

A Study on the Role of Field Marketing in Increasing Seed Sales with Special Reference to Agricultural Seed Marketing

Saujan Abhiman Chamate* and Dr. Atul B. Tekade**

* Student, Department of Business Administration (MBA), Wainganga College of Engineering and Management (WCEM), Nagpur, Maharashtra, India; Email: saujanchamate@gmail.com

** Research Guide, Associate Professor & Head, Department of Business Administration (MBA), Wainganga College of Engineering and Management (WCEM), Nagpur, Maharashtra, India; Email: tekade.a@wcem.edu.in

Abstract

Agricultural seeds are an essential input in farming, and the choice of seed can influence crop establishment, productivity and farm income. Farmers make seed-purchasing decisions based on several factors, including previous experience, price, product availability, dealer advice, recommendations from other farmers and confidence in a brand. Field marketing allows seed companies to communicate directly with farmers and dealers through farm visits, farmer meetings, demonstration plots, product awareness programmer and follow-up. This research paper examines the role of field marketing in increasing seed sales by improving product awareness, explaining product features, developing customer relationships and connecting farmer demand with dealer availability. The paper follows a descriptive research framework. Primary data can be collected through farmer questionnaires, dealer interviews and field observations, while secondary data can be drawn from marketing textbooks and verified agricultural publications. Since no survey responses were supplied for this paper, it does not present fabricated results or claim a measured increase in sales.

Keywords — Field marketing, seed sales, agricultural marketing, farmer awareness, dealer coordination, customer relationship.

I. INTRODUCTION

Agriculture depends on the timely availability of quality inputs, including seeds. Seed companies operate in a seasonal market where farmers often need product information before sowing. Advertising can create awareness, but farmers may also want practical explanations about suitable crops, product characteristics, sowing practices and where to purchase the product. Direct interaction can help address these questions. Field marketing refers to promotional and relationship-building activities conducted in villages, farms and retail outlets. In agricultural seed marketing, it includes farmer visits, dealer visits, crop demonstrations, village meetings, field

days and post-activity follow-up. These activities allow a company to understand local requirements and communicate information more personally. Field marketing is connected with personal selling, promotion, channel management and relationship marketing. It can support sales when the product meets farmers' needs, product information is accurate, dealers have sufficient stock and customer enquiries receive timely attention. Therefore, the role of field marketing should be assessed not only through the number of visits but also through awareness, customer engagement, availability and actual sales records.

II. NEED AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Seed demand can change according to rainfall, sowing schedules, crop prices, local preferences and the performance of varieties in previous seasons. A structured study of field marketing can help determine whether field activities reach the intended farmers and whether they are associated with awareness, purchase intention and repeat buying. It can also identify the reasons why farmer interest may not convert into sales.

Significance for seed companies

The study can help companies plan field routes, select priority villages, coordinate marketing and distribution teams, monitor promotional expenses and improve sales reporting. If farmers show interest but the product is unavailable, the company may need better demand forecasting and stock replenishment rather than additional promotion alone.

Significance for farmers and dealers

Farmers may benefit from clear and accessible product information, opportunities to ask questions and a reliable channel for feedback. Dealers may benefit from product updates, improved coordination with representatives and more accurate estimates of seasonal demand. Ethical field marketing should support informed choice rather than pressure farmers into unsuitable purchases.

Academic significance

For an MBA Marketing student, this topic applies marketing concepts to a practical business environment. It provides an opportunity to study customer behaviour, personal selling, promotion, distribution channels and relationship marketing using questionnaires, percentages and simple data analysis.

III. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To study the major field marketing activities used by agricultural seed companies.
- To examine the relationship between field marketing and farmer awareness of seed products.
- To understand the perceived usefulness of farmer

- meetings, farm visits and demonstration plots.
- To study the role of dealers and seed availability in converting enquiries into purchases.
- To identify challenges faced by field marketing representatives.
- To suggest practical measures for improving field marketing effectiveness and seed sales.

IV. RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHESES

Research questions: Which field marketing activities do farmers remember? What sources influence their seed-purchase decisions? Do demonstrations and meetings improve product understanding? How does dealer advice affect purchases? What barriers prevent farmer interest from becoming a sale? Proposed hypotheses: H1: Exposure to field marketing is positively associated with seed-product awareness. H2: Participation in farmer meetings or demonstrations is associated with better understanding of product features. H3: Dealer coordination and product availability are associated with a higher conversion of farmer enquiries into purchases. These hypotheses need to be tested with actual survey data. 5 Review of Literature and Conceptual Background

Relationship marketing

Relationship marketing emphasizes long-term customer relationships rather than one-time transactions. Trust can develop when a company communicates consistently, gives accurate information and responds to customer concerns. Field representatives can contribute by listening carefully, recording farmer feedback and arranging appropriate follow-up.

Personal selling

Personal selling involves direct communication between a representative and a potential customer. It gives the representative an opportunity to explain product features, respond to questions and understand the customer's needs. Its effectiveness depends on product knowledge, communication skills, listening, territory planning and the quality of follow-up. Visit counts alone do not prove sales effectiveness.

Demonstration plots and farmer meetings

Demonstration plots and field days can help farmers observe crop development under local conditions. Their results can be influenced by soil, weather, sowing time, irrigation and crop management. Demonstrations should record relevant conditions and should not promise identical results on every farm. Farmer meetings can provide a forum to discuss product information and gather questions.

Distribution and the research gap

Field marketing may generate interest, but distribution determines whether the product is available when farmers want to buy it. Stock-outs, unsuitable product selection, price concerns and previous experiences may limit conversion. Local primary research is required to determine which field activities are most useful in a particular territory and how they relate to sales. 6 Research Methodology

Research design

A descriptive research design is appropriate for studying farmers' awareness, experiences and opinions. A correlational approach may also be used to explore associations between field marketing exposure and purchase behavior. The design and questions should be decided before collecting data.

Study area, population and sample

The study may be conducted in selected villages and seed retail outlets in one taluka or district. The population can include farmers who purchased or considered agricultural seeds, seed dealers and field marketing representatives. For a practical MBA project, a target of approximately 50–100 farmers and a smaller number of dealers may be considered, depending on time and access. The sampling method and its limitations must be reported.

Sources of data and ethics

Primary data may be gathered through questionnaires, interviews and observations. Secondary information may come from marketing

textbooks, verified agricultural publications, approved product labels and company materials used with permission. Participation should be voluntary, personal details should remain confidential and no survey responses or results should be invented. 7 Role and Activities of Field Marketing

Farm and farmer visits

Farm visits help representatives understand farmers' crop plans, previous experiences and information requirements. Representatives can explain relevant product information, answer questions within their competence and record enquiries. A useful visit should have a clear purpose and a follow-up action where needed.

Farmer meetings and village programmes

Village meetings allow companies to communicate with several farmers at once. Sessions may cover product characteristics, approved usage information and seasonal planning. Meetings should be interactive, allow farmers to ask questions and record attendance and follow-up needs. Claims should remain consistent with approved product information.

Demonstration plots

Demonstrations provide an opportunity to observe crop development and discuss farming practices. Dates, seed details, crop-management practices and local conditions should be documented. Any comparison must consider differences in soil, sowing dates, irrigation and other factors. Photographs and claims should be accurate and not misleading.

Dealer visits and coordination

Dealers are an important link between seed companies and farmers. Regular dealer visits can help representatives review stock, discuss seasonal demand, communicate approved schemes and collect farmer feedback. Better coordination can help identify stock shortages and reduce missed sales opportunities.

Follow-up and customer relationship

Follow-up helps answer unresolved questions and provides a way to record customer feedback. Maintaining respectful relationships may encourage farmers to seek information again and consider a brand in future seasons. Representatives should avoid unsupported yield guarantees and refer technical complaints through the company's approved process. 8 Data Collection and Questionnaire

Suggested farmer questionnaire:

- a. Which crop seeds did you purchase in the latest season?
- b. Which seed brands are you aware of?
- c. Where do you usually obtain seed information?
- d. Has a company representative visited you?
- e. Have you attended a farmer meeting or demonstration?
- f. How useful was the information provided?
- g. What influences your purchase most: price, past experience, dealer advice, field visit or demonstration?
- h. Were your preferred seeds available when required?
- i. How satisfied were you with company or dealer support?
- j. Would you consider purchasing the same brand again? Why?

Dealer interview topics: Commonly requested products, frequent farmer questions, usefulness of company visits, stock availability, enquiries generated by promotional activities and suggestions for improving coordination. 9 Data Analysis and Performance Indicators After collecting responses, the researcher can use counts, percentages, averages and simple charts to summarise findings. The number of respondents should be shown alongside each result. A comparison can be made between farmers who attended a demonstration and those who did not, for example in terms of brand awareness or purchase intention. Such results should be described as associations unless the research design supports causal conclusions.

Suggested performance indicators

- a. Farmer coverage: number of unique farmers contacted.
- b. Activity quality: visits with a recorded purpose, outcome and follow-up.
- c. Engagement: meeting attendance and farmer questions.
- d. Enquiry conversion: enquiries that result in purchases, where tracking is reliable.
- e. Dealer service: product availability and timely replenishment.
- f. Customer experience: satisfaction and repeat-purchase intention.

Performance indicators should be considered together. A high number of visits may not lead to sales if the product is unsuitable, pricing is uncompetitive or stock is unavailable. Sales should be reviewed alongside activity reports and other relevant factors. 10 Economic Analysis Field marketing expenses may include travel, staff time, meeting arrangements, demonstration materials and communication. Total activity cost can be calculated by adding these expenses. Cost per farmer reached is calculated by dividing total activity cost by the number of unique farmers reached. If enquiry and purchase tracking is reliable, cost per converted enquiry can also be estimated. The period and assumptions used should be stated clearly. 11 Findings Framework and Discussion The final report should describe the number of questionnaires completed and summarise respondents by non-identifying categories such as village or crop. It should then report awareness, exposure to field activities, perceived usefulness, purchase factors and satisfaction. Charts should be prepared only from real data, with titles, labels, sample sizes and data sources. If farmers who attended meetings report greater awareness, the researcher should consider other possible explanations, such as their existing interest in the brand, dealer advice, price and product availability. Results must be linked to the objectives, and limitations such as a small or convenience-based sample should be acknowledged. 12 Recommendations

Recommendations for seed companies

- a. Set a clear objective for every field activity and measure its outcome.
- b. Maintain village-wise farmer and dealer records and update them regularly.
- c. Plan field routes around local sowing calendars and farmer availability.
- d. Train representatives in product knowledge, communication and listening.
- e. Coordinate demand forecasts and stock availability with distribution teams.
- f. Review sales, enquiries, activity reports and farmer feedback together.

Recommendations for field representatives

- g. Prepare a daily route and set realistic activity goals.
- h. Ask farmers about their needs before explaining products.
- i. Record enquiries, concerns and follow-up dates accurately.
- j. Confirm product availability before promising supply.
- k. Avoid unsupported yield or profit guarantees.
- l. Submit concise and truthful daily reports.

13 Conclusion and Limitations Field marketing plays an important role in connecting agricultural seed companies, dealers and farmers through direct visits, meetings, demonstrations and follow-up. These activities can improve access to product information, help companies understand local needs and support informed purchase decisions. However, seed sales are also influenced by price, product suitability, availability, weather, crop conditions, previous experience and dealer recommendations. Effective field marketing therefore requires accurate communication, reliable distribution and systematic measurement. This paper presents a research framework and does not contain primary survey results. Its hypotheses should be tested using actual data before making firm conclusions about sales growth. A small or convenience-based sample may not represent all farmers, and self-reported responses may contain recall errors. Future research could compare villages, crops or seasons and examine whether field activities are associated with repeat purchase or customer

satisfaction. 14 References and Suggested Reading

I. KOTLER, P., KELLER, K. L., & CHERNEV, A. MARKETING MANAGEMENT. PEARSON. CONSULT THE EDITION

available to you.

II. KOTLER, P., & ARMSTRONG, G. PRINCIPLES OF MARKETING. PEARSON.

III. KOTHARI, C. R., & GARG, G. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY: METHODS AND TECHNIQUES. NEW AGE

International.

IV. MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA; INDIAN COUNCIL OF AGRICULTURAL

Research (ICAR); and relevant state agricultural university publications. Include only materials actually consulted and verify publication details.

Submission note: Before final submission, add the selected study area, research period, actual survey responses, charts and verified citations as required by the college.