding reference to the Human Rights Act, that is only in the context of sex and violence. So there was a case that could be accepted about the association of mental illness with violence, in the film, and I didn't quite make enough of that in my argument. (T-1-Ki101-3, p. 14)

Operating at a policy and governmental level is also important for the Peace Foundation. This is particularly evident with the work done at the Disarmament and Security Centre. This specialist branch of the Peace Foundation focuses on,

Promoting the World Court's 1996 Advisory Opinion²³ on nuclear weapons and its implications and...working with a new network of leading international citizen organisations in partnership with a coalition of middle-power government to

²³ For further information regarding the World Court decision, see D-3-8

expedite nuclear disarmament. (Disarmament Security Centre, n.d.)

Further to the policy work performed at the Disarmament and Security Centre, the Peace Foundation is also involved in lobbying for changes in the law. For example,

Section 59 of the Crimes Act is an example for us, where we've been lobbying to get the law changed which currently allows parents to hit their children....And it sends a larger message, and that's where the danger is, that violence is okay, and that we accept it as a community. At the end of the day, we behave in the way that society says is normal, mostly, and because in one particular cohort, if a guy bashes his wife, it's okay, and his mates do it, and no-one says anything, it's only normal, they continue to do it. And so one of the strongest things we are trying to do is to change the norms of what is acceptable, and that's where marketing is really effective. (T-3-Ki302-2, p. 10)

In the Peace Foundation and mental illness cases, reference is therefore made to the importance of the law and/or governmental policy as one of the interventions necessary in their endeavour to attain the fundamental buy-in required, at a societal level, towards the idea they are marketing.

Combination of interventions not only relates to the inclusion of areas such as the law/policy in the overall marketing strategy, but also emphasises the variety of activities each organisation is involved with. Each of these activities helps consolidate the idea. For example, at the Peace Foundation,

Cool Schools, Disarmament and Security Centre, the books, all have different levels of sophistication. It's reinforcing the message. (T-3-Ki323-1, p. 19)

The Cool Schools programme is seen as the educational tenet within the overall strategy, as well as the Resource Centre, which manages educational resources such as *Thanks not Spanks*, and *Volcano in my Tummy*.

In terms of the mental illness campaign, the role of education is also given specific mention,

[Before the mass media advertising campaign] we had already spent three years putting the community education systems right. Our education services were all there ready to go, well were going in fact, but not getting a high level of recognition. (T-1-Ki101-2, p. 12)

In questioning the distinction between education and marketing, respondents typically differentiated these activities in terms of internal versus external influences²⁴. As explained by a respondent at the Peace Foundation,

Well there are many different types of marketing, and that's a problem isn't it? I'll give you an example. The example that I quoted for my workshop. The teacher who said children are not vessels to be filled, they are candles to be lit. Ah, people are motivated from within. And this is the best kind of education, I think, to change. Marketing isn't always in people's best interest. Marketing comes from the outside, but if you really want people to change, that has to come from within. And that's about education. (T-3-Ki304-1, p. 21)

Similarly another member of the Peace Foundation commented,

²⁴ This may relate to the previous discussed theme regarding apprehension towards marketing (Chapter Five, Theme 2)

Res: Let's talk about education, what exactly does that mean to you.

Ki307: I guess it's on many different levels. I mean I just automatically think of teaching people new things. So it might even be just teaching them a skill, a book, or we've got a youth conference coming up, a youth division as part of a conference so we are doing lots of regional activities. And one of our points is just to put a pamphlet out to educate people, to just let them know what this conference is about, why we are having this thing, and that to me comes under education as well.

Res: So, to me that sounds like a marketing activity. What's the difference between marketing and education then?

Ki307: How you get it out there. Marketing's about showing people stuff, it's external. Education comes from the inside. And it's to do with understanding. So, back to what I said, somebody is going home and they've learnt something new. I would think of that as being a goal in education. As opposed to marketing. Not to say, marketing bad, education good, but they are different. (T-3-Ki307-1, p. 10)

Overall, a characteristic of idea marketing strategies that emerged during the data analysis was that they are long-term, embodying a combination of interventions and operating over a variety of activities, which include education and the law. The approach taken by these organisations in marketing their idea is perhaps best summed up by the following reflection of a marketing committee member at the Peace Foundation,

I see it being more important to work at a younger level, kids and that, and then to work at a decision-making level with media and policy makers, and politicians, than doing stuff in the middle, which is basically with your average, grown up punter. Because I see that if you work with the young people, then hopefully you install it in them, at an early age, the values and then they carry that on through life. And if you

work at the other end you kind of helping to shape the big Government structures. (T-3-Ki309-1, pp. 10-11)

Theme 10

The impact of idea marketing strategies is difficult to assess

Across the Peace Foundation and mental illness cases, respondents spoke of the problems associated with measuring, or assessing, the results of their work. For example, in discussing assessment, the marketing manager of the Peace Foundation commented,

Part of this is measurement. So we say we want to create a more harmonious society. I mean it's hugely broad, how do you measure that? (T-3-Ki302-2, p. 3)

Similarly,

The problem that we have with lots of things is that it's extremely hard or impossible to measure. (T-3-Ki301-3, p. 9)

Due to the difficulties associated with assessing the effectiveness of work at the Peace Foundation, respondents spoke of narrowing measurement down to specific tasks (or each "little green step"). For example,

We want some discussion around measurement, saying, we're not sure of what we're trying to measure. How do we

know if we're being effective?.. Perhaps we can't measure peace, peaceful community, but we can measure the skills like mediation. Then we can assume that that will contribute to a more peaceful society. (T-3-Kis-6, pp. 2-3)

Similarly,

I mean if we said we wanted to create, we wanted to reduce the number of bullying incidents in schools, great! Something finite. We can work with that, and then that gives me something to hang the whole marketing pitch around too. You know if we're going into schools saying, 'Look this is our goal'. (T-3-Ki302-2, p. 3)

There are certain kinds of things you can measure. And Cool Schools again here is very useful, because with Cool Schools there are schools where they have taken statistics about the number of fights and disputes that have taken place in the playground before and after. And the number of unpleasant experiences that kids were having before and afterwards. (T-3-Ki301-3, p. 8)

In such discussions with members of the Peace Foundation, measurement is taken as being necessarily quantitative. In the eyes of respondents, to measure is to conduct quantitative research with numerical results (e.g. percentages, statistics etc). This approach towards measurement is reflected in the Cool Schools research, and in studies performed by the organisation such as the *Waging Peace* research²⁵ (D-3-7).

²⁵ As mentioned on page 130, *Waging Peace* is a report conducted in 1995, by the Peace Foundation, in which they explored a number of peace issues such as nuclear disarmament. The research was based around a survey, and the data was statistically analysed and presented in graph and table form. For example, "53% of respondents indicated they believed possession of nuclear weapons will not preserve peace and is too dangerous" (pp. 34-35).

With the mental illness case, respondents also spoke of the need to focus on measuring single interventions rather than the overall strategy,

You can measure the impact of single interventions in the short term. Like you can ask with a tracking survey, are you aware that we are running the ad? Do you remember what...,do you like it? You can do the same with an educational invention. You can get people to do an evaluation form at the end and you'll usually get positive responses. If you go back 3, 6 months, a year later you'll get a reduction in response. But the difficulties are going to be are you going to find the people, you can never quite do it. You can compare on a fairly broad frame over the long term. You can look at things like population attitudes surveys, but it's hard to isolate the components there. (T-1Ki101-2, p. 8)

Again, the measurement performed by this case, such as the pre-and post evaluation research, is quantitative in nature. Similar to the Peace Foundation, the project team saw firstly the need to measure a single specific activity or intervention, and secondly to conduct that measurement in a quantitative fashion. The evaluation research for example, included questions to describe issues such as 'awareness of the advertising', 'feelings and impression about the advertising', and so forth. The findings were presented as statistics – 39% felt the advertising was 'good/fantastic' and so forth (see D-1-4)

The issue of measurement was never raised in the Buddhism case²⁶.

²⁶ This is understandable, since Buddhism operates on a cosmic timescale. The scale of changes that can be achieved in a lifetime are not so much small, as infinitesimal. Achieving enlightenment is by definition immeasurable.

Theme 11

Marketing Strategies aim to materialise the idea offering

A central challenge of organisations involved in marketing ideas is the difficulty consumers have in visualising the concept. As explained by one respondent,

Once we start explaining what the Peace Foundation does and what peace actually means, there's real interest in that. So it then becomes for us, how do we tap into that, help them direct it or to use it. (T-3-Ki301-1, p. 5)

Some of the ways of “tapping into peace” and helping to materialise the idea, include events, programmes, publications and international speakers.

The publications produced by the Peace Foundation are examples of materialising the concept of peace. Books such as *Thanks Not Spanks* and *Volcano in my Tummy* also provide practical solutions that help potential consumers relate to, and understand, the idea offering. This issue is described in the following extract,

And I think what's happened, and certainly something I've wanted to see happen and probably pushed it, is wresting the concept of peace away from ivory white towers and making it tangible and real to their human daily lives. And saying look, “here's what you can do”, “here's what you are doing on a daily or hourly basis that is actually contributing to it or detracting from it” and “these are the things that you can use in your daily lives that will contribute to it if you want to contribute to it”. Which is why I get so excited about things like *Volcano in my Tummy* because they're giving people

things that they can do. *Thanks not Spanks* is giving parents things that they can do. It's not just saying, "oh I don't want to smack my kids", but "what do I do". It's actually saying these are the things that you can put in place, these are the alternatives, and it's real, it's tangible. (T-3-Ki301-2, p. 11)

This insight is shared by other respondents at the Peace Foundation,

I guess one of the ways we do that [materialise peace] is through publications, because that is something that people will connect with. They'll see that it's actually got a use for them. So they'll pick it up and they'll use it and that is disseminating the kind of material we want and they pay for it at the same time. (T-3-Ki301-3, p. 5)

Similarly,

And in a way looking at our marketing through books, we try to publish resources, because that provides an opportunity to deliver a message and also deliver an educational thing. (T-3-Ki302-2, p. 10)

An alternative way of articulating the idea of peace is through speaking tours. Over the past decade, the Peace Foundation have organised visits from a range of international speakers including John Pilger, Noam Chomsky and Helen Coldicott. As explained by one respondent,

I organise quite a number of speaking tours. We've had Richard Fork. For a long time we had the annual peace lectures and that was something that was started from the very beginning in the 1970s and it was kind of one of the events of the year. And they had some really good people come out. But what happened is that people seemed to stop going to lectures, unless it was a main lecture like the 'Rob'

lecture series. And it got to a point where we felt like we had to do something so we revitalised it as instead of one lecture we thought if we had a cluster of lectures that might work better. And it seemed to work okay, but we finally decided to abandon it because the attendance was actually getting quite embarrassing. And we thought this is silly. We're putting effort and time into something that's just not getting result. So we've now got the Great Peace Debate which is a bit more entertaining, but still trying to get the message across. (T-3-Ki301-2, p. 5)

A further advantage of guest speakers is the reputation they bring, which can influence access to government ministers and the media,

International speakers, there's still the overseas expert syndrome here, so getting interest and attention because of the fact that you've got someone else here is another way of doing it. So, we've had very well attended public meetings when we've had overseas speakers here. And it's been much easier for them to be able to see ministers than it may be for us, so that's another mechanism. (T-3-Ki301-3, p. 5)

Such guest speakers also provide celebrity endorsement of the offering. All case organisations actively encourage the involvement of celebrities in their events and advertising. For example, with the Peace Foundation, celebrity endorsement is evident in promotional material. The *Adolescent Volcanoes* publication is advertised by way of a flyer, which includes an insert of Carol Hirschfield (a well-known news presenter) commenting on the book:

Adolescent Volcanoes is a comprehensive resource for everyone, thoroughly researched and filled with practical exercises to help develop strategies towards stronger more rewarding relationships between adults and adolescents. I warmly recommend this book to both parents and teenagers –

it's as good as attending a workshop on the subject without having to leave your home. (D-3-27)

Events such as the Media Peace awards and the Great Peace Debate also embrace celebrities. For example, each Media Peace awards ceremony includes a well-known international speaker such as John Pilger, and is MC'ed by celebrities such as John Campbell. In past years, the Great Peace Debate has included names such as Nandor Tanzcos, Kerre Woodham, Brian Edwards and James Elliott.

In the mental illness case, the entire advertising campaign was focused around celebrities such as Mike Chunn, Ian Mune, Denise L'Estange and Mahinarangi Tocker. Using celebrities was seen by the project team as beneficial not only for attracting the general public, but also in terms of accessing the media (i.e. journalists more interested in reporting on celebrities).

Events such as the Great Peace Debate, the Media Peace Awards and the Inspire Concert also provide an opportunity to tangibilise the offering in a way that consumers can relate to and understand the idea. The importance of events in the overall marketing of peace is described in the following extract,

Because you talk to some people about peace and they think it's unrealistic nonsense and it's totally unachievable. To me it's about making it relevant and interesting to people. Because to give you an example, I got quite excited when I was talking to [Ki318] a few weeks ago, because she was talking to young people about Inspire. And when she was talked about peace, the whole holistic thing that I've been talking about and they said "oh, that's really interesting". (T-3-Ki301-3, p. 6)

The Inspire Concert, organised in conjunction with the Peace Boat arrival in New Zealand, allowed the younger generation, in particular, to support a peace movement event, and gain a clearer understanding of what peace is. Coinciding with this event was the launch of a CD,

What's happening around the peace boat is another way of doing it [materialising peace], and the Inspire concert. The CD we did last year with Sony, the sleeve inside that had a bit about the Peace Foundation what we were doing, and the philosophy that we had. And that was brought by 12,000 people. (T-3-Ki301-3, p. 5)

The Peace Foundation also materialise the offering by articulating the idea of peace through specific practical programmes. These programmes include The Cool Schools Peer Mediation Programme, The Cool Schools Parents' Programme, Cool Communities and Healthy Families. Such programmes are held up as examples of how you tangibilise peace,

When you talk about what the Peace Foundation does the easiest thing to do is to explain Cool Schools. And that's because it's just so tangible, and people can identify and understand the need. And they can relate broadly what it is the Peace Foundation does about that. And there are measurable results as well. Whereas other stuff gets into the kind of airy-fairy realm. (T-3-Ki309-1, pp. 8-9)

The significance of these programmes is highlighted in the following extracts,

If we had a whole lot of money, I'd probably go for, well, let's get out there, and double the number of Cool School programmes we are doing, or the numbers of trainers we

have got, that we are getting out there and that kind of stuff. Because in that way, you're doing two things at once anyway. You're raising awareness of peace, if you're doing it the right way, and make sure the Peace Foundation and its philosophy is quite obviously a part of the product itself. As well as actually preventing problems. (T-3-Ki309-1, p. 9)

Similarly,

So it's like let's start with what we are good at, and fulfil the best example of having perhaps something that is really practical, that makes a difference in people's everyday lives. And something that's useful, that can grow, really easy to relate to. And so I think for the Peace Foundation it's just a matter of doing more of those types of programmes. And by that, you're showing people what peace in a really practical way but you can wrap that with a philosophy around it as well. It's not just like they are buying a bead, it's like they are buying a necklace. Get the whole picture. (T-3-Ki309-1, p. 5)

Overall, as summed up by the marketing manager of the Peace Foundation, marketing activities such as events, publications, programmes, and international speakers are ways of making peace a tangible, understandable concept. Such activities are about "translating the idea into some visual form" (T-30Ki323-1, p. 3).

Similarly, the other two cases are involved in various events, publications and speaking tours. The Buddhism Meditation Centre for example was involved in organising a New Zealand visit from the Dalai Lama. The mental illness case has become involved with the Media Peace awards, and specifically fund a Like Mind Media Award, which awards "media excellence and innovation in the coverage of mental illness" (D-1-2).

Further strategies used to tangibilise the idea inherent to this campaign included producing stickers, project balloons, T-shirts and caps. Such tangible evidence was seen as a way to “really get the message out there” (D-1-2, p. 12).

As shown, each of the cases embraced and implemented a variety of marketing activities in their efforts to materialise their respective idea. All cases spoke of the intangible and ill-defined nature of ideas (see Chapter Six, theme 3) and the resulting need to tangibilise the offering through events, publications, speaking tours and programmes. In developing such strategies, respondents also spoke of the importance of being positive in any communication device, as well as the impact of word of mouth. These two issues are outlined below.

At the Peace Foundation, the importance of being positive was raised during one-on-one interviews,

You need to show them how life could be better. It's like there is two ways to go. One way is like pharmaceutical companies, who work in terms of marketing a drug by raising people's anxieties about their pain or to raise people's anxieties about ageing or whatever. And the other way to do it is to show the positive side of it. “Well, hey life could be a whole lot better if you go down this path”. And I think in some ways we need to do a little bit of both, but there's a lot of that kind of that negative imagery and negative messages out there anyway, so it's a matter of actually tapping into that and saying “hey, it doesn't have to be like this, if you do this”. (T-3-Ki309-1, p. 5)

Positive messages are also evident in events such as the Media Peace awards, which specifically celebrate positive media coverage.

In the mental illness case, the importance of being positive was often mentioned. For example,

Ki101: I've never believed that if you want to change attitudes you go for the negative. When we started, the big public relations campaigns run by government are almost invariably negative. The Australian Grim Reaper, are you aware of that? In 1986, the Grim Reaper ad that was produced in Australia by the Australia government featured the medieval image of death; the Grim Reaper cutting his way through populations, in the setting of a bowling alley. So the Grim Reaper playing bowls and the pins were people. And it was a brilliant piece of work in terms of pure advertising; in terms of its social impact it didn't work. Because it shifted people's consciousness of fear of the disease to fear of the people with the disease. Now similarly in the UK, they had great big icebergs clashing in the sea and tombstones and the slogan "don't die of ignorance". Now it's always seemed to me that if you want to win people over to your way of thinking, you don't start by calling them ignorant. Not a good way to get my attention.

Res: True, you're ignorant, but by the way you need to know this.

Ki101: Exactly. So part of my whole philosophy is that if you want to shift public opinion, you want to shift it with positive messages. I'm very sceptical about the impact of the road accident stuff. Now the police and the Land Transport Safety Authority (LTSA) are claiming big impact from that stuff, I think there's too much else going on to say this is working. I think the evidence is that fear is a significant factor in changing people's attitudes and behaviour for the short term, but it doesn't last – what it does is desensitise you and that just becomes part of the norm. Once you get over the initial fear, you settle in. (T-1-Ki101-2, p. 7)

Similarly,

You've got to get people feeling positive when you introduce your message. So when people think about non-drinking, or the mental illness campaign, they have a good feeling about it, not a negative feeling. (T-1-Ki301-1, p. 7)

That simple message has a profound effect on the whole approach certainly that I take and I've found we've generally had a consensus about in this project. And that is we're not into negatives. We're not into trying to embarrass people, slap people around the head. It's not that kind of approach; it's got to be an approach that wins people over. (T-1-Ki101-1, p. 7)

The importance of being positive is also discussed during a debriefing meeting on the mass media advertising campaign. In that instance, respondents commented that,

For such promotions, it's better to focus on mental health (the positive) rather than the negative, mental illness. (D-1-6)

Related to this issue – the importance of positive messages– is a further issue regarding the marketing of idea offerings: the significance of word-of-mouth. This is particularly evident in the Peace Foundation case. Indeed some respondents spoke of preferring to rely on word of mouth as a way of promoting their ideas, rather than more aggressive marketing tools. As commented by one respondent,

Well I think what it comes back to is, and what has been working for us in the Cool Schools programme, is word of mouth, which is the best marketing. And, that's comes through us not going out there and saying this is a fantastic programme, it's focusing instead on letting others say that. (T-3-Ki302-2, p. 13)

The impact of word-of-mouth on the Cool Schools programme was particularly noted by the Cool Schools coordinator,

I think marketing's really important, I think it is, but the other side of it is the fact that with the Cool Schools programme we haven't done any advertising. It's all word-of-mouth. (T-3-Ki303-1, pp. 9-10)

Similarly,

We've never had to advertise it, all word of mouth, so that's says something about the programme. (T-3-Ki302-1, p. 2)

Relying on word –of-mouth, rather than using more aggressive marketing tactics may further reflect the apprehension towards marketing (as discussed in Chapter Five, Theme 2).

8.4 Overall summary of themes

The data analysis performed in this research has been reported in three main sections. Firstly, those issues and themes to emerge regarding the production of ideas were outlined in Chapter Six. Chapter Seven dealt with exchange and consumption issues, while Chapter Eight has covered those themes relating to the idea marketing strategies. Following is a summary of each of the themes, within these three sections.

Organisational Characteristics

Those involved in marketing ideas:

- Theme 1: Appear self assured in their worldview
- Theme 2: Are apprehensive about marketing

Production Issues

Idea offerings are:

- Theme 3: Extremely intangible
- Theme 4: Holistic in nature
- Theme 5: Idealistic

Exchange and Consumption Issues

- Theme 6: Idea consumers have difficulty understanding and visualising the offering, due to:
 - Sub-theme A: Preconceptions of the idea offering
 - Sub-theme B: Impact of the media on the formation of those preconceptions
 - Sub-theme C: Holistic and ill-definable nature of the idea offering
 - Sub-theme D: Perceived irrelevance of the idea offering
- Theme 7: Idea consumers are being asked to shift fundamental beliefs about the offering
- Theme 8: The consumer benefits of idea offerings are broad and transferable.

Marketing Issues

Idea marketing strategies embody

- Theme 9: Long time horizons, with a combination of interventions including marketing, education and the law
- Theme 10: Measurement difficulties
- Theme 11: Activities that aim to materialise the offering, for example, events, programmes, publications and speaking tours. Such activities aim to be positive. Idea organisations rely on word-of-mouth.

In the following chapter, these eleven data analysis themes are consolidated into five inherent characteristics of ideas. These characteristics form the conceptual domain of ideas.

CHAPTER 9

SYNTHESIS OF RESEARCH FINDINGS: THE CHARACTERISTICS OF IDEAS

*He who receives an idea from me,
receives instructions himself without lessening mine;
as he who lights his taper at mine,
receives light without darkening me.*

Thomas Jefferson

9.1 Introduction

Chapter Nine signifies a shift from the ethnographer – reporting on a phenomenon through respondents’ descriptions and experiences, to the theorist – interested in developing a theoretical understanding of ideas marketing. The previous four chapters outline the themes that emerged during the data analysis. This chapter offers an integrative analysis; elaborating on the theoretical positions implied in the research themes, and synthesising the results into five implicit characteristics of idea offerings.

At the heart of the research lay the broad question: Is the marketing of ideas a demonstrably unique subfield of the marketing discipline? This question was further narrowed into three main areas:

1. What is the conceptual domain of an idea offering?

2. What are the unique characteristics of idea offerings that distinguish them from both goods and services?
3. What are the implications of these unique characteristics for marketing?

This chapter addresses the first two of these questions. Firstly, drawing on the data analysis themes, five inherent characteristics of idea offerings are presented. These characteristics – immateriality, interminability, omnipresence, transferability and Weltanschauung – provide the conceptual domain of ideas²⁷. Secondly, the five characteristics of ideas are considered in relation to goods, services and social products. The implications for marketing theory are postulated in Chapter Ten.

9.2 Conceptual domain of ideas

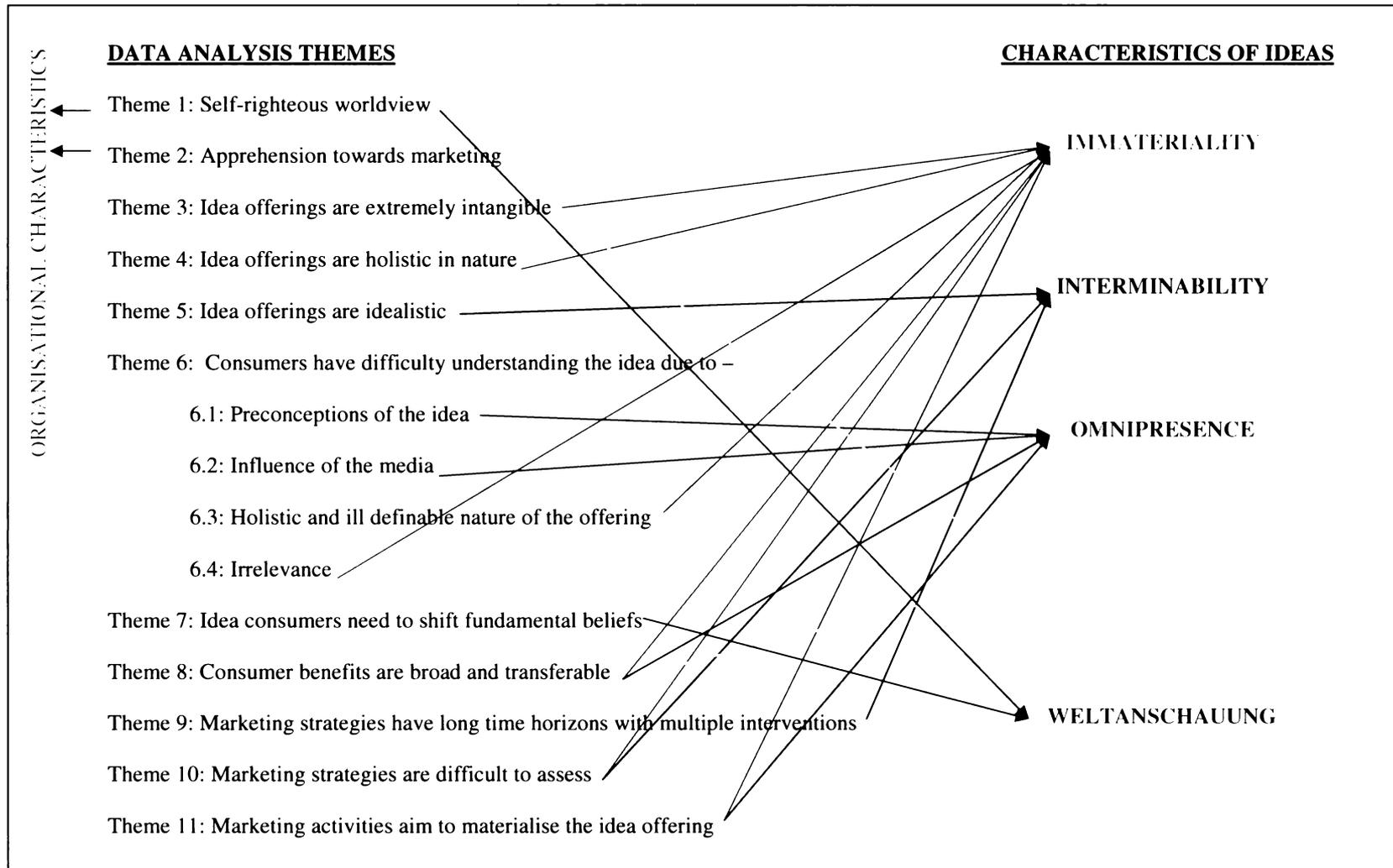
The eleven data analysis themes outlined over the previous four chapters suggest that the idea offerings studied hold specific qualities. In terms of non-discrimination against people with mental illness, peace and Buddhism, there is no clear producer (indeed the term “producer” seems inappropriate). There is no clear transaction, and no finality to the consumption process. Respondents found it difficult, for example, to describe or define their offering and spoke of the challenge of articulating a product that seems to

²⁷ This discussion draws primarily on the central case of the Peace Foundation. The mental illness case is positioned closer to social marketing than ideas marketing, as we shall see. The Buddhism case is included to supplement the discussion.

hold no bounds and no physicality. There seemed to be no end to their offering; their mission statements seemed unachievable, yet their fundamental belief in the importance of their efforts was recognisable. Respondents spoke of others also presenting their offering, in particular they pointed to the media and spoke of the challenge faced in deconstructing the representations of their product in the media. Events such as the Media Peace Awards illustrated such efforts. Respondents also spoke of the transferable character of their offering from one consumer to another. And through every interaction they showed their fundamental belief in their respective idea.

All such observations help reveal the unique characteristics of ideas, which can be best summed up through five descriptors: immateriality, interminability, omnipresence, transferability and *Weltanschauung*. The link between the five characteristics of ideas and the previously identified eleven data analysis themes is illustrated in Figure 9.1. These characteristics address the central objective of this inquiry – they outline the conceptual domain of ideas. This thesis rests on these five characteristics of ideas offerings. While they relate first and foremost to the three idea offerings investigated, they may indicate generally how ideas can be distinguished from other product types. Each characteristic is discussed in turn below.

Figure 9.1. Linkage of data analysis themes to characteristics of ideas



9.2.1 Immateriality

Intangibility is a characteristic used to distinguish services from goods. Idea offerings are even less tangible than services. To capture this extreme form of intangibility, in which there are no physical properties, another term was required: immateriality.

Immateriality means non-material, incorporeal, ethereal. Such definitions align with the terminology used by respondents when describing their offerings. Ideas such as peace seem to belong in the spiritual world, rather than the secular domain. Peace, for example, was not spoken of as a material, rational or functional thing. Rather, as an idea, peace was referred to by respondents as a way of being, a spiritual outlook or life philosophy. For example,

The way I see it is you're basically trying to sell something, whether it's an idea or a product. And what the Peace Foundation is trying to do is sell a concept, sell a philosophy. (T-3-Ki309-1, p. 3)

The fact is it's a concept...you're not asking people to buy something or use something or watch or read something.... this is like a concept or a way of thinking or a way of life or a philosophy. (T-3-Ki309-1, p. 4)

Describing ideas as a philosophy or “way of being” emphasises the immaterial nature of these offerings. Respondents’ comments suggest that ideas cannot be held, other than as a concept in the mind. In other words, ideas are immaterial and ethereal in nature.

Theme 3: Extreme Intangibility (presented in Chapter Six), presents evidence of the immaterial nature of ideas. Respondents often spoke of the intangibility associated with their offerings, and the difficulty this presents in terms of marketing the idea. Ideas do not require any physical properties to be made²⁸ or marketed. The offering exists as an intangible entity, and does not need to be associated with anything tangible to exist²⁹. In this way, idea offerings embody the characteristic of immateriality – that is, non-material.

Theme 4: The holistic nature of ideas, also points to this immateriality characteristic. This theme suggests that ideas are so broad, that placing boundaries around the offering is difficult. The immateriality of the offering means that the boundaries are unclear, not only to those marketing the idea, but also to those consuming the offering. Because ideas do not exist in the physical realm, there is nothing tangible to indicate where they begin and end.

The immateriality and breadth of ideas creates problems for measuring the offering, as measurements (particularly quantitative measures) tend to rely on substantiality and tangibility. This measurement challenge is reflected in *Theme 10: Marketing strategies are difficult to assess*. Respondents in this study each raised the issue of measurement, and the quandary they face in assessing their efforts³⁰. Again, the issue is to do with boundaries and

²⁸ Indeed the very notion of making, manufacturing or producing an idea seems irrelevant. This issue is particularly apparent with the omnipresence of ideas, discussed below.

²⁹ In contrast to artworks for example, in which the words are inseparable from the idea. In poetry, for example, you cannot convey the poetic idea without the words – the artwork rests on a tangible representation.

³⁰ Since the idea cannot be measured, other indicators of success are sought. For example, the Peace Foundation can measure the number of new schools participating in the Cool Schools programme. This quantifiable figure does not measure the idea of peace. Indeed, it does not necessarily even measure the amount or intensity of bullying (the specific peaceful goal of the Cool Schools programme); let alone the long-term, broader idea of peace.

specifics – neither of which exists for ideas due to their immaterial state. As summed up by one respondent,

So we say we want to create a more harmonious society. I mean it's hugely broad, how do you measure that? (T-3-Ki302-2, p. 3)

Consumers' perceptions of idea offerings, and in particular their difficulty in understanding and visualising the offering, also reflects the immateriality characteristic. Theme 6 (presented in Chapter Seven) outlines a number of issues that influence the consumption of an idea. One of these issues is the holistic and ill-defined nature of ideas – as seen through the eyes of consumers. As noted, consumers are often uncertain of what the idea offering is, due to its borderless character. Again, the issue at the heart of this dilemma is the immaterial – or non-material – nature of ideas. Without anything physical to present, consumers have difficulty understanding or visualising the offering. When a consumer is presented with the idea of peace for example, they seem to question what exactly that means. Indeed, the lack of definition or boundaries makes the idea offering a subject of debate, rather than simply an exchangeable entity.

Finally, the immateriality of ideas is also indicated in *Theme 11: The activities that aim to materialise the offering*. The issue of immateriality is recognised by all respondents and the implications of immateriality are seen in their attempts to materialise the offering. All case organisations are involved in a variety of activities such as events, programmes, publications and speaking tours in an endeavour to provide some substance to their immaterial idea.

Other than the non-material, ethereal definition of immateriality, this term also carries a secondary meaning applicable to this study: irrelevance.

Theme 6.4 describes the issue of non-relevance, as perceived by consumers of idea offerings. Consumers show limited interest in ideas such as peace, non-discrimination against people with mental illness and Buddhism, and struggle to recognise the relevance of such ideas to their daily lives. In the eyes of many consumers, idea offerings are immaterial – that is, they are irrelevant and unimportant³¹. While immateriality is used in this context primarily in terms of the non-physical nature of ideas, this secondary meaning of irrelevance also has some bearing when discussing idea offerings.

The data analysis themes therefore suggest ideas are immaterial. Ideas belong to the metaphysical domain. There is no substance or physical matter associated with an idea. Ideas cannot be easily defined or measured. They are holistic and boundless. And from a consumer's perspective, they are unimportant and irrelevant.

9.2.2 Interminability

A second characteristic of idea offerings to emerge from this research is their interminable nature. “Interminable” means endless, perpetual, without any prospect of a conclusion. This characteristic describes the timeless and endless nature of ideas.

The interminability of ideas is reflected particularly in Themes 5 and 9. *Theme 5: Ideas and idealism* highlights the ideal, unattainable visions of the case organisations. As outlined in Chapter Six, respondents within the case

³¹ In this instance, immateriality (non-relevance of ideas such as peace) is particularly distinguishable from materialistic attitudes implicit in contemporary society, and in contrast to the spiritual lifestyle suggested by ideas such as peace and Buddhism.

organisations take an optimistic outlook with regard to their work, as reflected in the organisations' vision statements. In marketing their respective ideas, the case organisations are working towards an ideal, for example a peaceful world. Yet with this goal, there is no clear ending in sight. It is impossible to pinpoint specific attributes necessary to attain this ideal. In the same way that "peace" is ill-definable and immeasurable, "a peaceful world" is equally ambiguous. While the case organisations hold up ideal visions, such ideals are essentially unachievable. To this extent, ideas are interminable.

The consumption of an idea is both endless and ubiquitous. The complexity of idea consumption rests partly on the apparently interminable nature of the offering. In that ideas are ongoing and interminable, it is difficult to identify a specific point in which a sale, transaction or exchange (between producer and consumer) occurs. At no time during the data collection process, did the respondents state "we have now secured one more consumer of our idea". Such a statement seems ludicrous. How could that even be measured? The respondents didn't speak of sales figures. There was no mention of transaction or exchange.

There also appears to be no beginning or end to the consumption process. Rather, idea consumption appears to be an ongoing, incremental process of adopting a particular philosophy (e.g. the idea of peace, the idea of non-discrimination, the idea of Buddhism). There appears to be no end to this process, nor any transaction that completes the exchange process. Peace has no end, so the consumption of peace is also endless.

The long-term, incessant nature of ideas can also be seen in the marketing strategies behind peace, non-discrimination against mental illness and Buddhism. A particular feature to emerge during this inquiry is the long-term perspective taken by these case organisations in terms of their

marketing efforts. Respondents spoke of marketing ideas as a gradual step-by-step process. That process is never-ending in relation to any particular consumer, and a combination of activities is employed in the evolutionary-type strategy. For example, as explained by one respondent,

To me it's an evolution towards a better way of being for people in communities and across the world. (T-3-Ki301-2, p. 7)

Again, the approach taken is reflective of the interminable nature of ideas. As an idea, peace evolves, not in a biological sense, but in terms of being intrinsically open-ended, constantly undergoing debate and development. Marketing strategies correspondingly evolve in response to that on-going, never-ending development of an idea.

Interminability therefore relates to endlessness. From the "production" side, the interminability of ideas is reflected in the idealism of marketers. This idealism is recognisable in the vision statements of the case organisations. The long-term, step by step marketing strategies employed also point to the endless nature of ideas. A consequence of working with an offering that is endless and evolutionary is that strategies surrounding the product are also ongoing. Idea consumption also appears endless and timeless. Respondents never spoke of idea consumption as a finite process, in which there is a clear decision point marked by identifiable transactions. Rather, the interminability of ideas creates a consumption process that is ongoing and incessant.

9.2.3 Omnipresence

Omnipresence means to be present in all places at all times. To be omnipresent is to exist everywhere, to be all pervasive. Ideas cannot be

owned or monopolised by any one individual. Rather, they exist beyond, not because of, organisations such as Peace Foundation, for example. If the Peace Foundation ceased to exist, the idea of peace would survive. The idea is not dependant on any one organisation.

During the data analysis process, the term omnipresence initially became apparent in reflecting upon the terminology used by respondents to describe their offering. In describing peace, for example, respondents drew on terms such as spiritual, life philosophy, “way of being”. This is reflected in the following extracts,

[Peace] is like a concept or a way of thinking or a way of life or a philosophy. (T-3-Ki309-1, p. 4)

But when you’re talking about peace, you’re really getting into the realm of spirituality, philosophy, religion, belief systems, and it’s not something you can turn into a sound bite. And it involves so much of a person really when you get down to it, to get real buy-in, in some ways, a person’s either there because of their belief system or they’re not. (T-3-Ki302-2, pp. 1-2)

Omnipresence is a word often used in the context of religion, as a way of describing the all-pervasive, ever present nature of God. In this research, the ethereal terminology used by respondents also held religious connotations. Applying omnipresence to the context of idea offerings therefore seems appropriate. In the same way that it is a term often used in relation to God, the idea offerings considered in this research (in particular, peace and Buddhism) also have religious connotations. Just as some humans embrace the concept of God, some humans equally embrace the ideas of peace, non-discrimination and Buddhism. And those involved in marketing the ideas

can appear as evangelistic as a Christian attempting to convert an atheist towards believing in God³².

While omnipresence was initially identified as a result of considering the religious-like terminology and behaviour displayed by respondents, its significance to idea offerings became even more apparent during the data analysis process. In particular, respondents' conversations about other applications of their idea drew some attention. Ideas appear to exist outside of the organisation and can be used in multiple ways by multiple parties. This was particularly highlighted when a marketing committee member of the Peace Foundation commented on the word "peace" being displayed on a sky-scraper in Auckland – in that context relating to a computer software company,

Ki308: How come there's a skyscraper on the skyline saying peace? And they happen to be a software company and they happen to be international. I find it really frustrating. Go across the Grafton Bridge towards the city. Peace is written on the sign. I find it incredibly frustrating that there is an organisation using that term in that way. (T-3-Ki308-2, p. 8)

What this quote is highlighting is the omnipresent nature of peace. The idea of peace is not limited to the work of the Peace Foundation. It is a product that can be used in a variety of contexts, because it exists everywhere³³. Since the idea of peace is omnipresent, even a computer software company can use the idea³⁴.

³² The evangelistic behaviour displayed by respondents is discussed further in the organisational characteristics section, p. 93.

³³ This quote also indicates a lack of branding activities. That others can use the idea of peace, suggests the Peace Foundation does little to brand their particular version of peace.

³⁴ This respondent was particularly against this use of the term peace because of its commercial application. Applying peace in the commercial realm was seen to negate the work of the Peace Foundation, which regards value beyond commercial or monetary terms.

The omnipresent character of idea offerings further emerged during respondents' discussions around idea consumption (most notably, *Theme 6, sub-theme A: Preconceptions of the idea offering* and *sub-theme B: The impact of the media on idea offerings*). A challenge faced by these organisations is that they are not the sole communicators of their ideas, for example marketing peace is not the sole discretion or responsibility of the Peace Foundation. Other organisations, and in particular the media, also communicate views about peace. This is because the idea of peace is omnipresent – peace exists everywhere, rather than being attached specifically to a particular company. The media, for example, can also present their take on peace (e.g. through the news, television programmes³⁵). These media views form, in part, the preconceptions held by consumers regarding the offering.

Theme 6, sub-theme A spoke of the preconceptions formed in the minds of consumers about ideas such as peace, non-discrimination and Buddhism. Idea consumers hear multiple, often contradicting, voices speaking of ideas such as peace. All the case organisations highlighted the need to understand and deconstruct these alternative representations as part of their overall marketing strategy. A consumer's perception of peace for example may be the dope-smoking hippy; of mental illness may be violent and aggressive people; and of Buddhism may be people in robes with shaved heads. Such images are presented through numerous vehicles including the news and entertainment media³⁶. And organisations such as the Peace Foundation cannot stop such disparate representations of their idea. The organisations

³⁵ For example, the Olympic Games opening ceremonies, Miss World contests, as well as through the coverage of news stories on anti-war protests etc.

³⁶ As part of the marketing strategy for non-discrimination against people with mental illness, the HFA gave specific attention to media representation of mental illness (particularly its association with violence). Their findings indicated that “the media has a substantial impact on the community's opinions of people with mental illness...Mental Health stories sell papers because of the way the media currently handles the topic. They also intensify the stigma and hinder the development of good services” (HFA, 1999, p. 9).

certainly attempt to counter these contrasting views (e.g. through the Media Peace awards), but they have no right to call peace their own, and therefore will continually have to listen to, and address, all the other voices within the public sphere.

A related issue to this omnipresent nature of ideas is the reputation and credibility of the specific voices (Theme 11). Each of the case organisations conveyed the importance of reputation, and employed strategies such as exploiting well-known guest speakers and celebrities as a way of standing out from the crowd. The advertising campaign for the mental illness case for example is based around celebrities; the Buddhism Meditation Centre links to the Dalai Lama; and the Peace Foundation regularly organises speaking tours for well-known peace advocates (e.g. Noam Chomsky, John Pilger).

The reasoning behind such marketing strategies is to assume a credible position in the eyes of consumers. In that ideas are omnipresent, and therefore cannot be monopolised by any one party, the organisation needs to build a reputation that allows them to speak louder, drowning out the other voices that also speak of peace, mental illness and Buddhism.

Further evidence of the omnipresent nature of idea offerings is reflected in the apparent transferable quality of these products (Theme 8). The research findings suggest that ideas can be transferred from one consumer to the next, without any loss to the original consumer. All consumers (whether or not they have ever heard of the Peace Foundation for example), have access to the idea, and can consume the offering simply through their association with another consumer of the idea. The portability of ideas is discussed with more depth in the following section.

Omnipresence therefore describes the universal and pervasive character of idea offerings. Ideas do not exist in the material domain, and cannot be

owned specifically by any one organisation or consumer. This is particularly reflected in the multiple voices consumers are subjected to regarding any particular idea. These voices can range from media representation to other organisations, such as the computer software company. In the face of such unlimited competition, the case organisations confront the challenge of countering other representations of their idea, through marketing strategies such as the Media Peace Awards, as well as establishing a credible reputation vis-à-vis alternative voices³⁷. The characteristic of omnipresence is also reflected in the ethereal terminology employed by respondents in describing their offerings, as well as the lack of ownership on the part of both the producer and the consumer. Idea offerings are ubiquitous, ever-present, and exist everywhere³⁸, and therefore anyone, (including competing organisations or potential consumers) has access to the offering at any time. Case organisations are simply mediating vehicles; each is only one of numerous voices presenting the idea. This suggests those involved in marketing ideas have limited control over their offering.

9.2.4 Transferability

The portable, movable nature of ideas is a further unique characteristic of idea offerings. This characteristic emerged particularly in *Theme 8: The consumer benefits of idea offerings are broad and transferable*. While the previous three characteristics of ideas exist as a culmination of numerous data analysis themes, this characteristic is primarily based on one theme, with other minor themes supporting the notion of transferability. The

³⁷ This suggests the case organisations claim a “better” version of the idea than, for example, the media. This relates to the evolutionary quality of the idea (in the sense that the Peace Foundation is constantly evolving a “better” idea of peace), as well as the self-righteous characteristic inherent to the case organisations.

³⁸ Yet ironically due to their immaterial nature, ideas cannot be seen anywhere.

reasoning behind including this attribute as one of the five characteristics of ideas is that transferability appears remarkably different from both goods and services. This trait distinguishes ideas from goods and services, and creates specific marketing challenges, warranting particular attention.

Ideas have no physical properties (immateriality), and cannot be owned by any one individual, yet everyone has access to the idea (omnipresence). This means ideas can be easily transferred from one person to another. An idea such as peace, for example, is universal, and exists only as a concept in the mind. Peace can then be transmitted from the mind of one individual to another, simply via conversation. In this way, ideas are transferable.

The notion of transferability arose during the data analysis primarily in terms of idea consumption, and in particular, the benefits consumers derive from adopting an idea such as peace. A consumer of peace for example, may benefit from living a more peaceful existence within their own life, and in doing so, benefit those within the world with whom they interact. In this way, the benefit of consuming peace is transferred from one individual to another. This transfer process however relates not only to the benefits of consuming an idea, but the offering itself. Respondents recognised that the idea of peace, for example, could itself be transferred from one consumer to another potential consumer. This feature has both positive and negative consequences.

The transferability of ideas is beneficial in that it allows the idea offering to cascade through a line of consumers, with minimal input or effort from the organisation. For example, a person who adopts the idea of non-discrimination against people with mental illness, may convince another individual of this idea, and convert that potential consumer into a “believer”. The Health Funding Authority who originally marketed this idea offering

may have no contact with the newly acquired consumer³⁹. In this scenario, the organisation would regard transferability as a valuable characteristic of idea offerings.

In addition to being valuable, the transferability of ideas was also identified as a challenge. As outlined in Theme 8, the process of transmitting an idea from one person to another is unstable. During the exchange, the essence of the idea might digress. In other words, the idea mutates⁴⁰. One respondent discussed this difficulty in the context of her experience with socialism ideology,

I remember during the Gulf War project, the socialist communist party type people, Socialist Workers Party in particular, were really really active in the groups and stuff. And we ended up splitting off and getting rid of them eventually because they were quite destructive. It was as though they have taken the message, and the initial message of socialism, I believe, got a little bit perverted. And that is the same sort of thing where it kind of gets passed on...And I think it is just one of those things I mean you can't really do much about it. (T-3-Ki309-1, p12-13)

The mutation capability of ideas, because of their immaterial and transferable nature⁴¹, creates a particular challenge for organisations

³⁹ This is similar to on-selling, but different in that the first person keeps the idea too.

⁴⁰ The notion that a product can mutate has been previously identified in marketing literature by Butler and Collins' (1994) in their discussion of political marketing. According to Butler and Collins (1994), "a notable property of political marketing is that the purchase is alterable even in the post-purchase setting" (p. 22). In that context, the authors are asserting that a political ideology may change – election promises may not bear fruit once the party has secured power. While mutability and the negative potential of transferability holds some similarities, the difference is that a politician who consciously changes their ideas in the post-election arena is not the same as a consumer who on-sells the idea offering but unconsciously changes the product in the process. Transferability in the context of idea offerings relates more to Chinese-whispers than conscious manipulation for personal gain.

⁴¹ Other representations of the idea may also influence this transfer process. For example, the potential consumer's preconceptions of peace (as influenced by media representations etc) may further distort the idea of peace.

involved in marketing ideas. This challenge is similar to the difficulty created by the omnipresent character of ideas – ideas cannot be owned, and therefore other parties may represent the idea in an alternative way, and ideas can be easily transmitted from one individual to another, and in the process can undergo a process of metamorphosis into an alternative idea. Both these challenges rest primarily on the immateriality of ideas. Without anything tangible to offer, an idea marketing organisation must face the possibility that what's in their mind, may not be in the mind of others.

The transferability of ideas therefore emerges as a consequence to the immateriality and omnipresence of ideas. As a characteristic, transferability concerns the portable, viral nature of ideas. Transmitting an idea from one person to another (e.g. a consumer to a potential consumer) is both valuable in terms of minimal organisational input, and challenging due to the mutation capability.

9.2.5 Weltanschauung

Occasionally, the English language is incapable of describing or defining particular concepts. At times, there appears no word to encapsulate the meaning of what you are trying to say. This is such a time.

At issue is the inherent quality of idea offerings that relates to the worldview, life philosophy component of an idea. Throughout the data collection process, words such as “philosophy”, “way of being”, “worldview” were as close as the respondents came to describing their offering. Other more restrictive definitions were dismissed as being unable

to encapsulate the breadth and fundamental nature of the product⁴². This issue appeared significant to idea offerings. It stood out as a quality that lay at the heart of ideas, an essential part of their character.

This issue emerged early in the data collection process. The religious-like terminology used by respondents was immediately apparent and again hinted towards something deeper. Ideas appeared to relate to a person's life philosophy, and adopting a particular idea such as peace would result in a deep-seated change in how one views the world. A search was therefore taken to find a term that captured this essential quality of ideas. The search evolved beyond the confines of the English language, to a German term – Weltanschauung.

Weltanschauung means world outlook, or the “general conception of the nature of the world, particularly as containing or implying a system of value-principles” (Bullock & Stallybrass, 1977, p. 673). Weltanschauung is a term that is increasingly used within English communication, and appears in diverse material from the *Sydney Morning Herald* (Eckersley, 2000) to scholarly journals such as the *International Crime Justice Review* (Zvekić, 1999). It therefore seems acceptable to draw on this term as a way of describing the fundamental and philosophical nature of idea offerings.

In many ways, Weltanschauung could be taken as the primary and essential principle underlying idea offerings. In each case, what the organisations are marketing is a way of looking at the world, or even more fundamentally, a way of being in the world. To consume an idea such as peace, non-discrimination against people with mental illness or Buddhism is to take on a particular worldview, which would influence the consumer's attitudes,

⁴² For example, attempts to define peace in a restrictive fashion, such as conflict resolution, appeared futile. This issue is outlined in Theme 4: The holistic nature of ideas.

behaviour, value system, world outlook. To fully embrace the idea of non-discrimination for example, would mean that all interactions with people with mental illness from that moment on would change. The attitude taken, the behaviour exhibited, the value you placed on people with mental illness would be transformed from your consumption of that idea offering⁴³. Similarly, consuming the idea of peace would result in a transformation of your Weltanschauung. Every interaction, from your boss to the person next door, would rest on the newly found world outlook. Peace would underlie every encounter, every action, every moment. Again, the religious connotations are apparent. A born-again Buddhist (a person who has consumed the idea of Buddhism) is someone who has adopted an alternative Weltanschauung, and this Buddhist philosophy influences all interactions from that moment forward.

The Weltanschauung characteristic of idea offerings is particularly highlighted in Theme 7 (Chapter Seven). This theme captures a specific challenge of idea consumption (as expressed by producers), that to consume an idea requires a fundamental shift in beliefs. The difficulty of this transformation is described in the following extract,

The desire is that we, in some way, facilitate people to make some quite significant changes in the way they relate to other people, or to the world. (T-3-Ki309-1, p7)

I guess we're asking them to think differently and to act differently; and that fundamentally is a harder thing to do anyway because you are asking people to not just change one small bit of their behaviour, but quite a fundamental, well obviously we're not saying that everybody out there is a kind of raging psychopathic war monger. But it's quite a fundamental shift (T-3-Ki309-1, p4)

⁴³ The interminability of ideas however means the point at which this consumption process is complete, is unclear.

What this is referring to is a person's *Weltanschauung*. Their belief system, their way of being in the world, their life philosophy is what these idea offerings are targeting. It is at this elementary level that a shift is required. This is a step beyond attitudinal and behavioural change, to a more inherent, fundamental world outlook.

The significance of *Weltanschauung* is also reflected in the producers' self-righteous and non-negotiable worldview. As outlined in Theme 1, respondents across each of the case organisations were passionate about their idea offering, and displayed almost evangelical behaviour in their attempts to convert others to their life philosophy. Each respondent is essentially a consumer of their idea. Members of the Peace Foundation believe whole-heartedly in peace. They are uncompromising in their outlook. They have adopted a particular *Weltanschauung*, and work at converting others (indeed the entire human population) towards also embracing the idea of peace.

Based on this analysis, ideas embody a series of recognisable attributes: immateriality, interminability, omnipresence, transferability and *Weltanschauung*. These characteristics form a conceptual basis – beyond the previously identified single feature of intangibility (see for example, Fine 1981; Whyte, 1985) – from which we can begin to understand idea offerings. Having identified the conceptual domain of idea offerings, the next stage is to consider these characteristics relative to goods, services and social products. Such comparison can determine whether ideas are a unique and distinguishable product type.

9.3 Ideas relative to goods and services

The objectives of this inquiry were firstly to describe the conceptual domain of ideas, and secondly, to consider ideas relative to other product types. This comparison is structured in terms of the five characteristics of ideas. Specific attention is then given to the distinction between ideas and social products in the subsequent section.

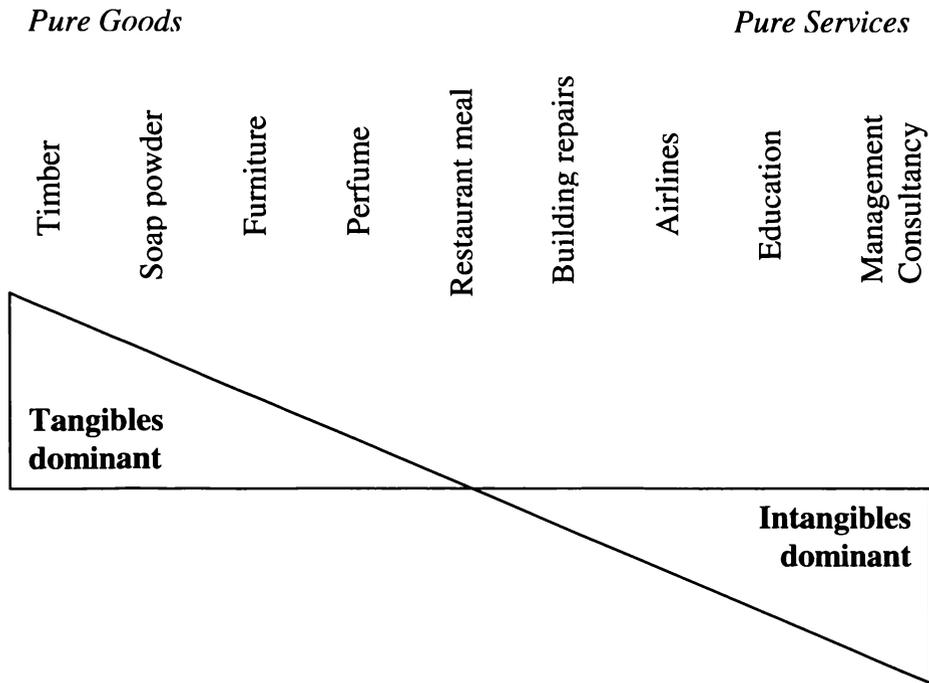
9.3.1 Immateriality

Immateriality represents two significant issues that lie at the heart of idea offerings – their extreme intangibility and (of lesser importance, but still significant) their perceived irrelevance. This characteristic distinguishes ideas from both goods and services.

Goods are largely tangible commodities. The tangible dimension of goods is used as a contrasting feature to services, which are regarded as largely intangible. To say that goods are tangible, services are largely intangible, and ideas are immaterial, however, is a generalisation. What differs is the proportion or degree of physical properties. The difference between these three product types – in terms of tangible dimensions – is relative. Services are *relatively* less tangible than goods; ideas are *relatively* less tangible than both goods and services.

A continuum can be used to compare and contrast products in such a manner. Continuums have been routinely used in the services marketing literature to contrast services from goods. For example,

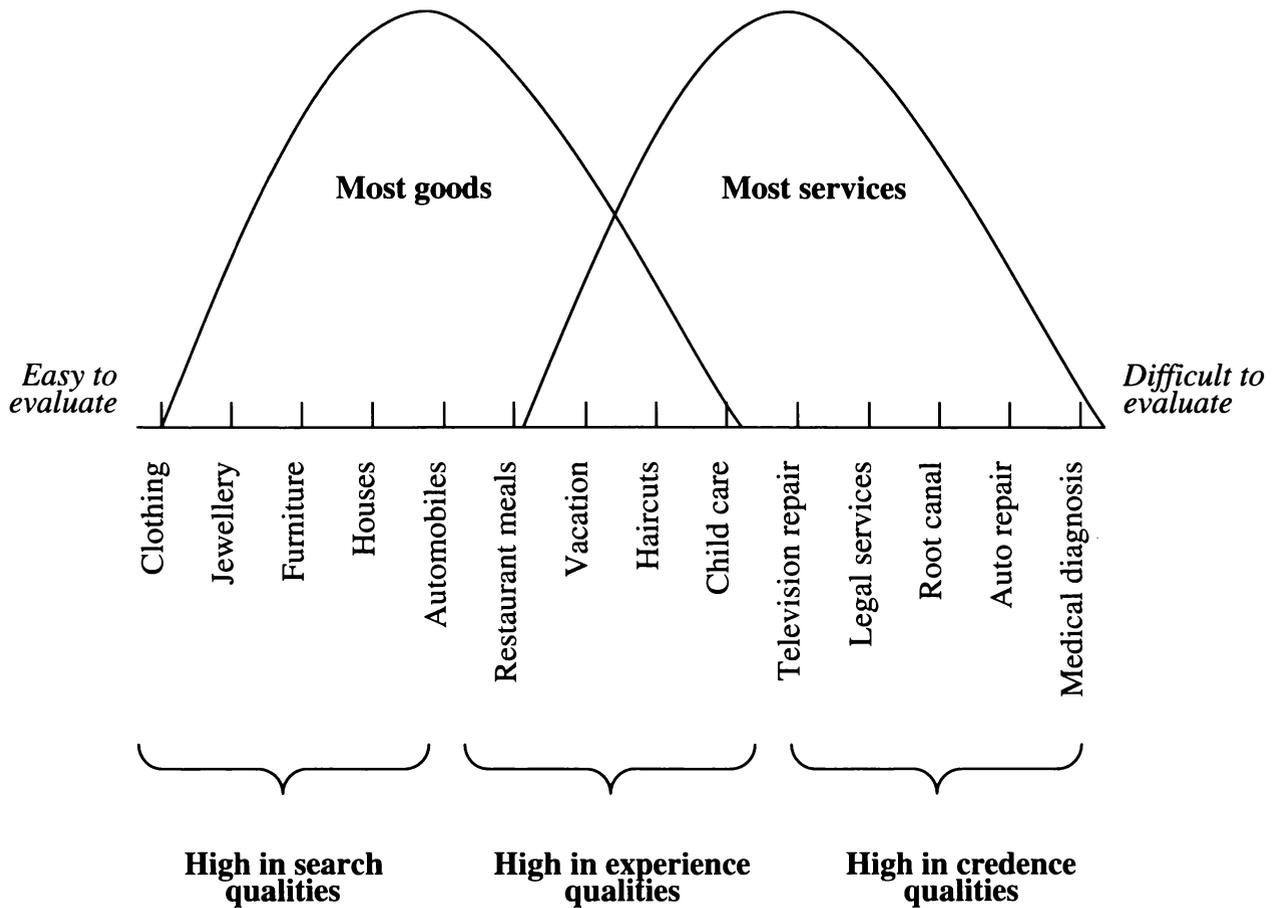
Figure 9.2. The goods and service continuum



Source: Palmer (1994, p. 2)

This goods-services continuum is further extended in the services marketing literature to incorporate the element of consumer evaluation. Those products that are tangibles-dominant are easier to evaluate, whereas those products at the opposing end of the spectrum embody high credence qualities. These intangibles-dominant offerings (or services) are more difficult to evaluate. This notion is presented in Figure 9.3.

Figure 9.3. Continuum of Evaluation for Different Types of Products



Previous ideas marketing literature has extended such continuums to incorporate the higher degree of intangibility inherent to idea offerings. Whyte (1985) for example describes the difference between product types by adding products of increasing intangibility, including ideas, to the scale of market entities, as illustrated in Figure 9.4.

Figure 9.4. Scale of Market Entities

Physical Products	Services	Organisations and Persons	Ideas
TANGIBLE DOMINANT		INTANGIBLE DOMINANT	

Source: Whyte (1985, p. 26)

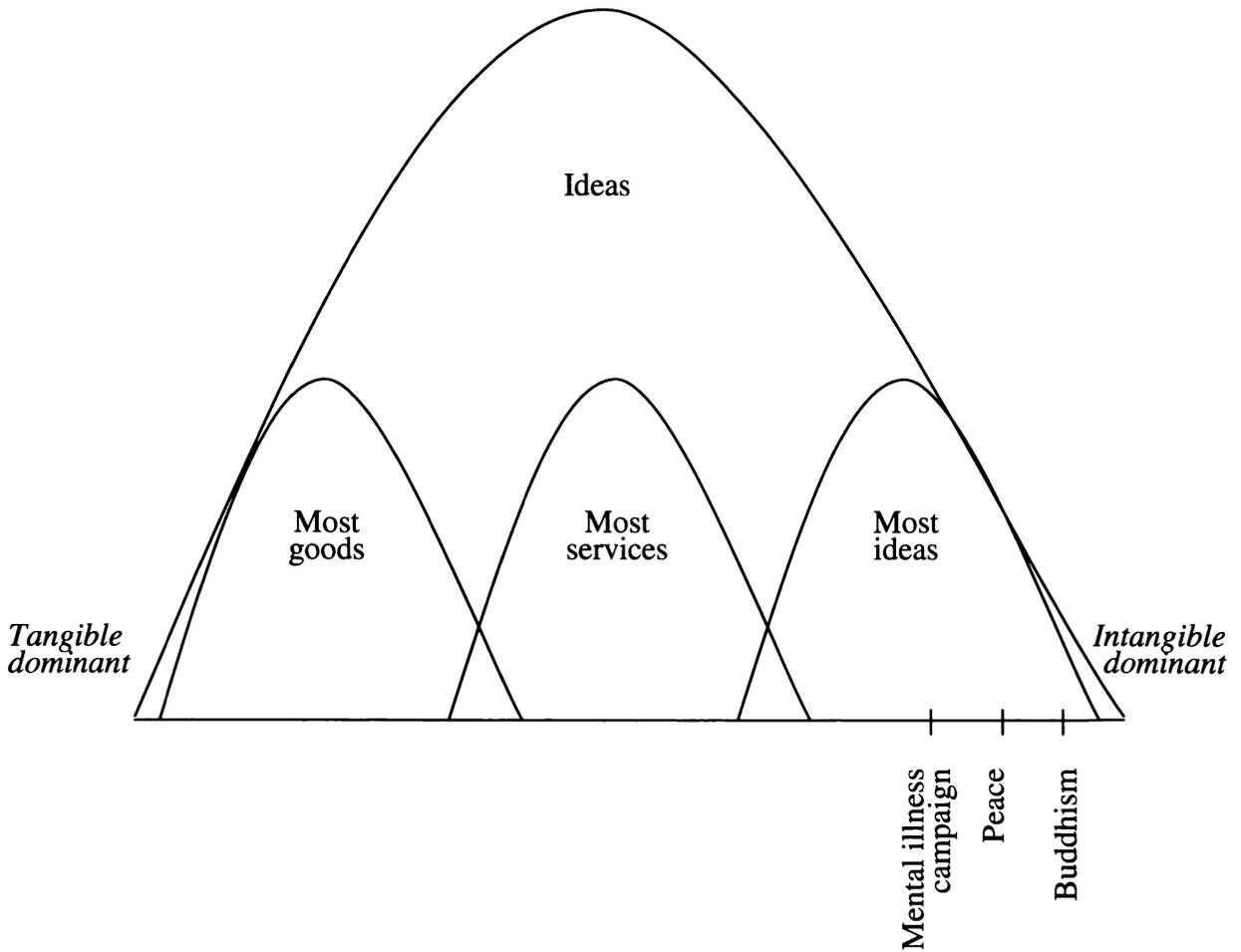
In moving towards the “intangible-dominant” extreme of the continuum, one reaches the area predominated by idea offerings.

Such models suggest that the difference between product types (whether goods and services, or goods, services, organisations and persons⁴⁴, and ideas) is relative in terms of their degree of tangibility. Furthermore, a continuum allows for the overlap between products. For example, in Figure 9.3, offerings such as vacations, haircuts and child care fall within both the goods and services domains, since they incorporate both tangible and intangible elements.

⁴⁴ Investigating organisations and persons falls beyond the scope of this research. Ideas are considered primarily in relation to goods and services (in accordance with the AMA definition), and secondly, in relation to social product (since ‘ideas’ figure in social marketing literature, e.g. Fine, 1981; Kotler & Roberto, 1989)

Drawing on previous literature, complemented with the findings in this study, these conceptual frameworks can be extended to incorporate ideas, as presented in Figure 9.5.

Figure 9.5. Goods, services and ideas continuum



The broader circle of ideas is included in this conceptual framework to allow for the ideas inherent in all products⁴⁵ (including goods, services and ideas). For example, a microwave oven (good) began with an idea (cooking

⁴⁵ Either as a creative input, first stage in new product development, or as part of an advertising campaign (see Chapter Two: Conceptualising Ideas).

food faster). Similarly, all products may include ideas as part of their marketing strategy. For example, the focus of an advertising campaign for a vacation (good/service) may be the idea of relaxation or escape. This relates to the issues raised in Chapter Two: Conceptualising ideas.

Other than via continuums, previous work on the marketing of ideas has also identified extreme intangibility as an issue pertinent to this subfield. Peter and Olsen's (1983) examination of the marketing of science (as an idea offering) also raises intangibility as an area of consideration. These authors suggest the need to market scientific theory as "a tangible manuscript [as this is] both easier and more effective than promoting an intangible set of ideas" (Peter and Olsen, 1983, p. 112). Categorising products through increased intangibility is further demonstrated in Fine's (1981) product typology, which categorises ideas as relatively less tangible than goods and services. In asserting the notion of immateriality (or extreme intangibility) as a characteristic of ideas, this study is therefore supporting such previous research on idea offerings.

The notion of extreme intangibility is not limited to the ideas marketing literature. Throughout the services marketing literature, scholars have often explored intangibility, including various degrees of intangibility. Berry (1980) for example conceptualised intangibility, describing it as "that which cannot be touched, impalpable and that which cannot be easily defined, formulated or grasped mentally" (Berry, 1980, p. 17). This definition appears as true to ideas as to services. The issue again is one of relativity. Some services (for example medical diagnosis), nearing the intangible extreme of the continuum, may display qualities such as "ill-definable" or "unable to be grasped mentally". These issues appear even more prevalent as the degree of intangibility intensifies – which is the case for idea offerings. The distinction between goods, services and ideas is continuous, rather than discrete, and the degree to which a product is "impalpable,

cannot be defined, formulated or grasped mentally” will increase as one moves along the tangibility-intangibility continuum from goods, through services to ideas.

Building on earlier services marketing work, Laroche, Bergeron and Goutaland (2001) developed a three dimensional scale of intangibility incorporating mental intangibility, physical intangibility and generality. These authors assert that the degree of tangibility differs between products in terms of these three dimensions. Intangibility is not simply about physicality. It also relates to the degree of mentally tangible representations of an object (mental intangibility), as well as how general and/or specific a consumer perceives a particular product (generality). For example, a haircut (a service) is perceived as being less physically tangible than a CD (a good), but more generally and mentally tangible. Laroche et al.’s (2001) study is pertinent to this thesis in that mental intangibility appears to be a particular issue relevant to idea offerings. It may be one explanation for the difficulties idea consumers have in conceptualising and understanding products such as peace. For ideas, intangibility is not only physical. Ideas also appear generally and mentally intangible.

For this study, the term immateriality also includes a secondary definition – the notion of irrelevance. Consumers show limited interest in ideas such as peace, non-discrimination and Buddhism. Irrelevance of the offering is raised in some of the earliest ideas marketing work. Rothschild (1979) who attempted to address the challenge of “why it’s so hard to sell brotherhood like soap?”, suggests “latent demand for the product” (p. 12) as being a reason for the difficulties faced by producers of non-business products (such as ideas). Latent demand regards the dormant (but existing) demand of an offering. Non-relevance takes this issue a step further in suggesting non-existent demand for an offering.

Irrelevance raises the issue of consumer orientation. Ideas marketing strategies are not currently structured by market research. They do not begin with the customer, and indeed the respondents believe seeking customer input is likely to be ineffective. Customers of the Peace Foundation, for example, struggle to even understand what peace is. The idea is not well defined, and is inherently immaterial, interminable and omnipresent. The Peace Foundation's approach is therefore more product-orientated – their marketing efforts lie essentially in convincing potential consumers of the relevance and ultimate commitment to peace. This orientation is not necessarily a sign of an immature view of marketing. Rather the nature of ideas demands such an approach.

The product-orientation of the organisations under study was evident across all cases. It highlights a further distinguishing feature of ideas, in terms of organisational characteristics. This difference may be best summed up through the now-clichéd phrase:

Goods are produced.

Services are performed.

During early services marketing research, scholars drew on this phrase as a way to distinguish services from goods. In light of the findings in this study, it is proposed that this cliché could be extended to:

Goods are produced.

Services are performed.

Ideas are professed.

To profess an idea, is to declare a particular belief. And the act of professing affirms one's faith in, or allegiance to, that idea. The idea of peace for example is professed daily by those involved in the peace movement, declared and exhibited through their actions, attitudes and behaviours. As succinctly put by Martin Luther King Jr., "peace is not merely a distant goal

that we seek, but a means by which we arrive at that goal". Every day of working in the Peace Foundation is to profess the importance of peace, both as a distant hope in the future, and as a way of getting there.

Such assertion of an idea may be interpreted as evangelistic behaviour. Marketing tactics for ideas could even be related to propaganda. In essence, the case organisations are imposing their Weltanschauung on others. This creates an interesting tension. On the one hand, the respondents operate within an uncompromising ideological stance and believe their worldview should be accepted by everyone. On the other hand, respondents were apprehensive towards employing marketing tactics to persuade anyone towards that worldview. This tension appears characteristic of organisations working with idea offerings.

Immateriality therefore distinguishes ideas from goods and services. The distinction is relative. Ideas are relatively less tangible than both goods and services. The secondary definition of ideas – irrelevance – further demonstrates ideas as a unique product type. Irrelevance raises the issue of customer orientation, and suggests while goods are produced and services performed, ideas are professed.

9.3.2 Interminability

Interminability concerns the temporal properties of an idea. As a product, ideas are endless and timeless. The interminable nature of ideas demands a long-term marketing perspective. Organisations such as the Peace Foundation work towards idealistic visions that exist only in the future (for example, a peaceful world). There is no distinguishable end to the marketing process, nor any clearly identifiable transactions that make up the

consumption process. The timelessness of ideas, particularly the lack of conclusion, makes ideas different from both goods and services.

The consumption of a good or service is more clearly defined by transactions and encounters. For goods and services, there is an identifiable transaction, in which payment is made for a product and ownership of that product is secured. For example, in marketing a car (a good), the consumer engages in an exchange (payment) in return for the tangible product (the car). There is a point of sale that exists at a particular time. This exchange is referred to as a transaction.

In services, the exchange between the customer and service provider occurs within the service encounter. For example, a customer engages in an exchange (payment) in return for a haircut (a service) by entering the service “factory” (the salon), and participating in an encounter (between the service provider and customer). An identifiable characteristic of services is that they are perishable, primarily in relation to time. For example, if a doctor has no patients on a Tuesday, he or she cannot save up that time to sell on the Wednesday. The unused time on the Tuesday is lost forever, because a doctor’s service is perishable.

This is in marked contrast however to the consumption process underlying ideas. If a consumer does not “buy into” the philosophy of peace for example on Tuesday, the Peace Foundation could continue their efforts towards that consumer on the Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. Ideas are not perishable, but the complete opposite – they cannot expire. Unlike the doctor’s time, ideas are infinite – they can be transferred an infinite number of times to an infinite number of consumers. For both goods and services, boundaries exist around the exchange. Unlike ideas, there is a clearly defined beginning and an end to the transaction or encounter. Ideas however do not benefit from such clarity. There is no clearly identifiable transaction,

payment or change of ownership. Rather, the transaction process appears endless.

Interminability is also reflected in the long-term perspective taken by the case organisations. Taking a long-term approach towards the marketing of a product however is not foreign to marketing theory. Indeed contemporary marketing thought has moved away from a transaction-based focus, towards developing long-term relationships with consumers. A company selling goods for example may no longer focus on the immediate transaction, but attempt to develop a relationship with the customer in the endeavour to maintain customer loyalty, and thereby secure ongoing transactions. The development of customer relationships is even more evident with services, due to the personal nature of the encounters. For example, a hairdresser may establish an ongoing relationship with his or her client, which promotes additional encounters. The difference between relationship marketing strategies, and the interminable nature of ideas however lies in the offering itself. Interminability is an intrinsic characteristic of ideas, which influences the long-term approach taken in the marketing strategies for ideas. Conversely, goods and services are not in themselves interminable. Rather companies adopt relationship marketing strategies simply to ensure their ongoing survival. The reasons for taking a relationship marketing approach are not driven by the interminable nature of the product itself, but by the competitive and saturated marketplace. For ideas, the reasons for taking a relationship marketing approach are to continue to deliver the offering.

Interminability therefore further distinguishes ideas from both goods and services. While there may be aspects of interminability within the goods and services realm (e.g. the long-term nature inherent to relationship marketing strategies), the products themselves are finite. Indeed, a particular feature of services is their perishability, which is in marked contrast to the interminability of ideas.

9.3.3 Omnipresence

Whereas interminability concerns the timeless nature of ideas, omnipresence concerns the space-less, boundless nature of ideas. Ideas subsist only in the metaphysical realm. Peace exists, and will continue to exist, whether or not the Peace Foundation exists. The Peace Foundation cannot own or monopolise peace. Other organisations (e.g. the computer software company mentioned earlier, or the media), also have access to the idea.

Goods and services can be tied to particular production and consumption processes. A good-manufacturer produces a car, for example. Consumption of that vehicle occurs after the good is produced and exchanged. Presence of the consumer (at the point of delivery) is required in order for the good to be exchanged. While they may not directly interact with the manufacturer, there will be direct interface with a representative of that good, for example, a retailer.

For services, the production and consumption of the service occurs simultaneously. The inseparability of services demands the presence of both consumer and producer. A particular haircut, for example, cannot exist without both the service provider and consumer coming together. It is the interaction of these two parties that creates the service. With advances in technology, the inseparability of services has become somewhat blurred. A service can now be performed in the virtual realm, requiring only the tele-presence of producer and consumer. For example, telephone banking means the consumer does not need to be physically present in the same space as the service provider. In terms of spatial properties, service providers and consumers must be either co-presence (e.g. a haircut) or tele-present (e.g. telephone banking).

Ideas however are accessible everywhere, at any time. The Peace Foundation for example does not produce peace; rather they are a mediating vehicle for this omnipresent idea. While the Peace Foundation does not own or produce peace, they can draw on this universal principle and take some responsibility for conveying that idea into the public sphere. However, any other organisation can do the same⁴⁶.

The lack of production processes means the consumption of an idea is equally ubiquitous. Unlike goods and services, an idea can be consumed (in the sense of “taking that idea on board”), whether or not the consumer is even aware of the organisation marketing the idea. Joe Public may commit to the idea of peace for example, yet has never heard of the Peace Foundation⁴⁷. The consumption of an idea does not occur after a production process because ideas are not produced *per se*. Consuming an idea can occur anywhere, at any time, and no direct interaction is required with the organisation marketing the idea.

The lack of production suggests idea organisations fall beyond legal contractual requirements. Because the Peace Foundation does not own or produce peace, they can not be liable for providing the idea of peace. Each time a brawl erupts, or a war begins, consumers of peace cannot sue the Peace Foundation. However, if a doctor misdiagnoses a patient’s illness, or a car manufacturer produces a faulty vehicle, they can face legal repercussions for their incompetence. Unlike ideas, goods or services can be

⁴⁶ For example, as discussed in Chapter Three, the idea of peace was the basis of a marketing campaign developed by the Los Angeles City Attorney’s Office targeting warring gang members. In that case, the same product, that is peace, was being marketed, yet by a remarkably different organisation to the Peace Foundation (Webber, 1998)

⁴⁷ This emphasises that the idea is more important than the brand or organisation. The idea can be transferred without reference to the Peace Foundation. The Peace Foundation would still welcome the newly acquired consumer even though their name does not get mentioned in the second transfer.

linked directly back to a particular producer. In this sense, goods and service producers are locatable. Ideas however are omnipresent – they are not owned or produced by any one organisation.

The lack of ownership for an idea raises the issue of intellectual property. Intellectual property relates to the right to claim a particular idea as your own⁴⁸. This obviously begs the question of whether the Peace Foundation, for example, can apply for intellectual property rights over the idea of peace. The difficulty however is that in order to secure ownership rights, the organisation must reduce the idea to a material form⁴⁹. Yet, a characteristic of ideas is their immaterial nature. Describing the idea of peace in a definitive, specific, yet all-encapsulating fashion, as would be required to apply for intellectual property rights, is impossible. And because peace is inherently omnipresent and exists beyond the material realm, you could not legally tie it to any one organisation. You cannot prevent Joe Public speaking of peace⁵⁰.

Omnipresence is therefore a further characteristic that distinguishes ideas from goods and services. Ideas cannot be owned specifically by any one organisation. Organisations such as the Peace Foundation do not even produce the offering – peace exists whether or not the Peace Foundation

⁴⁸ Intellectual property concerns the protection of literary and artistic works, trademarks, patents and designs. As stated by the Intellectual Property Organisation of New Zealand, “like ‘real’ or ‘tangible’ property, [intellectual property] can be bought, sold, or licensed” (Intellectual Property Office of New Zealand, 1998)

⁴⁹ For most countries, intellectual property rights are governed by the Berne Convention. New Zealand became party to the Berne Convention in 1928 (Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works, no date). Article II b(2) of the Berne Convention states, “It shall, however, be a matter for legislation in the countries of the Union to prescribe that works in general or any specified categories of works shall not be protected unless *they have been fixed in some material form*” (Legal Information Institute, 1971, italics added)

⁵⁰ Interestingly, this would go against the Peace Foundation’s motives. Their aim is to have everyone ‘buy into’ peace. Restricting its use through intellectual property law is a limiting, rather than an all-embracing approach.

exists⁵¹. Ideas are accessible by consumers at any time, anywhere. Consumers of peace, for example, do not need to directly interact with the Peace Foundation in order to consume the idea of peace. Ideas are not owned by anyone, yet accessible to everyone. This is significantly different from the experience of goods and service providers, who have more clearly defined production and consumption processes, required either the co-presence or tele-presence of the consumer. This suggests goods and service producers have considerably more control over their offering.

9.3.4 Transferability

Transferability concerns the portable nature of ideas. Ideas cannot be owned solely by any one person or organisation. Rather, ideas are metaphysical entities, existing only in the minds of individuals. Through the process of communicating, an idea consumer can pass on the offering to another potential consumer. Yet in the process, the initiator of that conversation retains the original idea. The effect is cumulative. Similar to a cold, ideas are viral in nature.

At the heart of this transferability characteristic is the issue of ownership. Since ideas such as peace cannot be owned by any one individual, and everyone has access to the offering, anyone can consume peace without loss to anyone else. Indeed, once you have consumed an idea, it is impossible to lose it. Furthermore, the very nature of transferring the idea, allows the original idea to evolve – through the act of passing on the idea, the original

⁵¹ Indeed, marketing terms such as production and exchange seem inappropriate to idea offerings.

consumer may develop a clearer understanding of the offering. This exchange-like process is remarkably different from both goods and services.

For a good, such as a car, the consumer engages in a transaction, the result of which is the vehicle. If they entered into a further transaction with the same product and exchanged the car to another party, the car's ownership would correspondingly change to the new owner. The initial purchaser would no longer have access to the vehicle.

Services cannot be transferred. The ownership of a haircut is permanent – a consumer simply cannot transfer their haircut to another individual. There is no mobility inherent to services.

In contrast, an idea is both permanent – in the sense that once consumed, you cannot lose an idea; and mobile – in the sense of being completely portable from one consumer to another. This highlights the complexity of exchange in the context of ideas, and distinguishes ideas from both goods and services. While goods are mobile, transferring the good means loss of ownership. If the good is resold, the ownership is equally reassigned. For services, the inseparability of producer and consumer means that post-the service encounter, the service cannot shift to another individual. Ideas however exhibit more viral qualities⁵². Ideas can be continually transferred, with no loss to anyone.

⁵² A theoretical model that may more accurately describe the viral transfer process for ideas is memetic theory. The origins of memetic theory lie in biology, specifically the advancement of thought in Darwinian evolution. The theory concerns the replication process underlying evolution – specifically how genes are “passed on to the next generation” (Blackmore, 1999, p. 4). Richard Dawkins (1976) book *The Selfish Gene* outlines this process, and concludes with the question – are there other replicators on our planet? For Dawkins, the answer was yes – a unit of imitation exists which he called a meme. As examples of this unit of imitation he suggested ‘tunes, *ideas*, catch-phrases, clothes fashions, ways of making pots or of building arches” (Blackmore, 1999, p. 4; emphasis added). What Dawkins is proposing is that memes catch on, propagate themselves around the world from jumping, through a process of imitation, from brain to brain. For example, Dawkins wrote about “religions as groups of memes with a high survival value,

9.3.5 Weltanschauung

Weltanschauung concerns the fundamental and philosophical nature of idea offerings. Ideas relate to a person's worldview, life philosophy, or way of being. This characteristic marks a further distinguishable quality of ideas in comparison to goods and services.

Consuming a good (e.g. a microwave), does not change the fundamental world outlook (or Weltanschauung) of the consumer. They may enjoy the benefit of cooking food faster, and may even advocate those benefits to potential consumers. But their belief system is unlikely to be affected. Purchasing and using a microwave is unlikely to impact on other aspects of the consumer's life. How the consumer interacts with fellow human beings or how they view the world, would not be considered or challenged as a result of using a microwave. Rather, the motivation for consuming a good usually lies with satisfying functional consumer needs.

Similarly, it is improbable that the result of a service encounter with a bank, for example, would impact on your life philosophy. Even consuming an experience-based service such as a vacation is unlikely to affect the consumer's Weltanschauung. Such services are more personal in nature, (satisfying, for example, social needs), but the impact is unlikely to result in a fundamental change in life philosophy.

The closest goods and services come to shifting a consumer's Weltanschauung is the "buy in" of a particular brand identity as part of

infesting whole societies with belief in God or an afterlife" (Blackmore, 1999, p. 4). The transferability of idea offerings and the notion of memes are similar. Transferability has been identified in this study as a characteristic of idea offerings describing the portable, transmittable nature of ideas. Memetics is similarly about idea transfer; this transfer occurring through the process of imitation. Memetic theory may therefore provide further insight into the transferability (and ultimately acceptance) of ideas such as peace.

purchasing a product. For example, Disney markets its services based on the ideas of fantasy and fun. Consumers of Disney services buy into this brand identity as part of the overall service experience. Similarly, Steinlager is promoted under the brand identity of “New Zealand pride”. To consume Steinlager is to “buy into” that philosophy⁵³. In such cases however, consuming the good or service is still unlikely to impact on the consumer’s *Weltanschauung*. Buying into “New Zealand pride” may result in a consumer drinking Steinlager over other brands, but is unlikely to affect other aspects of their life. These brand identities also relate to existing views. For example, Steinlager recognises that “pride” is an important element to New Zealand society, and therefore plays on that existing idea. Unlike ideas, these organisations are not marketing a new or different way of looking at the world.

Yet, to commit to peace, is to change all aspects of one’s life, at a fundamental level. The shift in a consumer’s *Weltanschauung* occurs internally. The impact would be felt in all interactions from that moment on. A consumer of peace carries that idea with them in all aspects of their life. While *Weltanschauung* lies at the core of ideas, its relevance to goods and services is negligible.

Each of the characteristics therefore distinguishes ideas from goods and services. Relative to both product types, ideas hold discernible, unique properties. These differences between ideas, goods and services are summarised in Figure 9.6.

⁵³ Extended brand identity relates to the ideas underlying all products, as part of an advertising campaign (see Chapter Two: Conceptualising Ideas).

Figure 9.6. Characteristics of ideas relative to goods and services

PRODUCT QUALITIES	IDEAS	GOODS	SERVICES
Degree of tangibility	Low - Immaterial	High - Tangible	Medium - Intangible
Temporal properties	Interminable (unending time span)	Finite (short to long time span)	Perishable (short time span)
Spatial properties	Omnipresent	Co-present (physical presence)	Mix of Co-present and Tele-present
Transferability	Viral	Transferable, but with loss of ownership	Inseparable
Core objective	Weltanschauung	Satisfying consumer needs	Satisfying consumer needs

9.4 Ideas relative to social products

Ideas are more akin to social products than any other product type. Similarities between ideas and social products exist. But there are also differences.

Like ideas, social products are highly intangible. For ideas, immateriality occurs across all tangible dimensions, including physically intangible, mentally intangible and generally intangible. While social products, such as anti-smoking campaigns, may be physically intangible, they are more easily defined and recognisable in a mental and general sense. Whereas Joe Public may strike difficulty in defining and understanding peace, he is more likely

to recognise and identify the social message of anti-smoking. There may also be specific tangible products intrinsic to a social message, for example, devices to stop smoking. In this way, social products hold some tangible properties.

The ability to mentally picture a social product lies partly in the fact that social products are typically based on current societal issues. Social messages around seat belt use or not drinking and driving exist because the problem exists – that is, people don't wear seat belts or they drink and drive. Social products are therefore defined with respect to a tangible activity, detectable in the material world.

In this way, the mental illness case is closer to social marketing – it deals with an issue evident today, and was developed in response to a problem (i.e. negative public attitudes towards people with mental illness). Recognising the idea of non-discrimination against mental illness is easier (relative to ideas such as peace) since mental illnesses (e.g. schizophrenia, depression, bi-polarity) are specifically (and indeed medically) defined. In contrast, peace and Buddhism are closer to ideas marketing. Both offerings are extremely intangible across all dimensions: physically, generally and mentally.

The long-term, definable goals of social marketing campaigns also points to a difference between social products and ideas. Whereas ideas marketing strategies embody idealistic, ambiguous goals, social marketing goals are relatively clear and measurable. There is an identifiable end, for example, a world in which no one smokes. While this goal may still seem unlikely, it exists as a measurable condition. In contrast, the long-term goal for ideas (e.g. a peaceful world) is vague. Achieving this goal rests more on hope, than pragmatism.

Both ideas and social products embody an element of spacelessness. Both peace and anti-smoking can be accessed by everyone, yet cannot be solely owned by any one individual. Consuming a social product can require direct contact with this producer (for example purchasing patches to stop smoking), but as with ideas, social products do not required a specific point of sale. The ideas underlying both products are accessible everywhere, at any time. The omnipresence of both ideas and social products influences their transferability. For both products, the offering is highly transferable, and the transfer process can appear viral in nature. There is a subtle difference in terms of some personal ownership with social products, for example, a patch to stop smoking can only be used by one individual consumer. But, in general, ideas and social products are similar in terms of both their omnipresent and transferable nature.

Weltanschauung however marks a distinction of ideas relative to social products. Social marketing literature asserts the notion of “customer behaviour as bottom line” – the way to judge the success of a social marketing campaign. A consumer behaviour model frames the work of social marketers. Behavioural change is what social products target. Unlike social products, ideas target a more fundamental shift in a consumer’s belief system. While this may result in behavioural change, Weltanschauung is a much broader concept – it concerns adopting a particular world outlook, which impacts on all aspects of the consumer’s life. Consuming the social message of not drinking and driving, for example, may change specific behaviour regarding alcohol consumption, but is unlikely to impact on other aspects in a person’s life. It would not influence how that consumer relates to their neighbour, or interacts with their children. Committing to peace however would impact on all aspects of the consumer “way of being” in the world. Idea consumption is an internal process – affecting the consumer’s Weltanschauung, rather than externally recognisable as specific attitude or behavioural change.

Such issues suggest that while there are some obvious similarities between social marketing and ideas marketing, social products and idea offerings are not necessarily one in the same. Social marketing does contend with elements of intangibility (particularly physically intangible), degrees of interminability (in the sense of adopting a long-term focus), and some spatial similarities (in that social products can similarly be consumed in multiple locations by multiple consumers). Like ideas, social products are also transferable. The relationship between these two fields is therefore illustrated thus:

Figure 9.7. Social marketing and ideas marketing



This suggests that the findings in this thesis may indeed have some relevance to the social marketing field (and, equally social marketing theory may benefit our understanding of ideas). However, suggesting that idea offerings are simply another term for social products is to deny their differences. While social products target specific, measurable behavioural change, ideas concern a more fundamental shift in a consumer's world

outlook, impacting on all aspects of their life. Tracking the progress of a social marketing campaign, and marking the conclusion of that campaign, is somewhat easier, since social products are defined with respect to a current activity, detectable in the physical plane, for example, the goal of reducing road deaths by a set percentage. Measuring peace however is more difficult, and identifying the conclusion of this idea impossible. These differences are summated in Figure 9.8.

Figure 9.8. Characteristics of ideas relative to social products

PRODUCT QUALITIES	IDEAS	SOCIAL PRODUCTS
Degree of tangibility	Low - Immaterial	Mixed – Physically intangible Mentally tangible Generally tangible
Temporal properties	Interminable	Long-term, but conclusive
Spatial properties	Omnipresent	Omnipresent (Some co-presence may be required)
Transferability	Viral	Viral (May include some loss of ownership)
Core objective	Shift in Weltanschauung	Behavioural change

Ideas are therefore different from goods, services and social products. They warrant particular attention and a specific position alongside other product types. The implications of this difference are considered in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 10

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

*We shall not cease from exploration,
And the end of our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time.*

T.S. Elliot

10.1 Introduction

The conceptual domain of ideas – as described through immateriality, interminability, omnipresence, transferability and Weltanschauung – and the distinguishing relation of these characteristics to goods, services and social products, demonstrate ideas marketing as a distinct subfield within the marketing discipline. Chapter Ten considers the theoretical implications of this distinction. The second part of this chapter turns towards the future, offering possible areas of inquiry for post-doctoral research.

10.2 Research outcomes

The research question that guided this inquiry throughout was:

Is the marketing of ideas a demonstrably unique subfield of the marketing discipline?

The fourteen-month ethnographic inquiry with three organisations involved in marketing ideas provided a basis for addressing this question. Specifically, the research findings suggest the conceptual domain of ideas can be summarised through five descriptors: immateriality, interminability, omnipresence, transferability and *Weltanschauung*.

- *Immateriality* concerns the extreme intangibility of ideas. There are no physical properties associated with an idea – in terms of production, exchange or consumption. Ideas are perceived as largely irrelevant in the eyes of consumers.
- *Interminability* regards the temporal properties of ideas, namely, their timeless and endless nature.
- The spatial properties of ideas are described through *omnipresence* – ideas belong to the metaphysical realm, accessible to everyone, anywhere, rather than being tied solely to one individual or organisation.
- *Transferability* concerns the portable and viral nature of ideas.
- The essential character of ideas however lies in the term *Weltanschauung*. *Weltanschauung* describes the philosophical, fundamental shift in a person's world outlook required in the process of consuming an idea.

Each of these five characteristics distinguishes ideas from both goods and services. In some cases, such as immateriality, this distinction is relative. However other characteristics, such as omnipresence, are unique to ideas.

Ideas have closer ties to social products than goods or services. Ideas and social products embody similarities in terms of their omnipresent and transferable character. However, differences such as relative immateriality, the conclusive nature of social marketing campaigns, as well as the shift in Weltanschauung versus specific behavioural change, indicates ideas and social products are not synonymous.

These findings however are constrained to the specific idea offerings investigated – non-discrimination against people with mental illness, peace and Buddhism. The evidence provided in the research findings and analyses suggest that these ideas are different from goods, services and social products. Further investigation of other idea offerings is encouraged, since this research suggests ideas marketing is a unique sub-field of the marketing discipline.

The implications of this research for the marketing discipline are both conceptual and theoretical. Conceptually, this research highlights the need to semantically distinguish idea offerings from ideas that are connected to other aspects of marketing activities. These conceptual implications are outlined below. Theoretically, the research findings raise questions regarding the exchange paradigm as justification for including ideas within marketing's domain. In questioning this theoretical basis, a proposition is made: that ideas are situated on the edge of marketing.

10.3 Conceptual implications

The word “idea” has a great richness and diversity of meaning. This leads to considerable ambiguity when it is used in marketing literature, as well as

everyday conversations. “Idea” can refer to the creative input of an organisation. “Idea” relates to the first stage in the new product development process. “Ideas” also form the basis of advertising campaigns. Each of these uses relate to the application of ideas to marketing principles. In contrast, this inquiry concerns the application of marketing principles to ideas.

The conceptual domain of ideas laid down in this inquiry helps distinguish idea offerings from other uses of the term. Idea offerings are those products that exhibit characteristics of immateriality, interminability, omnipresence, transferability and *Weltanschauung*. An outcome of this inquiry is the suggestion that the term “idea” should be limited to a type of product which displays these characteristics. Other applications of idea should be accompanied by a qualifying word to clarify the sense in which it is being used. For example, ideas underlying advertising campaigns could be referred to as “advertising ideas”; new product development: “idea generation”; and creative inputs: “creative ideas”. As a marketing term, “idea” should be reserved for idea offerings, as a type of product distinguishable from goods, services and social products.

The conceptual domain of ideas provides the necessary definitional basis for determining what products should be labelled ideas. The inclusion of family planning organisations under the “concept sector” for example is questionable (see for e.g., El-Ansary and Kramer, 1973). The concept of family planning is not interminable. There is a specifically identifiable conclusion to this idea (i.e. pregnancy or infertility). Consuming the concept of family planning affects specific, measurable behaviour. It does not affect the broader world outlook of the consumer. In these ways, family planning falls more in line with social marketing, than ideas marketing.

Other products listed as “idea” in Fine’s (1981) typology are also debatable. Seat belt use for example is more closely linked to social marketing, while

value of education deals with “advertising ideas” rather than an idea offering. Similarly, Fine’s (1981) categorisation of “a fashion design” as being a profit-making idea is disputable. “Fashion design” again concerns the idea underlying a good (i.e. “creative ideas” or “idea generation”), since the design is generated into a specific tangible garment.

As stated in the Chapter Three, Fine’s (1981; 1990) work on idea offerings is admirable in that it provided a launching pad for this study. However, his categorisation of ideas, such as the examples above is limited, which in turn limits its application towards the formation of a general theory on idea offerings. It would appear that Fine (1981; 1990) attempted to provide guidance on marketing ideas (as well as social products), without firstly understanding and conceptualising the inherent characteristics of these offerings. This thesis investigates a prior phase. It attempts to establish the conceptual domain of ideas, from which marketing implications can then be postulated. Such implications are outlined below.

10.4 Theoretical implications

This section marks a deviation from the path taken by services marketing pioneers during their process of distinguishing services from goods. Upon identifying the characteristics of services, services marketing pioneers subsequently considered the marketing implications (see for example, Groenroos, 1982; Sasser, 1976; Shostack, 1982; Zeithaml, Parasuraman & Berry, 1985). These marketing implications were largely practical in nature – aimed at satisfying the industry demand for knowledge about services marketing. For example, scholars postulated that the perishability of services created particular implications for managing demand and supply (Sasser, 1976; Shostack, 1977). Papers produced during the “scurrying

about stage” focused on providing practical solutions to such challenges – for example, manipulating supply factors such as staffing resources to compensate for demand fluctuations (Sasser, 1976).

As outlined in Chapter Four, the development of the services marketing sub-field occurred largely in response to industry demand. It is therefore understandable that scholars moved quickly towards providing guidance for service practitioners on marketing their intangible products. Berry and Parasuraman’s (1993) *Model of Forces Influencing the Development of the Services Marketing Field* may therefore be appropriate for services marketing, which appeared to develop in a more linear fashion. But this model is less applicable for the development of the ideas marketing sub-field. For example, Fine’s (1981; 1990) work on ideas was largely practical in nature. It dealt more with knowledge utilization – the final step in Berry and Parasuraman’s (1993) model. A criticism of Fine’s (1981; 1990) work is that it lacked clear conceptual underpinnings – a gap that this thesis aims to now fill. From a macro perspective, the development of ideas marketing therefore appears more erratic than linear. In the context of ideas, Berry and Parasuraman’s (1993) model appears useful in theory, but is limited in practice.

Having laid the conceptual domain for ideas, practical advice for those involved in marketing ideas would now be useful to develop. Issues may arise towards the appropriateness of traditional marketing models, such as the Four Ps when applied to immaterial, interminable, omnipresent, and transferable products, which are aimed towards shifting a person’s Weltanschauung. Questions already prevail regarding the marketing mix. For example, Van Waterschoot and Van den Bulte (1992, p. 85) recognise three flaws to the Four Ps model:

The properties or characteristics that are the basis for classification have not been identified. The categories are not mutually exclusive. There is a catch-all subcategory that is continually growing.

Such flaws may be accentuated with the complex qualities of ideas. For example, the variables of product and place are somewhat distorted. Ideas are inherently immaterial and omnipresent. There is no clearly defined product or place. Indeed, the absence of 'place' is inherent to the product itself. Furthermore, marketing-related phenomena – such as the significance of reputation because of the omnipresence of ideas – are not given specific priority as a variable within the standard marketing mix. Yet reputation is an essential ingredient for the effective marketing of an idea. As suggested by Gronroos (1997), rather than simply adding dimensions to the standard marketing mix, the model itself may need to “lose its position” (Gronroos, 1997, p. 322), and allow new approaches to emerge. This sediment appears particularly relevant for ideas marketing.

Further research on the implications of this thesis for marketing ideas would be welcomed. Specifically, interest may lie in such marketing issues as: the difficulty of assessing the effectiveness of marketing strategies, the distant time-horizons inherent to marketing ideas, the mass marketing approach to professing ideas, and the complex nature of the exchange and consumption process. Some existing marketing theory may assist in this process. For example, marketing strategies such as materialising the offering through activities such as events, publications and guest speakers are identifiable in services marketing theory. Services marketing has long advocated the need to tangibilise intangible offerings (George & Berry, 1981; Rushton & Carson, 1985)⁵⁴. In terms of tangible dimensions, ideas differ in relative

⁵⁴ In the same way that ideas should be tangibilised because of their extremely intangible nature, idea marketers should also consider the secondary definition of immateriality – the

terms – they can be situated on an extended tangible-intangible continuum. The long term marketing perspective of idea organisations is similar to the approach taken by social marketers.

In particular, the nature of production, exchange and consumption of ideas raises fundamental theoretical issues worthy of attention. Ideas are inherently omnipresent – there is no specific production process, since they subsist solely in the metaphysical realm. There is no clearly identifiable exchange – consumers can access ideas anywhere, with no direct interaction with the marketing party. There is no conclusion to ideas – no measurable point that completes the transaction or the consumption (interminability). Such findings raise questions about whether ideas are marketable entities, or whether they lie beyond marketing's domain.

Previous work on the marketing of ideas has used the exchange paradigm as justification for including ideas within the bounds of marketing (Bagozzi, 1975; Kotler, 1972; White, 1986; Whyte, 1985). Whyte (1985) for example addressed the question “can brotherhood be marketed like soap?” in stating, “if marketing is viewed as the creation of products of sufficient value to bring about a freely entered into mutually satisfying exchange, then I would suggest the answer might be yes” (p. 29). Bagozzi (1975) argues, “the exchange concept is the key factor in understanding the expanding role of marketing” (p. 32), and points specifically to social marketing as being a subset of the generic concept of marketing since “it deals with the creation and resolution of exchanges in social relationships” (p. 39). Similarly, Kotler's (1972) generic view of marketing, which encapsulates non-traditional products including ideas, is based on exchange theory⁵⁵.

issue of non-relevance. Materialising an idea concerns not only adding tangible dimensions to the offering, but also making the idea relevant.

⁵⁵ The importance of the generic concept of marketing can be seen in its periodical republication, most recently in 1998. (Kotler, 1998)

Kotler's (1972) generic concept of marketing specifically describes marketing exchange through four axioms of marketing, including:

- Axiom 1: Marketing involves two or more social units, each consisting of one or more human actors
- Axiom 2: At least one of the social units is seeking a specific response from one or more other units concerning some social object
- Axiom 3: The market's response probability is not fixed
- Axiom 4: Marketing is the attempt to produce the desired response by creating and offering values to the market.

These axioms specify there are at least two parties, in an asymmetrical relationship: the marketer and the market. An offer of value (e.g. an idea) is situated between these parties. Value is "defined subjectively from the market's point of view" (Kotler, 1972, p. 50). The marketer facilitates the exchange of value by "altering the accessibility of the object" (Kotler, 1972, p. 50).

Considering ideas against these four axioms indicates that in the context of ideas, exchange takes an unconventional form. Axiom 1 states marketing involves two or more social units. For ideas, there are indeed two or more social units, for example, the Peace Foundation and a potential consumer of peace. The exchange of idea appears consistent with Axiom 1.

With ideas, the specific response sought (Axiom 2) however is unclear. The point at which an idea consumer responds to the idea, for example, "buying into" the idea of peace, is ambiguous. While Kotler's (1972) framework allows for long-term responses from the market, for ideas this response may

be infinitely long term. There is no clearly identifiable conclusion to an idea such as peace.

Consistent with Axiom 3, the market's response probability to the idea is not fixed. The Peace Foundation does not know if any potential consumer is likely to embrace the idea of peace. Indeed, the perceived irrelevance of ideas suggests consumer response is likely to be negligible. This axiom therefore aligns ideas with Kotler's generic concept of marketing.

Ideas marketing becomes ambiguous however with regard to Axiom 4. Axiom 4 concerns attempts to produce the desired response by creating and offering values to the market. Such attempts are vague in the context of ideas. What constitutes value, and the degree of accessibility is particularly unclear.

In terms of value, Kotler's (1972) model suggests a marketer should identify what the market would perceive as valuable, and then create an offering that meets and augments that value. Ideas however do not need to be created. They are not produced in response to market needs, because they exist beyond the physical plane.

Ideas are also perceived as inherently immaterial (as in non-relevant) in the eyes of the public. Respondents' comments suggest the weak definitional capabilities of ideas, as well as their highly intangible nature, suggest that researching the market to determine customer needs, or what is perceived as valuable, would be largely ineffectual. It is unclear whether or not this is accurate. Market research may still be useful when marketing ideas. However, this perceived irrelevance of ideas suggests "value" may not be clearly defined. The research findings further indicate that the case organisations intrinsically value their idea. Even if it were possible to accurately research the market, the market response may still be largely

ignored. The Peace Foundation continues to market peace, even when the market perceives peace as an irrelevant and valueless idea. In these ways, how value is defined for ideas is unusual.

Kotler's (1972) model presupposes that the marketer has the ability to alter the accessibility of the object. Ideas however are inherently omnipresent – meaning they are completely available anywhere at anytime. Although available, people have not necessarily accessed the ideas. The Peace Foundation's objective is to make peace accessible, in the sense of the market accepting the relevance of peace and embracing the idea. But, they do not produce nor distribute peace; it exists beyond any specific production processes. They cannot increase or decrease the availability of peace.

In relation to Kotler's (1972) generic concept of marketing, the nature of ideas therefore creates some discrepancies. While ideas align with Axioms 1 and 3, the applicability of Axioms 2 and 4 is ambiguous. This implies that Kotler's interpretation of the exchange paradigm may not be the most suitable model for framing the production, distribution or consumption of ideas. Interestingly however, previous work on exchange theory may be more suitable – specifically, the work of Alderson and Cox (1948).

As outlined in Chapter Three, Alderson's (1948) Law of Exchange can be stated in symbolic form as:

$$\begin{aligned}
 &x \neq y \text{ (} x \in A_1 \text{ and } y \in A_2\text{),} \\
 &P(A_1 - x + y) > P(A_2), \\
 &\text{and} \\
 &P(A_2 + x - y) > P(A_1);
 \end{aligned}$$

where

$$\begin{aligned}
 &x \stackrel{\Omega}{\sim} y \text{ means } x \text{ is exchangeable for } y, \\
 &x \neq y \text{ means } x \text{ is different from } y, \\
 &x \in A_1 \text{ means } x \text{ is an element of } A_1, \\
 &P(A_1) \text{ means the potency of } A_1
 \end{aligned}$$

In essence, this calculation provides the conditions upon which exchange relationships can be formed. This law of exchange is limited however to transactions, as opposed to transvections. Alderson and Martin (1965) furthered their work on exchange in suggesting that marketing exchange can be seen as a sequence of sorts and transformations. This sequence is described by Alderson and Martin (1965) as a transvection. In their words, a transvection refers to,

a single unit of action of the marketing system. This unit of action is consummated when an end product is placed in the hands of the ultimate consumer, but the transvection comprises all prior action necessary to produce this final result, going all the way back to conglomerate resources (Alderson and Martin, 1965, p. 123).

Symbolically, the marketing process is shown as:

$$O(C) = \sum_{t_0 \rightarrow t_1}^u \Delta (A_1, A_2, \dots, A_x, W),$$

where

C means conglomerate,

$O(C)$ means the marketing operation performed $t_0 \rightarrow t_1$ on C during the time period t_0 to t_1 ,

$\Delta (A_1)$ means the increment in assortment A_1 during time period $t_0 \rightarrow t_1$ t_0 to t_1 ,

W means waste

This description of exchange, which takes into account the unfolding marketing process through a series of transformations, seems more akin to the exchange process for ideas. The transferability characteristic – which occurs as a result of the immaterial, interminable and omnipresent state of

ideas – describes this viral nature of ideas. Ideas can be passed from one person to another, without any loss to the original consumer. The person that consumes the idea of peace, for example, may be far removed from the Peace Foundation, and indeed have no direct contact with this “conglomerate”. However, the work of the Peace Foundation informs that viral process – the marketing of peace continues to filter from one person to another.

Alderson and Martin (1965) further consider the optimal number of steps in a transaction, suggesting “a transvection has the optimal number of steps if costs cannot be decreased, either by increasing or decreasing the number of steps” (p. 124). This aspect of Alderson and Martin’s (1965) theory deviates from the nature of exchange for ideas. As demonstrated by the interminability characteristic, the exchange and consumption process for ideas appears infinite. No specific number of steps could conceivably be determined. Despite the variation, Alderson’s (1965) Law of Exchange is worthy of consideration in furthering our understanding of the complex nature of production, exchange and consumption in the context of ideas.

This discussion on the nature of exchange in the context of ideas raises issues regarding the domain of marketing. As explained in Chapter Three, exchange theory is part of the foundation of contemporary marketing thought. Some aspects of exchange theory align well with ideas (e.g. Alderson and Martin’s 1965 transvections construct, as well as some aspects of Kotler’s 1972 generic concept of marketing), while other parts of exchange theory appear less applicable. For example, exchange theory presupposes that each party involved in the transaction has a desire for something held by the other party. For ideas, this does not necessarily hold true. Idea consumers question the relevance of peace for example. The development of exchange theory to relational exchange is also questionable. Idea consumers may have no expectation or desire for an ongoing

relationship, and indeed their dramatically changed world view may reduce their need for an ongoing relationship.

This mix of incongruity and applicability of marketing theory imply ideas are positioned on the edge of marketing's domain. Beyond this edge is the broader field of communication; within the boundary lie other marketable products including goods, services and social products. Ideas straddle these fields, and could conceivably draw on both marketing and communication theory to provide theoretical direction and understanding. Thus, ideas as a product type, may be positioned not only alongside goods and services (therefore supporting the revised AMA definition of marketing), but also occupy a border position where marketing ends, and the broader field of communication begins.

10.5 Future Research Implications

This inquiry was located within three organisations – with a particular focus on the Peace Foundation. Further idea organisations warrant investigating to consolidate the research findings. For example, an identifiable characteristic of ideas in this study is their omnipresent nature. Omnipresence was initially considered in response to the religious-like terminology of respondents. Such religious connotations inherent to this inquiry may hold lesser relevance in the context of other idea offerings. Similarly, *Weltanschauung* emerged as a characteristic of the ideas studied. Whether all ideas operate at this world-view level would need to be clarified by testing this notion with other idea offerings. *Weltanschauung* may indicate a particular distinction between ideas and social products. Social products are more behaviourally based, focusing on a specific attitude or behaviour regarding a social message (e.g., stop smoking, don't drink and drive and so on).

Comparatively, and with an eye on Plato's interpretation of ideas, idea offerings may be limited to those products which concern a way of looking at the world. Overall, this thesis has built a theory of ideas that is context bound. If other cases were selected for this inquiry, different findings might have emerged. The extent of this can only be known by taking the findings in this thesis to a broader context and deductively investigating the proposed characteristics of ideas to test their generability.

The case organisations involved in this inquiry were non-profit oriented. Fine's (1981) typology categorises ideas as being the products of both profit oriented and non-profit oriented organisations. Researching a profit-oriented idea may further add to the body of knowledge on ideas marketing. As mentioned on page 231 however, some products listed as profit-orientated ideas, for example a fashion design, are disputable.

These two limitations regard the "supply side" view of the ideas inherent to this study. Respondents in this study were limited to those involved in marketing ideas, rather than idea consumers. This approach was in accordance with services marketing advice, as well as practical constraints. However, some insights emerged regarding idea consumption, as perceived from the organisation's perspective. These perceptions should be clarified by conducting specific research with idea consumers.

Taking the characteristics of ideas identified in this study into the consumer realm could help clarify particular consumption issues – for example, the difficulty idea consumers face in understanding the offering may be due to mental intangibility. In particular, consumer behaviour literature may help inform such research. For example, the construct of involvement, which is regarded as a primary determinant of consumer behaviour, may clarify the *Weltanschauung* characteristic of ideas. Involvement relates both to the organisation in terms of the degree the products themselves may be

inherently more or less involving (product-centred view), as well as the degree of consumer involvement (see for e.g. Broderick & Mueller, 1999; Gabbot & Hogg, 1999). For ideas such as peace, high involvement on behalf of both the organisation and prospective consumers appears evident.

A further consumer behaviour construct worthy of consideration is the notion of learning. Sinkula, Baker and Noordewier (1997), suggest “a more positive learning orientation will directly result in increased market information generation and dissemination” (p. 305). This links directly to the evolutionary nature of ideas. As ideas unfold and develop, learning is required for both the organisation marketing the idea, as well as the consumer. This creates specific marketing implications, suggesting the need to develop a two-way communication flow between the organisation and consumer. This research also suggests a high degree of learning is required of an idea consumer. The role of education as part of the idea marketing strategies was evident. Idea consumers did not appear to understand the product on offer, and needed to learn what peace entailed for example, before committing to this idea.

One further consideration is the notion that consuming an idea is essentially about adopting a particular value system. Is the Peace Foundation simply marketing a moral value? What constitutes a value, and how this differs from an idea, was not an objective of this thesis, but could be explored further with idea consumers. The emergence of *Weltanschauung* in particular suggests values – which appear related to how one views the world – are a particular consumer behaviour construct that may be relevant to idea offering.

Each of these constructs – involvement, learning, and values – may help inform further research on idea consumers. Research on each of these areas

is extensive within consumer behaviour literature, and could be drawn on for future studies.

Future research should also specifically investigate how ideas are exchanged, including how ideas are created, stimulated, facilitated and valued (Kotler, 1972). Alderson and Martin's (1965) Law of Exchange in particular may guide further research in this area. Furthermore, the exchange paradigm as the basis of marketing appears unclear in the context of ideas. Exchange may not be the most appropriate way to describe the relationship between idea organisations and their consumers. Alternative theories, such as the viral metaphor suggested in memetic theory, may more accurately explain the process underlying the transfer of ideas.

In light of the inapplicability of some marketing exchange theory to ideas, specific marketing terminology – in particular producer and exchange – may need to be developed. Rather than speaking of idea organisations such as The Peace Foundation as producers, the term mediator or facilitator may be more appropriate. Rather than consume an idea, a person may embrace an ideology. Rather than idea consumer, perhaps a person is an idea believer or idea follower. Such terminology could be explored further with those that adopt ideas such as peace or Buddhism.

This inquiry considered ideas relative to goods, services and social products. Goods and services were considered because of their inclusion in the revised AMA definition of marketing. Social products were considered because of their specific mention in ideas marketing literature (e.g. Fine, 1981; Webber, 1998). Ideas were not compared with organisations or persons, nor issues and causes (as types of products). Further research may look at conducting a similar analysis as this inquiry, but specifically investigating ideas relative to these other product types.

This inquiry found a qualitative approach is appropriate for examining ideas. The research findings indicated that other investigative approaches – particularly quantitative measures – proved ineffectual in the context of ideas. Ideas are inherently immeasurable constructs. Future research may therefore consider adopting a similar qualitative method when researching idea offerings. Nevertheless, this thesis provides some theoretical framework which can now be tested in the field. A more deductive approach to studying ideas may now be possible.

The years ahead mark an exciting time for the demonstrably unique subfield of ideas marketing. The conceptual domain of ideas outlined in this thesis offers the necessary understanding of ideas, and how they differ from goods, services and social products. In doing so, this thesis provides the foundation to move ideas marketing from the “crawling out” stage to the “scurrying about” stage. As with the burgeoning days in services marketing, it is hoped that research on ideas marketing will now proliferate, and its potentially unique place on the edge of marketing’s domain will be further explored.

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PROJECT INFORMATION SHEET

Understanding Marketing Strategies for 'Non-Traditional' Products

1. Who are the researchers and how can they be contacted?

Suzette Major is conducting this research as part of her PhD study under the Department of Marketing and International Management, University of Waikato, Hamilton. Two lecturers within that department are supervising this study: Dr. Carolyn Costley and Dr. Lorraine Friend.

All enquiries regarding this work should be directed to Suzette. She can be contacted as follows:

2 Church Road, RD 1, Cambridge

Ph: (07) 827 8667

Email: suzi@waikato.ac.nz

or

c/- Department of Marketing and International Management

University of Waikato, Private Bag 3105, Hamilton

Ph: (07) 856 2889, ext 6273; Fax: (07) 838 4352

2. What is the study about?

The research involves exploring how various 'non-traditional' products are marketed. For the purposes of this project, marketing is defined in terms of any activity involving the product and consumer, including the conception, pricing, distribution and promotion of the product. Marketing addresses such issues as how an organisation lets people know about a product, what meanings and benefits that product holds, how it is made available and how its value is determined.

The specific products I am investigating include religion, academia, art, fundraising and social products such as road safety and mental health. In each of these cases I am interested in finding out what marketing techniques are currently being employed. The data collected will be compared across these various products. This comparison will be made in order to better understand the nature of non-traditional products and how this affects the marketing of them.

3. How will I collect this data?

The data needed for this study will be collected across five different companies using a variety of sources. These include 'participant observation', interviewing, review of company documentation and photography.

Participant observation

The type of research I am conducting is known as 'fieldwork, employing participant observation'. This simply means I wish to visit your organisation to observe the day-to-day activities involved in putting together a marketing campaign. These visits are likely to be for approximately 2-3 hours at a time, 2-3 days per week for 2-3 months. During these visits, I will endeavour not to interrupt the daily routine, but rather will watch and perhaps participate in the various activities in order to learn from those involved in designing the marketing strategies for your product.

Interviews

Occasionally I will be interested in speaking with key people involved in the marketing campaign in more depth. I will approach such people and request a private one-on-one interview. These interviews are likely to take 1-2 hours. Interviews will be electronically recorded and later transcribed.

Company documentation

Material from within the company that would be beneficial for this study may also be investigated. This may include memos, minutes from meetings and promotional material (e.g. brochures). Such material will be

reviewed in order to better understand the marketing strategies employed in this company. This material will only be reviewed upon receipt of informed consent as specified in point 5 below.

Photography

On occasion, researchers photograph key images such as product launchers that are worth documenting. These still photographs are taken to help remind the researcher what occurred in a particular situation. Photographers would only be taken in accordance to the confidentiality clause outlined in point 5 below.

4. How will this information from observations, interviews, company documentation and photography be used?

The findings from this study will be written up in the Ph.D. thesis. Papers based on this Ph.D. study will also be written and submitted for publication in marketing academic journals.

Since this research is not a case study of the firm, but rather focuses on the marketing techniques employed across a range of non-traditional products, it is unlikely that a specific company's name will be used in these publications. At no time will any specific individual be mentioned.

5. What degree and kind of confidentiality and anonymity is provided to yourself and your firm?

During such research, utmost in the researcher's mind is the importance of confidentiality and anonymity. Any staff on site will be told that their involvement in the research is strictly voluntary. While I will be observing and recording daily activities of individuals, I will not use any specific data relating to that individual without their written consent. The identity of any specific individuals will remain anonymous. All information gathered during this research will be treated as strictly confidential. Any people who agreed to take part in this study will be told of their rights as a participant. These include:

- The right to refuse to answer any particular question
- The right to refuse the use of any data specifically concerning their activities
- The right to ask any further questions about the study
- The right to privacy and anonymity

The information I will collect will be in the form of notes taken during and after each visit and transcriptions of recorded interviews. This information will be securely filed at the Department of Marketing and International Management, University of Waikato during the research process. Access to these files will be restricted to myself and my two research supervisors. These field notes and interview transcriptions will be coded to ensure no possible link can be made back to a specific individual. Once the data collection stage is complete (in approximately 18 months time), all identifying material including tapes and photographs of specific individuals will be destroyed. Any material that remains, for example the field notes and interview transcriptions, will be coded and will only be accessible by prior written consent from myself and the company involved.

Right to review and approve

During the process of observing and interviewing participants and reviewing appropriate company documentation, I will be continually analysing the data. This analysis will be made available to all staff for their general perusal, to confirm research findings and to clarify any misinterpretations. At all times, all participants have the opportunity to review and approve any material I am collecting and any of the research findings.

6. What are the incentives for you to be involved in this study?

It is hoped that this research will shed some light on the specific issues involved in designing marketing strategies for products such as yours. The process of reflecting upon how you put this marketing campaign together may be beneficial not only for your firm, but for anyone engaged in marketing activities.

Once the research is complete across all five companies, a copy of the 'Summary of Research Findings' will be made available to all participants. At that stage I will also be willing to discuss the research findings and the implications for designing marketing strategies for such non-traditional products. This report and presentation may offer some new insights into marketing activities for your firm. Your input will be truly appreciated and respected.

PROJECT CONSENT FORM

I have read the Project Information Sheet for this study and have had the details of the study explained to me. My questions about the study have been answered to my satisfaction and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

I understand that Suzette Major will be observing the daily activities of this organisation in order to learn about designing marketing strategies for this product. This may involve interacting with staff, participating in meetings concerning marketing strategy, review company documentation, taking photographs and conducting private interviews with individual staff members.

I understand that all interaction with this firm will be treated as strictly confidential and Suzette will not use specific names of individual staff members without their written consent. I also understand that the review and analysis of our firm will be made available to all staff members to check for authenticity, accuracy and to clarify any misinterpretations.

I agree to allow Suzette Major to participate in this firm under the conditions set out in the Project Information Sheet.

Signed: _____

Name: _____

Company: _____

Job position: _____

Date: _____

RESERACHER'S NAME & CONTACT INFORMATION:

Suzette Major
 Department of Marketing and International Management
 University of Waikato
 Private Bag 3105
 Hamilton
 Tel: (07) 856 2889, ext 6273
 Email: suzi@waikato.ac.nz

**This research has been approved by the Waikato Management School
 Ethics Committee, University of Waikato**

DATA COLLECTION LOGBOOK

NB: Abbreviations are explained at the end of the logbook

DATE	WHO	VENUE	TYPE OF CONTACT	CASE	DATA NO.	REMARKS
9 June 1999	KR	WMS Dean's office	Interview	General – S&S	T-G1-KR	Meeting to discuss S&S and 'age of ideas'
8 June 2000	Ki101	HFA office, Penrose	Interview	Mental illness	T-1-Ki101-1	Initial meeting to negotiate entry
8 June 2000	Ki101		Fieldnotes	Mental illness	FN-1-Ki101-1	Observations from initial meeting
10 June 2000	D-1-1		Documentation - National Plan	Mental illness	D-1-Kis-1	Material sent by Ki101
26 June 2000	Ki301 Ki302	Ki302's home	Interview	Peace	T-3-Ki301-1	Initial meeting to negotiate entry
7 July 2000	Ki302	On site, private	Interview	Peace	T-3-Ki302-1	
7 July 2000	D-3-1 D-3-2		Documentation - brochures	Peace	D-3-Kis-1	Following interview, Ki302 provided brochures for PF & CS
7 July 2000	Ki301 Ki302		Fieldnotes	Peace	FN-3-Ki302-1	Tour of site by Ki302.
15 July 2000	Ki102	On site, private	Fieldnotes	Mental illness	FN-1-Ki102-1	Informal meeting with Ki102
18 July 2000	D-1-2 D-1-3		Documentation - Media pack and research	Mental illness	D-1-Kis-1	Material sent from Ki102
1 Aug 2000	D-3-3		Documentation - Marketing meeting minutes	Peace	D-3-Kis-1	Prior to marketing meeting, Ki302 emailed minutes of previous meetings
4 Aug 2000	Ki301	On site, private	Interview	Peace	T-3-Ki301-2	

4 Aug 2000	Ki303	On site, private	Interview	Peace	T-3-Ki303-1	
4 Aug 2000	Ki309		Fieldnotes	Peace	FN-Ki309-1	Met Ki09, initial comments
Aug 2000	D-3-17		Documentation - website pages	Peace	D-3-Kis-1	Downloaded website pages for Case 1
4 Aug 2000	Ki301 Ki302 Ki308 Ki309	On site, private	Meeting	Peace	T-3-Kis-1	Observation of marketing committee meeting
4 Aug 2000	D-3-9		Documentation - discussion paper	Peace	D-3-Kis-1	Discussion paper submitted at marketing meeting
4 Aug 2000	D-3-4 D-3-5 D-3-6 D-3-7 D-3-8		Documentation - Info from ChCh office	Peace	D-3-Kis-1	Ki303 provided information re the DSC in ChCh
8 Aug 2000	D-1-4 D-1-5		Documentation - Research material	Mental illness	D-1-Kis-1	Research papers sent by Ki101
11-12 Aug 2000	All	Quakers House, Mt Eden	Fieldnotes	Peace	FN-Kis-2a FN-Kis-2b FN-Kis-3-1 FN-Kis-3-2	Observation at 2-day strategic planning meeting. Minutes taken.
12 Aug 2000	Ki301 Ki302 Ki309 Ki312 Ki316 Ki317 Ki318	Quakers House, Mt Eden	Meeting	Peace	T-3-Kis-3	Youth and marketing interest groups meeting, held during strategic planning day
12 Aug 2000	D-3-10		Documentation - brochure	Peace	D-3-Kis-1	Partners in Peacemaking brochure provided at strategic planning meeting
14 Aug 2000	D-3-11		Documentation - Popularising peace paper	Peace	D-3-Kis-1	Email from Ki309 following marketing meeting

19 Aug 2000	Ki317 Ki318	On site, private	Meeting	Peace	T-3-Kis-4	Meeting to discuss marketing of Inspire concert
19 Aug 2000	D-3-12		Documentation - Peace Boat	Peace	D-3-Kis-1	Peace Boat info provided during meeting
31 Aug 2000	Ki101	Café, Akld	Interview	Mental illness	T-1-Ki101-2	
1-2 Sept 2000			Fieldnotes	Peace	FN-3-Ki302-2	As requested by Ki302, followed up press release for Great Peace Debate, by contacting media
8 Sept 2000	Ki302	Outside	Fieldnotes	Peace	FN-3-Ki302-3	Informal conversation prior to marketing meeting
8 Sept 2000	Ki301 Ki302 Ki308 Ki309	On site, private	Meeting	Peace	T-3-Kis-5	Observation of marketing committee meeting
8 Sept 2000	Ki301 Ki302 Ki308 Ki309		Fieldnotes	Peace	FN-Kis5-1	Minutes of marketing meeting
8 Sept 2000	D-3-13		Documentation - Great Peace Debate	Peace	D-3-Kis-1	Promotional material provided by Ki302
8 Sept 2000	All	Akld	Fieldnotes	Peace	FN-3-Kis-8-1	Attendance at the Great Peace Debate
15 Sept 2000	Ki308	On site, private	Interview	Peace	T-3-Ki308-1	
15 Sept 2000	Ki301	On site, private	Interview	Peace	T-1-Ki301-3	
26 Sept 2000			News item - Peace Boat arrival	Peace		Recorded. One Network News, 6pm, TV1
27 Sept 2000	D-3-14		Documentation - Inspire postcard	Peace	D-3-Kis-1	Promotional material for Inspire

17-19 Oct 2000			Fieldnotes	Peace	FN-Ki317-1	As requested by Ki317, followed up on contacts made at Inspire
24 Oct 2000	Ki302	On site, private	Interview	Peace	T-3-Ki302-2	
24 Oct 2000	D-3-16		Documentation Creative strategy paper	Peace	D-3-Kis-1	Paper submitted by Daswoods re Case 1's brand
25 Oct 2000	Ki308	On site, private	Interview	Peace	T-3-Ki308-2	
25 Oct 2000	Ki309	On site, private	Interview	Peace	T-3-Ki309-1	
25 Oct 2000	Ki308	Outside	Fieldnotes	Peace	FN-3-Ki308-1	Informal conversation, while wrapping up presents for the MPAs
17 Nov 2000	Ki304	St Mary's school	Fieldnotes	Peace	FN-3-Ki304-1	Observation at Cool Schools programme
23 Nov 2000	Ki304	On site, private	Interview	Peace	T-3-Ki304-1	
23 Nov 2000	D-3-18		Documentation - Cool Schools material	Peace	D-3-Kis-1	Newsletter x2 Handbook x3 CS material provided by Ki304
24 Nov 2000	All	Akld	Fieldnotes	Peace	FN-3-Kis-7-1	Attendance at the Media Peace Awards
30 Nov 2000	Ki309	Outside	Fieldnotes	Peace	FN-3-Ki309-1	Informal conversation prior to marketing meeting
30 Nov 2000	Ki301 Ki302 Ki308 Ki309	On site, private	Meeting	Peace	T-3-Kis-6	Observation of marketing committee meeting. Minutes taken.
30 Nov 2000	Ki301 Ki302 Ki308 Ki309		Fieldnotes	Peace	FN-Kis6-1	Minutes of marketing meeting
30 Jan 2001	D-3-22		Documentation - agenda, minutes	Peace	D-3-Kis-1	Agenda, notes and minutes from marketing meeting

19 Feb 2001	Ki101	On site, private	Interview	Mental illness	T-1-Ki101-3	
27 Feb 2001	Ki307	On site, private	Interview	Peace	T-3-Ki307-1	
27 Feb 2001	Ki309	On site, private	Interview	Peace	T-3-Ki309-2	
27 Feb 2001	D-3-23		Documentation - video	Peace	D-3-Kis-1	Media Peace Awards video
27 Feb 2001	D-3-21		Documentation - agenda, minutes	Peace	D-3-Kis-1	Agenda and minutes from council meeting
27 Feb 2001	Ki323	On site	Fieldnotes	Buddhism	FN-3-Ki323-1	Initial observations at Case 3
16 Mar 2001	D-3-20		Documentation - minutes	Peace	D-3-Kis-1	Brief minutes from marketing meeting (not attended)
19 Mar 2001	All	MOH, Wngt	Observation – debriefing meeting of entire team	Mental illness	FN-K-Kis-1a FN-1-Kis-1	Observation of debriefing meeting. Minutes taken
19 Mar 2001	D-1-6		Documentation - notes from debriefing meeting	Mental illness	D-1-Kis-1	Typed up for Case 1
27 Mar 2001	D-3-19		Documentation - Peaceworks newsletter	Peace	D-3-Kis-1	
27 Mar 2001	Ki323	On site, private	Interview	Buddhism	T-3-Ki323-1	
26 April 2001	D-3-34		Documentation - management report	Peace	D-3-Kis-1	
1 May 2001	D-3-31		Documentation - Flyer	Peace	D-3-Kis-1	Thanks not Spanks promotional material
1 May 2001	D-3-35 D-3-36 D-3-27 D-3-40		Documentation - from resource centre	Peace	D-3-Kis-1	Booklets from Case 1 resource centre
12 June 2001	Ki103	On site, private	Interview	Mental illness	T-1-Ki103-1	
12 June 2001	Ki323	On site, outside	Interview	Buddhism	T-3-Ki323-2	
16 June 2001	D-1-7		Documentation - workshop material	Mental illness	D-1-Kis-1	Workshop material sent by Ki103

26 June 2001	D-3-33	Documentation - minutes	Peace	D-3-Kis-1	Minutes of council meeting (not attended)
1 Sept 2001	D-3-38 D-3-39 D-3-26	Documentation - Peaceworks newsletters	Peace	D-3-Kis-1	Sent by Ki303
23 Oct 2001		Documentation - Minutes	Peace	D-3-Kis-1	Minutes from marketing meeting (not attended)
10 Nov 2001	D-3-28	Documentation - Newspaper clipping	Peace	D-3-Kis-1	Contributed to 'Not in our Name' protest in newspaper

Abbreviations

WMS: Waikato Management School, University of Waikato
 S&S: Saatchi and Saatchi
 HFA: Health Funding Authority
 PF: Peace Foundation
 CS: Cool Schools
 DSC: Disarmament Security Centre (Christchurch office, PF)
 ChCh: Christchurch
 Wngt: Wellington
 Akld: Auckland
 MPAs: Media Peace Awards
 MOH: Ministry of Health