

Chapter 10 Product Life Cycle

I. Learning Objectives

- *To understand the importance for an exporter to know product life cycle;*
- *To know the ways and purposes of product adaptation and presentation*
- *To define packaging and labeling as well as illustrate their functions in business*
- *To grasp the main idea and the structure of the text;*
- *To master the usage of key special terms, words and phrases in this chapter;*
- *To conduct a series of listening, speaking, reading, writing and translating activities concerned with the theme of the chapter.*

II. Introduction

The product life cycle describes the stages a new product idea goes through from beginning to end and shows the sales of a product over time, which is useful to decide what marketing needs to be carried out for the product at different stages. Therefore, a thorough understanding of product life cycle is doubly important to an exporter.

像人类一样，任何产品都有自己的生命周期。产品生命周期揭示了产品销售历史中的不同阶段。与各个阶段相对应的是与营销策略和利润潜能有关的不同机会和问题。公司可通过确定其产品所处的阶段或将要进入的阶段制定更好的市场营销计划。因此，正确认识产品的生命周期，可以用一种长远的眼光进行决策，能达到较好的长远效果，从而带来长期的收益。

III. Main points of the text

1. the importance of deciding on a product strategy
2. the distinction between products and product lines
3. four stages of all products in a given market
4. introduction stage
5. growth stage
6. maturity stage
7. decline stage

IV. Background and terminology

1. Product Life Cycle

the stages through which a product passes from development to being withdrawn from the market, which was developed by Raymond Vernon, a professor at Harvard University, in 1966 产品生命周期是1966年由哈佛大学雷蒙德·弗农教授研发出来的。

2. **product strategy** 产品战略
3. **sample**: a portion, piece, or segment that is representative of a whole 样品, 标本
4. **manufacturer** a person, an enterprise, or an entity that manufactures something 制造商, 制造企业
5. **profitability** the nature of being profitable 收益性, 收益率
6. **category**: a specifically defined division in a system of classification; a class 种类, 类别; **product category**: 产品分类
7. **launch** *vt.* to introduce to the public or to a market 推出 (新产品), 投放市场
8. **idea evaluation** 产品设计观念的评估
9. **broad marketing aim** 更大的销售目标
10. **Test Marketing (试销)**

It is a business practice in which a new product is sold to or tested by a limited group of consumers in order to observe their reaction to it. Test marketing is part of the research and development phase of a new product. Many products that are test marketed are never released to the general market because of poor survey responses or failure to meet sales targets in the test area.

试销是一种商务实践活动。在试销过程中, 新产品销售给范围有限的顾客或让他们试用以观察他们对新产品的反应。试销是新产品研究和开发阶段的一个组成部分。由于不太好的调查反应或不能满足试销区域的销售目标, 许多试销过的产品从来没有发布到大众市场。

11. **competitor** one that competes with another, as in sports or business; a rival 竞争者, 对手
12. **“try-my-product”** “试用我的产品”
13. **“buy-my-brand”** “购买我的品牌”
14. **Pilot Model**
a test model of something, for example, a proposed manufacturing process, to discover and solve problems before full implementation 实验模型, 试选样品
15. **Target Customer**
somebody expected to buy product: a customer of a type considered likely to buy a particular product 目标客户
16. **maturity** 票据或证券等的到期时间, 票据或证券等的到期, 成熟 (期)
17. **embryonic stage** 胚胎期, 萌芽状态
18. **Product Mix 产品组合**

range of products sold by a firm. For example, a supermarket sells food, but it may also sell clothes, electrical equipment, beauty products, and stationery; an electric appliance manufacturer may sell washing machines, dishwashers, refrigerators, televisions, and videos. A firm may expand its product mix by offering different products for sale; for example, a clothes shop may add underwear to its range. It may extend existing ranges; for example, a car manufacturer may bring out a special edition of an existing car model. It may change existing products; for example, a laundry detergent manufacturer may add more blue flakes to an existing brand and declare it to be new and improved, or a food company may repackage a product.

一个公司出售的一系列产品。例如, 一家超市销售食品, 但是它也可以同时销售服装、电器、护肤美容品和文具等; 一家生产家用电器的制造商可能销售洗衣机、洗碗机、冰箱、电视和录像等。一家公司可以通过提供不同的销售产品来扩大其产品组合。例如: 制衣厂可以把内衣加入它的生产范围。它也可以延伸既存的生产范围, 例如, 一家汽车制造商可以推出既存车型专款车。它也可以改变既存的产品, 例如, 一家生产洗衣清洁剂的厂商可以在它既存的品牌中加入更多的蓝色屑状物并宣称该品牌是新的改善的产品。一家食品公司也可能重新包装它的产品。

19. Haier product mix

- Product line 1: Haier fridge
- Product line 2: Haier color TV Set
- Product line 3: Haier washing machine
- Product line 4: Haier ice-box
- Product line 5: Haier micro-oven
- Product line 6: Haier dish-washer
- Product line 7: Haier gas cooker
- Product line 8: Haier air-conditioner
- Product line 9: Haier VCD
- Product line 10: Haier DVD
- Product line 11: Haier mp3
- Product line 12: Haier vacuum cleaner
- Product line 13: Haier water heater
- Product line 14: Haier medicine
- Product line 15: Haier desk-top computer
- Product line 16: Haier notepad
- Product line 17: Haier mobile
- Product line 18: Haier furniture

20. Lenovo product mix

- Line 1: Notepad
- Line 2: Digital camera
- Line 3: U-disc
- Line 4: mouse
- Line 5: electronic dictionary
- Line 6: mobile
- Line 7: desk-top computer

21. four stages of product life cycle: introduction stage, growth stage, maturity stage, and decline stage 产

品生命周期的四个阶段：产品的形成期；成长期；成熟期和衰退期。

第一阶段是产品的形成期。在这个阶段里，产品被投放市场，或曰进入市场，销售缓慢上升。

第二阶段是成长期。这意味着该产品正在被顾客接受并打进市场。该产品如果开始流行的话，它就进入了一段销售迅速增长的时期。在这一阶段，如果利润前景特别诱人，竞争者将蜂拥而至，进入市场。可是，这种竞争性生产者的加入往往也使该产品在顾客眼里变得合法化。这时，出口商应该把他的促销策略从“试用我的产品”及时转变为“购买我的品牌”。

第三阶段是成熟期。在该阶段，销售增长开始放慢。在这一阶段的早期，不成功的竞争性品牌很可能退出市场。由于这个原因，幸存下来的公司吃进这些退出品牌的顾客，销售额可能继续上升。不久以后，由于市场已经变得饱和；或者为了生产的目的，把销售量维持在一个相对平稳的水平上通常更好。

最后一个阶段是衰退期。这意味着该产品的需求下降。顾客开始对该产品感到厌倦。事实上，对所有生产者来说，由于新的产品开始了它们自己的生命周期并且取代旧的产品，产品的过时报废是不可避免的。

V. Language Points

1. If a company wants to build a long-term position in export markets, it should decide on a product strategy.

一家公司想在出口市场上长期立于不败之地，就得就产品的发展战略作出决策。

decide on 对...作出决定[决议]

①. Don't idle away your time any more, and you should decide on what to do next as soon as possible. 别再浪费时间，你应当尽快决定下一步该怎么办。

②. [Biz Eng] Under the current situation, we must decide on the sales promotion plan and face the music ourselves. 在目前的情况下，我们必须自行决定推销计划，并勇敢地承担责任。

2. It must decide whether or not it must modify its present products or bring out new ones, and it must try to get a good idea of how often it will have to change its products.

它必须决定它是需要变更其现有的产品呢，还是推出新的种类。并且，它还须努力搞清楚多长时间它应该改变一下自己的产品。

modify: to change in form or character; alter 变更：在形式或特征上改变，修改

The equipment may be modified to produce VCD sets.

这设备可以经过改装用来生产光碟机。

3. bring out

1. to produce or publish 生产，制造，出版[本课义]

[Biz Eng] In order to win more customers' favor and get greater market share, we will have to bring out a new type of machines on the basis of the improvement of our current ones. 为了赢得更多顾客的青睐，获取更大的市场份额，我们必须在改进现有机器的基础上，生产出一款新的机器。

2. to induce to speak freely; draw out 鼓励，引导自由发言

1) Alice is very shy, so we should try to bring her out.

爱丽丝很怕羞，因此我们要设法鼓励她说话。

2) [Biz Eng] The job applicant was so choked with excitement at the acceptance notification that he could hardly bring out a goodbye. 工作申请人得到通知说他被录用了，激动得连一声再见也说不出来。

3. to nurture and develop (a quality, for example) to best advantage 培养（例如一种品质）使之达到最佳境界

You bring out the best in me. 你使我把自己最好的方面都发挥出来了。

4., where a product is in its life cycle on the domestic market may vary a great deal from its possible position in export markets.

这是一个带有主语从句的句子。从句 where a product is in its life cycle on the domestic market 作句子的主语，意思是“在国内市场上，一种产品在其生命周期上的位置”。不及物动词 vary 作谓语。

vary from: differ from

5. A product, which is new at home, may be out-of-date in a foreign market. Conversely, a familiar product at home may seem strange and new in an export market.

一种产品在国内市场上还是崭新的，在国外市场上却可能是过时的东西。与此相反，一种国内常见的产品，在一个出口市场上却可能看起来既陌生又新奇。

out-of-date: out of style or use; outmoded

过时的：过时的或废弃不用的；老式的

an out-of-date dictionary 一本过时的辞典

conversely: on the contrary

A product, which is new at home, may be out-of-date in a foreign market. (glass building)

a familiar product at home may seem strange and new in an export market. (Chinese traditional medicine)

6. The timing of product life cycles may differ considerably from one export market to another.

一处出口市场上产品生命周期的时间安排与另一处出口市场上的可能会迥然不同。

timing: 时间的选择；时间的安排；时间的调配

the timing of a play 一场戏的时间安排

The timing of our statement is very opportune.

我们发表声明选择的时机很恰当。

7. catch on

1. to become popular 变得流行

1) Skateboarding caught on quickly. 滑板运动很快就流行起来。

2) [Biz Eng] They think that it will take a few years for this product to really catch on. 他们认为这项产品要真正畅销起来还需要若干年的时间。

2. to understand; perceive 理解，察觉

It was a long time before the police caught on to what he was really doing. 过了好长时间，警察才搞明白他实际上是在做什么。

8. place orders [Biz Eng]提交订单，下订单

If your quotations are suitable, we shall be able to place orders with you.

如你方报价合适，我们将向你订货。

This order is placed with the seller subject to import license.

此订单是向卖方定的，但要以获得进口许可证为准。

9. fall off to become less; decrease 变少，降低

1. [Biz Eng] Stock prices have fallen off. 股票价格下降了。

2. [Biz Eng] The number of staff meetings fell off after a few months. 工作人员的会议在几个月后减少了。

3. [Biz Eng] British export trade fell off rapidly last year. 去年英国的出口贸易迅速减少。

10. sell off to get rid of by selling, often at reduced prices 甩卖，贱卖，低价出售

1. [Biz Eng] The rest of the goods will be sold off at greatly reduced prices.

剩下的货物将大幅度削价出售。

2. [Biz Eng] We have a residue stock of 1,200 dozen of the products which we are selling off at \$20 per dozen.

这些产品还有 1200 打的剩余库存，我们将以每打 20 美元的价格贱卖。

11. Almost all products eventually pass through four stages in a given market in terms of sales and profitability.

在销售和利润率方面，几乎所有产品在既定市场上都经历四个阶段。

given: specified; fixed: 指定的; 确定的:

We will meet at a given time and location. 我们将在指定的时间和地点见面。

9. try out

1. to test or use experimentally 试行, 试用

[Biz Eng] Those manufacturers are always doing their best to persuade as many customers as possible to try out their new products. 那些制造商总是竭尽全力劝尽可能多的客户试用他们的新产品。

2. to undergo a competitive qualifying test, as for a job or athletic team. 参加选拔, 参加竞争性资格测试

Joan tried out for the school basketball team. 琼参加了学校篮球队的选拔赛。

10. mop up

1. to complete a piece of work or finish dealing with something or someone 完成, 做好

[Biz Eng] The general manager has just got a couple of jobs to mop up before he goes on holiday. 就在总经理要度假之前, 他又来了几件工作需要完成。

2. to clear (an area) of remaining enemy troops after a victory 肃清, 扫荡

The People's Liberation Army mopped up isolated pockets of resistance in the battlefield. 人民解放军肃清了战场上的零星抵抗。

11. level off

1. to move toward stability or consistency 达到平衡或稳定

1) [Biz Eng] Prices leveled off. 价格趋于稳定

2) [Biz Eng] We had fantastic sales for a few months, and then they leveled off. 有几个月我们销售额极高, 然后趋平。

2. to stop climbing or falling, and continue at a fixed height (使)变得平坦, (使)变得平整

After climbing steeply through woodland, the path leveled off. 爬过陡峭的林地后, 小路平坦起来。

12. **set in** to begin to happen or be apparent 开始发生或出现

1. Evening was setting in as I took the road over Mountain Top.

当我行驶于山顶公路时夜幕降临。

2. [Biz Eng] A period of further economic decline set in during the 1930s.

二十世纪三十年代, 出现了一段经济持续下滑的时期。

13. **Deciding what stage a product has reached in its life cycle can be more difficult when the sales figures are still rising.**

动名词短语 Deciding what stage a product has reached in its life cycle 作句子的主语, what 引导的从句作动名词 deciding 的宾语从句。主句的谓语部分是 can be more difficult (动词 be+表语)。when 引导的是时间状语从句, 说明主句谓语动词发生的时间。

VI. Summary of the lesson

If a company wants to build a long-term position in export markets, it should decide on a product strategy. It is important to know the distinction between products and product lines. Almost all products

eventually pass through four stages in a given market in terms of sales and profitability. Those four stages are: introduction stage, growth stage, maturity stage, and decline stage. The first stage is introduction, which means the product is launched or enters the market and sales rise slowly. The second stage is growth, which means the product is becoming accepted and penetrating the market. The third stage is maturity, which means sales growth starts to slow down. The last stage is decline, which means there is a decline in demand for the product.

VII. Comprehension questions

1. What should a company do if it wants to build a long-term position in export markets?
2. What is product life cycle?
3. How many stages are there in the product life cycle? What are they?
4. Is there a distinction between products and product lines? What is it?
5. Why is it very important for an exporter to have a thorough understanding of product life cycle?