

Process in action

The BMW Mini

Commentary

The whole point of this process in action is to demonstrate the value of seeming to offer the customer choice (Porter's differentiation strategy) whilst producing on mass production principles (Porter's low cost). In this case it is achieved using what is basically a make-to-(modular)-stock, assemble-to-order process.

Update

Customers can still design and order their own special mini:

<http://www.mini.co.uk/html/ecom/ecom.html>

Solutions

Question 1

The customer is offered a wide choice of design.

Question 2

The organization can still mass produce on the same assembly line.

Question 3

A sophisticated computer system is required to plan work, material requirements planning and an equally sophisticated material tracking system to ensure that the appropriate modular parts arrive at the right vehicle on the assembly line at the right time. As indicated in the description real variety is less than that perceived by the customer as tastes tend to centralise in the choice distribution.