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PRINTtips



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Do You Have a Marketing System?

In 2007 the board of directors of the American Marketing Association adopted this definition of marketing:

Marketing is the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large.

For another take on the definition of marketing, consider this from The Chartered Institute of Marketing, a professional association based in the United Kingdom:

Marketing is the management process responsible for identifying, anticipating, and satisfying customer requirements profitably.

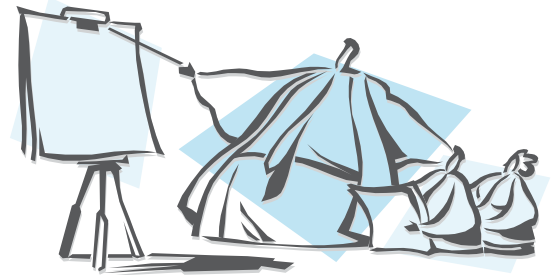
Management guru Peter Drucker defines marketing this way:

Marketing is not only much broader than selling; it is not a specialized activity at all. It encompasses the entire business. It is the whole business seen from the point of view of the final result, that is, from the customer's point of view. Concern and responsibility for marketing must therefore permeate all areas of the enterprise.

Finally, Regis McKenna, an influential marketing consultant whose professional career includes authorizing five books on marketing, succinctly states

Marketing is everything.

What all these definitions have in common is the recognition that marketing requires businesses



and organizations to be customer-centric – to shift from a focus on production to a focus on what customers need and want.

Traditionally, marketing activities have included advertising, distribution, and selling. However, with the shift in emphasis from products to customers, marketing now includes insight gained from the study of customer behavior (incorporating the disciplines of social science, psychology, and sociology) as well as input from hard science (economics and mathematics). Thus *relationship marketing* and *social marketing* are now being added to traditional marketing activities.

Marketing basics

In the sixth edition of his book *Marketing Plans: How to Prepare Them, How to Use Them*, Professor Malcolm McDonald of Cranfield University School of Management in the United Kingdom suggests that marketing consists of three types of activities:

- *Review of the external marketing environment* which studies the market, customers, and competitors and identifies current and developing trends.
- *Review of the internal marketing activities* with emphasis on the seven Ps of

Do You Have a Marketing System? (continued)

“...how market research is conducted, and current marketing objectives and strategies.”

“... communicating with customers and prospects is changing..”

“Customers and prospects will form an opinion about a business or organization based on several factors.”

marketing: price, product, promotion, placement, people, positioning, and packaging.

- *Review of the marketing system* including the marketing organization, how market research is conducted, and current marketing objectives and strategies.

But what marketing strategies should small companies and organizations use? The buzz is in favor of abandoning traditional marketing strategies based on print media in favor of entirely new ones, largely built on Internet marketing. Social media – including online communication like blogging and social networking as well as opinions and review – are appealing because of a lower cost-per-touch than print media. But we suggest that these new tools are just that – a new way to reach customers and prospects that enhances rather than replaces what is already working.

Consider these facts about traditional print media:

- According to the United States Postal Service 2007 Household Diary Study, 80% of households read or scan advertising mail.
- In a 2008 survey sponsored by the Direct Marketing Association and Pitney Bowes, 39% of respondents said they tried a business for the first time because of direct mail advertising, and 70% said they renewed a business relationship because of a direct mail promotion.
- An iProspect study conducted in 2007 found that 67% of online searches were driven by offline messages, resulting in purchases 39% of the time. In addition, shoppers who receive a direct mail piece directing them to an online site spend on average 13% more than those who do not receive a printed piece.

Enhancements to traditional marketing

Our statement that traditional print media remains important does not mean that we don't recognize how communicating with customers and

prospects is changing. More and more, customers and prospects are taking control of the buying situation by seeking information on their terms – looking for what they want as the need arises. We are well past the time when a small business could use only word of mouth and yellow pages advertising to attract new customers. Businesses and organizations today need a web site supported by a consistent direct mail program to point prospects to the web site.

Web sites have also evolved since their earliest days. A web site that is no more than an online yellow pages ad will disappoint visitors looking for information and interactivity. Pictures, descriptive text, detailed explanations, downloadable information, videos, and an easy way to contact the business to request more information are now minimum requirements for a web site.

Who is responsible for marketing?

With marketing becoming customer-centric and customers taking control of the information-seeking process prior to making a buying decision, the responsibility for marketing within the business or organization has changed. While the owner of a small business or the president of an organization may continue to control or decide about the specific marketing strategies, all parts of the organization are now involved in implementing the marketing plan.

Customers and prospects will form an opinion about a business or organization based on several factors:

- the image projected in print and online;
- the staff members who are responsible for customer service and product or service delivery; and
- the responsiveness of the organization to resolving customer problems.

For consistency and marketing effectiveness, the print and online image must support the marketing strategies, and the staff members in customer service, delivery, and problem

Do You Have a Marketing System? (continued)

resolution must understand and implement the marketing strategies.

The core concepts of a marketing system

A modern, successful marketing system for businesses and organizations is built on three core concepts: a customer-centric rather than product-centric focus that identifies current needs of customers and predicts their future needs; expanding the responsibility for

marketing to the entire organization; and using new marketing strategies to enhance but not replace traditional ones.

If you need help with your image in print – business stationery, brochures and marketing materials, direct mail marketing campaign, or web site development and improvement, we can help. Contact us at 513-248-2121 for an appointment now.

“...staff members... must understand and implement the marketing strategies.”

Newsletter Styles

Whether you are using print-and-mail or e-mail to distribute your company's newsletter, there are three main styles: B2C, B2B and membership. Each one has different characteristics, and the one you use will depend on your target audience.

B2C: The B2C newsletter style is for businesses that sell mainly to consumers. The content is transactional, meaning it features products and services and information about them. Readers of these newsletters expect straightforward information about products and services to help them make the buying decision. To allow for display of a number of products or services, construct the newsletter so it is a series of summaries with continuation to an inside page (printed newsletter) or link to a full article (eletter).

B2B: The B2B newsletter style is for businesses that sell mainly to other businesses and organizations. For B2B, the sales cycle is usually longer than B2C and depends on gaining the trust and confidence of the buyer. Therefore a primary goal of the B2B style is to build a

relationship. Retention is also an important aspect of B2B marketing as it provides the opportunity for cross-selling.

Content for B2B newsletters is crafted to meet the specific needs of the target audience and is based around information that will help the decision makers. Good B2B content includes features on products and services, expert advice, case studies, industry news, and white papers.

Frequency is another important aspect of the B2B newsletter – sent too frequently, a newsletter can be annoying; not sent often enough, and it loses its effectiveness. The most popular cycle for newsletters is monthly.

Professional services/membership: The membership newsletter is for businesses and organizations that are communicating with members or offering expert advice. Content centers on things of interest to the membership, including recent and upcoming events. These newsletters often include many photographs of members engaging in events and activities sponsored by the organization.



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“Passion, which can take the form of expertise and knowledge, will be evident to your readers...”

Q.

How can I keep readers interested in my marketing message?

A.

Keeping readers interested in what you send to them may not be as hard as you think. Here are a few tips to help you:

Be passionate about your subject. Passion, which can take the form of expertise and knowledge, will be evident to your readers and will reinforce that they are making the right choice to buy from you. Show that you know

your products and services inside and out by presenting interesting performance facts and features. Discuss the superior beauty or design of your product and prove it with pictures. Give examples of your amazing customer service with customer testimonials

Provide compelling content. Useful content saves customers and prospects time and/or money, helps them make a wise buying decision, or provides interesting or unusual information about products and services.

Adopt a personal perspective. Enliven the marketing message with a personal approach. Use first- and second-person personal pronouns (I, we, and you). Include anecdotal information and case studies.

Be brief. Keep writing concise and to-the-point, grammatically correct, and without spelling errors. If making a point, get to it quickly.