**Promotion (Introduction)**

**Promotion is all about communication**. Promotion is the way in a business makes its products known to the customers, both current and potential.

It is a common mistake to believe that promotion by business is all about advertising. It isn't. There are a variety of approaches that a business can take to get their message across to customers, although advertising is certainly an important one.

The main aim of promotion is to ensure that customers are **aware** of the existence and positioning of products. Promotion is also used to **persuade** customers that the product is better than competing products and to remind customers about why they may want to buy.

It is important to understand that a business will use more than one method of promotion. The variety of promotional methods used is referred to as the **promotional mix.**

Which promotional methods are used depends on several factors:

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| **Stage in the life cycle** | E.g. advertising is important at the launch stage |
| **Nature of the product** | How much information is required by customers before they buy |
| **Competition** | What are rivals doing? |
| **Marketing budget** | How much can the firm afford? |
| **Marketing strategy** | Other elements of the mix (price, product, place etc) |
| **Target market** | Appropriate ways to reach the target market |

The main methods of promotion are:

* Advertising
* Public relations & sponsorship
* Personal selling
* Direct marketing
* Sales promotion

A business will use a range of promotional activities for its product, depending on the **marketing strategy** and the **budget** available.

The way in which promotion is targeted is split into two types:

**Above the line promotion** – paid for communication in the independent media e.g. advertising on TV or in the newspapers. Though it can be targeted, it could be seen by anyone outside the target audience.

**Below the line promotion** – promotional activities where the business has direct control e.g. direct mailing and money off coupons. It is aimed directly at the target audience.