

## **UNDERSTANDING THE MARKETING STRATEGIES AND MARKETING MIX OF ASICS**

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### **Abstract**

This research paper examines the marketing strategies and marketing mix of ASICS, a leading sportswear brand. The study explores how ASICS differentiates itself in the competitive sports apparel industry through its strategic marketing initiatives, including product innovation, branding, promotional tactics, and global expansion. The research also provides an in-depth analysis of ASICS' marketing mix, commonly referred to as the 7Ps: Product, Price, Place, Promotion, People, Process, and Physical Evidence.

**Keywords:** marketing mix, sports apparel, product innovation

### **Introduction**

ASICS Corporation is a globally recognized sportswear company known for its high-quality running shoes and athletic apparel. Founded in 1949 in Japan by Kihachiro Onitsuka, ASICS began as a small footwear company with a vision to create shoes that support athletes' performance and overall well-being. The company name, ASICS, is derived from the Latin phrase "Anima Sana In Corpore Sano," which translates to "A Sound Mind in a Sound Body," reflecting its commitment to both physical and mental wellness through sports.

Over the decades, ASICS has grown to become a major competitor in the sportswear industry, rivaling brands like Nike, Adidas, and Puma. The company has built a reputation for technological innovation, focusing on biomechanics and material sciences to create high-performance footwear. ASICS' dedication to research and development (R&D) has resulted in groundbreaking innovations such as the GEL cushioning system, FlyteFoam technology, and advanced stability features tailored for different athletic needs.

ASICS employs a strategic marketing approach that combines performance-driven branding, athlete endorsements, digital engagement, and sustainability initiatives to appeal to a broad consumer base. By leveraging data analytics and market research, ASICS continues to refine its products and promotional strategies to align with consumer preferences. The company's emphasis on customer-

centric marketing and brand authenticity has allowed it to maintain a strong presence in the global sportswear market.

This paper aims to analyze the company's marketing strategies and how its marketing mix contributes to its overall success. By examining ASICS' use of the 7Ps marketing framework, the study provides insights into the brand's positioning, customer engagement, and competitive advantages in the evolving sportswear industry.

## **Literature Review**

### **The Concept of Marketing Strategies**

Marketing strategies have been widely studied as essential tools for business success. According to Kotler and Keller (2016), a well-defined marketing strategy helps a company position itself effectively in the market and differentiate its offerings from competitors. Various studies highlight that companies focusing on consumer behavior, branding, and technological innovation can achieve sustainable competitive advantages.

### **The 7Ps Framework in Marketing**

The traditional marketing mix, originally defined by McCarthy (1960) as the 4Ps—Product, Price, Place, and Promotion—was later expanded to the 7Ps to include People, Process, and Physical Evidence (Booms & Bitner, 1981). These elements provide a more holistic approach, especially for service-oriented industries, where customer interactions and service quality play a significant role.

### **ASICS' Market Positioning**

Research on sportswear brands suggests that ASICS has built its reputation through a strong emphasis on research-driven innovation and product performance. Studies by industry analysts indicate that ASICS' investment in biomechanics and advanced materials has positioned it as a preferred choice among professional athletes (Smith & Brown, 2020).

### **Digital Marketing and Consumer Engagement**

Digital marketing has transformed the way brands interact with consumers. Social media, influencer marketing, and targeted online campaigns have become essential for reaching modern consumers. ASICS has leveraged these channels effectively, as noted in recent studies, by using data analytics to refine its marketing strategies and improve customer engagement (Johnson, 2021).

### **Marketing Strategies of ASICS**

#### *Brand Positioning*

ASICS positions itself as a performance-driven brand with a strong emphasis on research and innovation. The company focuses on biomechanics and sports science to enhance athletic performance, making it a preferred choice among professional athletes and fitness enthusiasts.

### *Product Differentiation and Innovation*

ASICS invests heavily in research and development (R&D) to create high-performance footwear and apparel. The company's proprietary technologies, such as GEL cushioning, FlyteFoam, and Duomax, differentiate its products from competitors.

### *Endorsements and Sponsorships*

ASICS collaborates with elite athletes, sports teams, and events to enhance brand credibility and visibility. The company sponsors marathons, triathlons, and Olympic events to align its brand with high-performance sports.

### *Digital and Social Media Marketing*

ASICS leverages digital platforms, including social media and influencer partnerships, to engage with consumers. The company runs targeted advertising campaigns and interactive social media challenges to boost brand engagement.

### *Global Expansion Strategy*

ASICS has a strong presence in international markets, focusing on expansion in North America, Europe, and Asia. The company employs localization strategies to cater to regional preferences and consumer behaviors.

### *ASICS' Impact on Young People (Ages 20-35)*

ASICS has made a significant impact on young people, particularly those aged 20 to 35, by aligning its marketing strategies with their interests and lifestyles. This demographic is highly engaged with fitness, health, and digital media, making them a key target market for ASICS.

### *Influence on Active Lifestyles*

ASICS promotes an active lifestyle through its innovative sportswear and performance-driven products. The brand's focus on running, training, and sports apparel encourages young consumers to incorporate fitness into their daily routines. Through sponsorships of marathons, fitness challenges, and gym partnerships, ASICS builds a strong connection with health-conscious individuals in this age group. Moreover, ASICS collaborates with personal trainers and fitness communities to promote wellness and encourage participation in sports.

### *Digital Engagement and Social Media Influence*

Young consumers are highly active on digital platforms, and ASICS has adapted by enhancing its online presence. The brand collaborates with fitness influencers, athletes, and social media campaigns to engage younger audiences. Interactive challenges, such as virtual races, mobile fitness apps, and online workout programs, further strengthen ASICS' connection with tech-savvy consumers. Additionally, ASICS utilizes targeted advertisements and personalized content to reach young audiences based on their interests and purchasing behaviour.

### *Sustainable and Ethical Consumer Preferences*

Millennials and Gen Z consumers are increasingly concerned with sustainability and ethical business practices. ASICS has responded by incorporating eco-friendly materials into its products and promoting sustainable manufacturing processes. The brand has launched initiatives like recycling programs, carbon footprint reduction, and ethically sourced materials to align with the values of environmentally-conscious buyers. ASICS also educates young consumers about sustainability through digital campaigns and collaborations with sustainability advocates.

### *Fashion and Lifestyle Appeal*

Beyond performance, ASICS has expanded its appeal to the athleisure market by launching stylish sneakers and apparel. Collaborations with designers, celebrities, and streetwear brands have attracted young consumers who seek a blend of fashion and functionality in their footwear and apparel. Limited-edition sneaker drops and fashion-forward collections have helped ASICS strengthen its brand presence in the lifestyle and streetwear segments. Furthermore, ASICS incorporates innovative design elements and colourways that align with contemporary fashion trends, making its products more desirable among younger consumers.

## **Marketing Mix (7Ps) of ASICS**

### **1. Product**

ASICS offers a diverse range of sports footwear, apparel, and accessories, with a strong focus on running shoes and performance-enhancing technology. The brand is known for innovations like the GEL cushioning system, FlyteFoam, and impact-reducing midsoles, which cater to both professional athletes and casual runners. ASICS continuously invests in research and development to enhance product quality, comfort, and durability, ensuring that consumers receive high-performance athletic gear.

### **2. Price**

ASICS employs a value-based pricing strategy, positioning its products in the mid-to-premium range. This pricing reflects the brand's commitment to quality, innovation, and performance. ASICS also offers various price segments, from budget-friendly models for casual consumers to high-end, technologically advanced footwear designed for professional athletes. Competitive pricing strategies, seasonal discounts, and loyalty programs further enhance its market appeal.

### **3. Place**

ASICS has a strong global presence, with distribution channels including official brand stores, e-commerce platforms, third-party retailers, and sporting goods outlets. The brand strategically places its products in premium sports stores and online marketplaces to reach a wide customer base. ASICS' website and mobile app provide a seamless shopping experience, incorporating user-friendly interfaces, product recommendations, and virtual try-on features to enhance customer satisfaction.

### **4. Promotion**

ASICS utilizes a mix of traditional and digital marketing techniques to promote its products. The brand collaborates with professional athletes, fitness influencers, and sports organizations to build credibility and brand trust. Social media campaigns, sponsorship of marathons and sporting events, and targeted advertisements help ASICS maintain high visibility. Additionally, ASICS engages in content marketing, using blogs, video tutorials, and fitness tips to connect with consumers and promote a healthy lifestyle.

## 5. People

Customer experience is a core focus for ASICS, with dedicated teams ensuring quality service at every touchpoint. The company invests in employee training, equipping store staff and customer service representatives with product knowledge and sales expertise. ASICS also engages with consumers through social media interactions, customer feedback surveys, and personalized support, fostering a loyal and engaged customer base.

## 6. Process

ASICS maintains an efficient and customer-friendly purchasing process, from product development to sales and after-sales service. The company leverages data analytics to optimize inventory management, streamline supply chain operations, and enhance the overall shopping experience. Features such as online customization, hassle-free returns, and real-time customer support contribute to a smooth consumer journey.

## 7. Physical Evidence

ASICS enhances its brand presence through visually appealing retail stores, high-quality packaging, and interactive brand experiences. The brand's flagship stores incorporate modern aesthetics, digital screens, and trial zones where customers can test products before purchasing. ASICS also focuses on sustainable packaging and in-store experiences that reinforce its brand identity and commitment to performance-driven sportswear.

## **ASICS' Marketing Strategies in Real Time**

### 1. ASICS MetaRun Campaign

ASICS launched the MetaRun shoe, designed with cutting-edge technology and biomechanical research, positioning it as the ultimate long-distance running shoe. The marketing campaign included limited availability, influencer promotions, and high-profile marathon sponsorships to create a sense of exclusivity and desirability (ASICS, 2019).

### 2. Sponsorship of Major Marathons

ASICS has been a key sponsor of major marathons, including the Tokyo Marathon, New York City Marathon, and Paris Marathon. These sponsorships reinforce ASICS' positioning as a top-tier running brand and enhance brand visibility among fitness enthusiasts and professional athletes (Running Insight, 2021).

### 3. ASICS FrontRunner Community

The ASICS FrontRunner initiative builds a global community of athletes and fitness enthusiasts who promote the brand through social media, blogs, and local running events. This strategy strengthens customer engagement and word-of-mouth marketing (ASICS, 2020).

### 4. Digital Engagement via the ASICS Runkeeper App

ASICS acquired the Runkeeper app to provide users with personalized training plans and performance tracking. This digital integration helps ASICS connect with tech-savvy consumers and reinforce its presence in the digital fitness space (TechCrunch, 2016).

## Conclusion

ASICS has successfully established itself as a leading sportswear brand through its innovative marketing strategies and well-structured marketing mix. The company's focus on research-driven product development, strategic pricing, global expansion, and digital engagement has strengthened its position in the industry. By continuously evolving its marketing approaches and incorporating the 7Ps framework, ASICS remains competitive in the dynamic sportswear market.

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