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Marginal and Absorption Costing**

Marginal Costing

- Focuses on variable costs that change directly with output.
- Assumes fixed costs are irrelevant for decision-making.
- Used to evaluate short-term decisions, such as pricing and production levels.

Absorption Costing

- Allocates all costs, both variable and fixed, to products based on an activity base.
- Assumes all costs contribute to the production of goods.
- Used to prepare financial statements for external reporting and tax purposes.

Major Cause of Differences in Profit Figures

The major cause of differences in profit figures between absorption costing and marginal costing is the treatment of fixed costs. Absorption costing allocates fixed costs to products, while marginal costing ignores them.

Managerial and Absorption Costing

• Managerial costing is an internal reporting tool used for decision-making.

 Absorption costing is often used for managerial costing, as it provides a more comprehensive picture of total costs.

Example of Absorption Costing

A company manufactures 100 units of product with the following costs:

• Direct materials: \$20 per unit

• Direct labor: \$15 per unit

Overhead (fixed): \$20,000

• Overhead (variable): \$5 per unit

Absorption costing allocates the fixed overhead of \$20,000 as \$200 per unit, resulting in a total cost of \$245 per unit.

Advantages and Disadvantages of Absorption and Marginal Costing

Absorption Costing

Advantages:

- o Provides a more comprehensive view of costs.
- Complies with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP).

• Disadvantages:

- Can distort profitability for short-term decisions.
- Allocates fixed costs even when they are not incurred.

Marginal Costing

Advantages:

- Provides a more accurate picture of variable costs.
- Facilitates better decision-making for pricing and production.

• Disadvantages:

- Ignores fixed costs, which can lead to inaccuracies in long-term planning.
- May not be suitable for external reporting.

Difference between Marginal Costing and Absorption Costing (Kaplan)

Robert Kaplan distinguishes between marginal costing and absorption costing based on the following:

- Marginal costing only considers variable costs, while absorption costing considers both variable and fixed costs.
- Marginal costing is used for internal decision-making, while absorption costing is used for external reporting.

Principle of Absorption Costing

The principle of absorption costing states that all manufacturing costs, including fixed costs, should be allocated to products based on their usage of an activity base.

Income Statement as per Absorption Costing

- Sales Revenue: The amount of revenue generated from product sales.
- Cost of Goods Sold (COGS): The total manufacturing costs allocated to the products sold. This includes direct materials, direct labor, and allocated overhead.
- Gross Profit: The difference between sales revenue and COGS.
- Operating Expenses: The costs incurred in selling and administering the business, such as rent, salaries, and marketing expenses.
- Net Income: The profit after deducting operating expenses from gross profit.

Disadvantages of Marginal Costing

Ignores fixed costs, which can lead to underestimating total costs.

- May not be suitable for long-term planning, as fixed costs are an important factor in overall profitability.
- Can be difficult to implement in practice, as it requires accurate tracking of variable costs.

How to Determine Profit Under Marginal Costing

Profit under marginal costing is calculated by deducting variable costs from sales revenue:

Profit = Sales Revenue - Variable Costs

Marginal Costing vs. Absorption Costing CIMA

The Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (CIMA) emphasizes the following differences between marginal costing and absorption costing:

- Marginal costing is used for decision-making and performance evaluation.
- Absorption costing is used for external financial reporting and tax purposes.
- Marginal costing ignores fixed costs, while absorption costing allocates them.

Marginal vs. Absorption Costing and Activity-Based Costing

Activity-based costing (ABC) is a costing method that allocates costs based on specific activities that drive production. Unlike absorption costing, ABC allocates fixed costs more accurately, resulting in a more precise picture of product costs.

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