Vishna. If, for example, the Barbados Hotel Association sponsored shows and concerts featuring famous celebrities, the pleasure benefit might increase by 2 points. The tour company could create a tour package to eliminate the complexity of vacation planning. The Barbados government could advertise its excellent health-care facilities and reduce the safety costs by 3 points. With these features, the value equation would now look like this:

Total Benefits (21) – Total Costs (20) = +1

With a positive result, Adam and Vishna are more likely to go to Barbados.

A brand strategy attempts to **position** the product or service, which means that marketers try to create a value equation for the product in the consumer's mind. To establish the value equation, the brand strategy uses packaging, brand names, slogans, and trademarks to develop a positive and identifiable brand image for each product or service. The brand image is communicated to the consumer through advertising and promotional activities.

What Were They Thinking?

In 1999, IncrEdibles, an easy and convenient breakfast food, was launched in Canada. This fast food came in cheese, sausage, and cheese-and-bacon flavours, and appealed to the consumer "on the run." Unfortunately, when it was thawed and eaten "on the run" it tended to end up in the lap of the unsuspecting consumer. The company, IncrEdibles Breakaway Foods, pulled the product off the market. Could promoting this product differently have helped save it?

Distribution Strategies

Distribution strategies focus on the best way to deliver a product or a service to the target market. There are three ways a company can achieve its distribution goals. It can (a) push the product or service to the consumer; (b) pull or attract the consumer to the product or service; or (c) use a combination push/pull strategy.

Push

Consumers purchase thousands of products and services every day that have not previously been positioned in their minds. These are generic products, non-branded products, or unknown brands purchased as a bargain, a gift, or on impulse. These products use the push strategy to reach the consumer.

The **push strategy** sells the product to retailers, importers, or wholesalers, and not to end-use consumers. The reasoning behind this strategy is simply that if the product is "out there" where consumers can see it, they will buy it. The manufacturer, importer, or wholesaler relies on the retailer to display the product and to sell it to the customers who come into the store.

Did You Know

Did you know that the Levi's brand once tried to market a three-piece suit? It was rejected by consumers and, learning from that failure, the company launched a major line of clothing more in keeping with its product mix. The new brand called Dockers soon became a consumer favourite.

A push strategy requires the marketer to focus all of the promotional activities on the distributor, which, most often, is the retailer. Buying incentives, such as promotional discounts, prizes, display fixtures, and product-knowledge seminars encourage the store to carry the product. Once the store displays the product, the consumer will see it and, hopefully, buy it.

Candles are a good example of the kind of product that relies heavily on a push strategy. There are over 300 candlemakers in North America, some of which have sales over $500 million each year. Although over 70% of all North American homes use candles, very few people can name even one brand of candle. Most consumers buy candles when they need them or when they see them, and they pay very little attention to who made them. To encourage retailers to carry their candles, candle marketers will often provide the store with a rack on which to display the product, or offer the store a discount if it