

Marketing Undressed

Pulling back the covers on the
marketing discipline



David Newberry

Introduction

I'm delighted that you have decided to take a look at this book.

I would also like to explain why I chose to use an image of a chessboard.

I believe marketing is like chess. You need to have a full understanding of all aspects of the game in order to be able to win the game. You need to know and understand each of your assets whilst also knowing every possible tactic that you could deploy. Like chess, there can be no half-hearted approach to marketing and just being a specialist in digital marketing is certainly not enough. Great marketers are the ones who can step back and see the whole board and make the right moves at the right time, knowing how to integrate all of these in a way that helps the company achieve the desired outcome.

Additionally, like chess, each and every move or action you take in marketing impacts the end result. They are all related. Success is not deemed by a successful move; it is the final outcome that is important. So yes, you might have more visitors to your website but unless this translates into more happy customers then marketing hasn't delivered to its remit.

I hope you enjoy this book. Hopefully you will find it easy to follow, fun, informative and engaging as these reflect the principles on which great marketing should be based.

Thanks again for your time,

David

So who is this book for?



I would like to think that this book will be read by CEOs. I know that it will help these senior executives better understand the significant contribution that marketing can make to a business when empowered and supported.but I am a pragmatist and it is unlikely that I would be honoured to receive such an audience.

In all reality, it will be read by my friends and colleagues, well I hope it will!!

It is therefore to all the readers of this book that I wish to express my sincerest thanks, as for all intents and purposes, it is your book.

Everything in this book has been gleaned and borrowed from you and so I hope that I can offer you all a fitting tribute that is reflective of your knowledge and expertise. So please feel free to send any observations, comments and recommendations to david@market-in-360.com

What people are saying

"The CEO's guide to today's marketing - a great perspective on how to combine the art and science of marketing to build a successful business."

Cliff Pollan, CEO and Co-Founder Postwire Inc.

"An eye opening spotlight on the shortcomings of one dimensional marketing."

Nasser Sagheb, President ProMost LLC

" David's book cuts away the myths and gets straight to the reality. A must for anyone who wants their brand to succeed."

Charles Shiplee, Director BRAND GP

"In my view people are motivated by ideas not strategy. Asserting what you want customers to take out of communication usually only benefits the media owner. Ideas based on fundamental insights are the magic ingredient that drive all media... paid, earned and owned."

Ed Will, Managing Partner Breakfast Agency

"A great read from a marketing artisan. This is a book from someone who has actually been there and done it. David offers sage advice as an experienced, senior marketer, which makes this book a must read for executives who need to know more about the science and art of marketing, with some solid metrics to measure its success."

Ben Salmon, Founder Attributely

Foreword by Philip Shel Drake

Marketing is about creating something others want enough to part with their 'hard earned'. And it's about sustaining and growing this value exchange by nurturing customer relationships and developing products that continue to meet their changing needs and aspirations.

Marketing is multi-faceted. It's complex. It's art and science. And for these reasons, it can end up looking quite different to one person from the next, and indeed to one practitioner from the next. I sometimes consider the facility to maintain a deep and wide perspective of marketing a fundamental difference between the professional marketer and the practitioner.

That's not to criticise the practitioner, far from it. Execution of anything with the depth and breadth of marketing demands individuals who make a narrower expertise their sole focus. If you have ever tried, for example, to get your head around the latest search engine marketing analytics and

techniques, or perhaps marketing mix modelling, or marketing research, you'll appreciate that operational excellence requires intense practice and constant learning.

And for me, the marketing professional is the glue. They are sense makers. Such professionals might not know the intricacies of each and every facet, but they know more than what might be described as mere awareness. They are sufficiently informed to ask probing questions, to challenge the status quo, to join dots, to form and reform teams of marketing practitioners for strategic alignment and continuous operational success.

[Duke Ellington](#) was a composer, pianist and jazz bandleader. He was not considered a virtuosic composer or pianist but excelled as bandleader in bringing the members of the band together to achieve something considered very special. Importantly, in our context here, while any 'num-

ber' the band played had a theme and general direction, jazz musicians sense each other and riff off each other, picking up on new ideas thrown into the mix to see where they might go in support of the wider theme, and Ellington was the catalyst. The audience is in that mix too, providing constant feedback to the band-leader that listens as to what they appreciate all the more.

This continuous master blend of the deliberate and emergent is fundamental to marketing today. In fact, with the complexity of the market and the complexities of business manifest real time through digital technologies, you might say that professional marketers today are into quite complicated jazz!

Books on marketing tend to one extreme, the comprehensive tome, or the other, focusing on just one niche aspect. It's noteworthy then, indeed praiseworthy, that in this ebook David pursues a balance of depth and breadth. Being the marketing professional, he has spotted an over-tendency in this new digital age towards the science at the neglect of the art, and a tendency towards over-specialisation, a prefix conveying an imbalance by definition.

In reading this book you're hearing it like it is from a guy who's been there and done it. It will prove valuable to the new marketer, but also to established marketers who may find themselves too distracted by routine and/or blinkered by over-specialism. It should also I hope contribute to the strategic imperative of professional marketing at the most senior level in business.

Philip Sheldrake

Managing Partner, Euler Partners

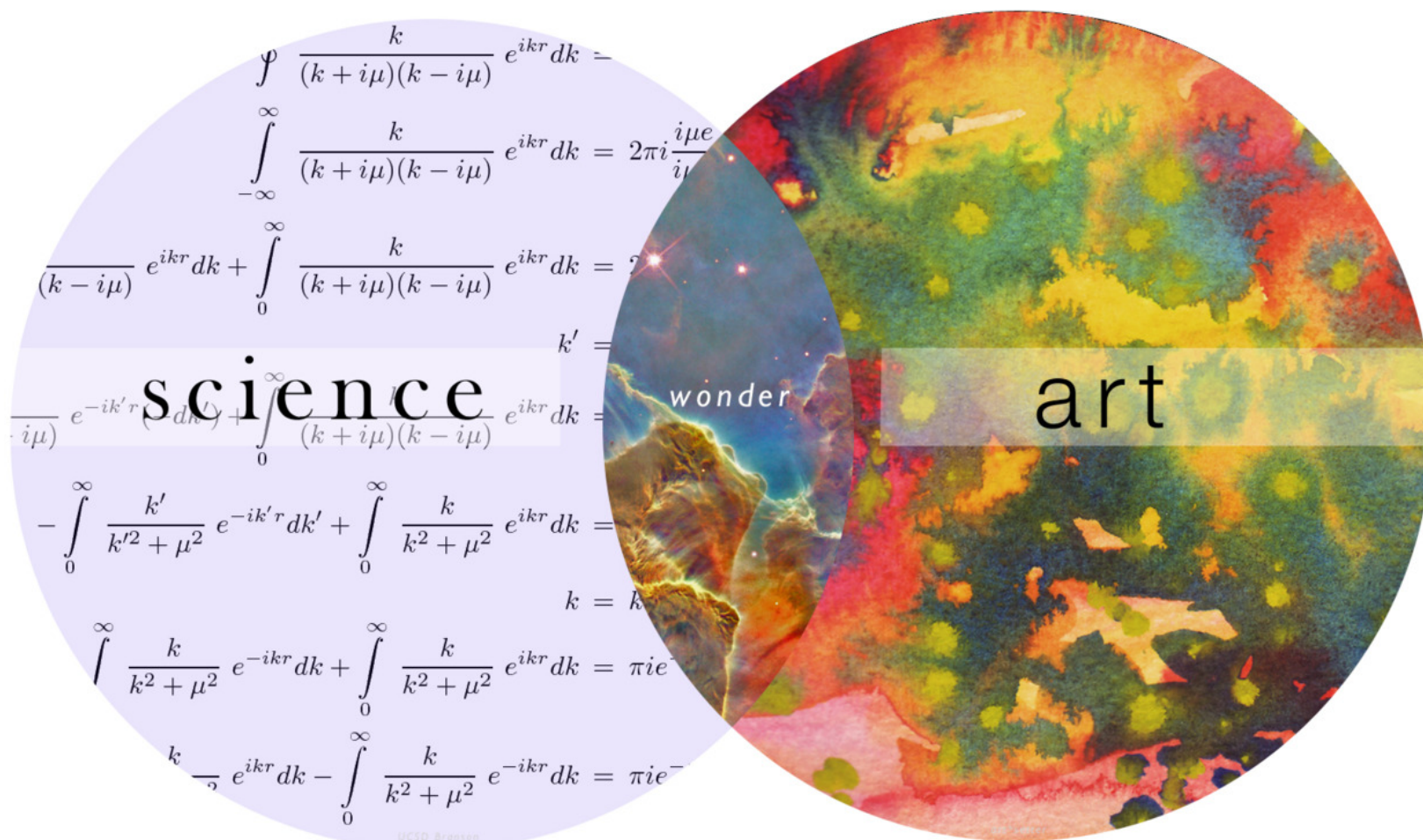
Author:

- ***Attenzi – a social business story, in association with Social Media Today, 2013***
- ***The Business of Influence – reframing marketing and PR for the digital age, Wiley, 2011***
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Art and Science

“Chess is a unique cognitive nexus, a place where art and science come together in the human mind and are then refined and improved by experience.”

— Garry Kasparov



There is significant talk nowadays of marketing being first and foremost a science, and that the Chief Marketing Officers of the future will be data scientists. In fact some editorials and opinions go so far as to say

that unless you have a background in data and analytics you will not have a future in marketing.

I would like to say “**baloney**”, which the english dictionary would define as “pretentious nonsense”.

In addition, the Chartered Institute of Marketing (CIM) defines marketing as: “**The management process responsible for identifying, anticipating and satisfying customer requirements profitably**”, but does this really catch it all? Yes, it is extremely important to create satisfied customers but does this in itself evoke brand loyalty? More bunkum, I believe.

So why would I say this?

A quick example to make a point.

Heather is coming to the end of her mobile contract. She has been very satisfied with the phone and the service that she is getting but is looking for the best new deal. She doesn't care about the brand or look; she just wants the best deal on phone calls. She was very satisfied with the previous contract and was willing to say so but she wants to try something new / different.

David on the other hand is looking for a personal phone as he wants to separate his business calls from his personal calls. He has a strong preference for a specific brand even though he has had some issues with the operator. He is not willing to

change brand and will compromise on the operator and possible level of service to remain with his desired brand. There is significant loyalty here that is based not so much on satisfaction, but more on the fact that there is an emotional connection in place with this brand.

I am sure many of you will relate to this. It is in fact a story from my own family. When we step back and put ourselves in the shoes of a customer we can find many, many instances when satisfaction simply does not mean loyalty. The reality is that we are all human, complicated, individual, imperfect and above all seeking emotional connections with the world around us. We simply cannot be seen as numbers based on data, where a successful outcome is seen as a high Net Promoter Score.

So does satisfaction necessarily infer loyalty? I don't think so and if I am right then we need to start rethinking how we define marketing and not just pigeonhole it as a science.

Here is my take on things; I see **customer satisfaction** as the outcome of applying the science of marketing. It is the ability to understand the customer, to recognise their needs and wants and to provide them with the right offer or response depending

on how the interaction took place. This is almost becoming a given, an expectation of every customer interaction.

However, **customer loyalty** is dependent on the art of marketing, creating an experience that forms an emotional connection, where empathy is established by reflecting the values, thoughts and aspirations of the individual. This takes creativity and innovation.

[Jonathan Mildenhall](#), the creative genius at [Airbnb](#) (who was previously at Coca-Cola) best sums it up when he says, “*Creativity is behind every leap in science and marketing*”.

What this means for all those digital gurus out there is that you may only have one half of how to play the game. The digital marketing ecosystem is becoming a pretty cold, faceless domain and customers need and want more. We are approaching the watershed where, in the words of [Bryan Kramer](#), “*we need to act human again*”.

For me it is essential that both art and science are applied in equal measure to affect the desired outcome. Put another way, identifying the right offer at the precise moment of interaction is only one piece of the puzzle, as the way that the offer is delivered and the experience that is created is what really influences the overall out-

come and the ongoing relationship thereafter.

So let's stop only ***talking*** about science and ensure that creativity (the art of marketing) is supported (and integrated) in equal measure.

I hope this book helps address this challenge and that marketers in the future will seek to seamlessly integrate both art and science to create magical moments that capture the hearts and minds of the customer.

About the book

Marketing is a complex discipline; it has a wide remit which requires understanding and skills in many different areas including research, strategy, creative, media, content, data-mining, technology, etc. In addition, it is a misunderstood discipline and the real reason I decided to write this book stems from frustration.

So have you heard about the three rules of marketing?

- *Everyone has an opinion*
- *Every opinion is different*
- *Every opinion is right*

I have been in so many meetings where participants just come out with some bizarre personal preference. *“Oh, have you considered that colour? Oh, I prefer that font.”* I often wonder what other functions would say if I started throwing around off-the-cuff suggestions about what they do?

Coming back to the three rules of marketing, the reality is that there is a general view of marketing that:

- **Firstly** everyone can do it; it is easy. We are all customers, so we just need to follow what we as individuals like.
- **Secondly** every department believes marketing is there to serve them and all the departments have different needs. *“Aren’t marketing meant to be leading the product roadmap? Surely marketing are tasked to support sales so where are the brochures I need?”*
- **Thirdly** marketing is warm and fuzzy, it doesn’t really impact commercial performance and therefore it doesn’t really matter what they do. *“Whoops, sales are down so first port of call is to cut the marketing budget”.*

It is this lack of understanding of marketing and its potential contribution that is

undermining marketing and resulting in sub-optimal performance. I believe there are a number of reasons for this:

- **Lack of understanding**
- **Lack of empowerment**
- **Lack of authority**

In some cases, as marketers, we are our own worst enemies but all too often it is due to the fact that the marketing function is not given full control over the remit it needs. We need to be trusted, supported and empowered.

This book has therefore been written to help inform all parties about the key aspects of marketing. It does not cover these in depth; this is not a specialist book. But what it does do is set the agenda for what marketing should be responsible for in broad terms and provide some colour around what these responsibilities should entail and how they can benefit the business.

The key point is that marketing cannot succeed in isolation. A successful marketing function is one that influences, inspires and supports every other business function. As [Jonthan Becher](#), the CMO at SAP, says: *“I believe that marketing has always been the glue in a company”*.

There has NEVER been a more important time for marketing to help companies act as one voice in the eyes of their customers.

The format of the book looks at marketing as a journey starting with strategy, then execution and finally closing the loop on the customer. I have also added in some additional chapters on enablement and the future.

The chapters are:

- The vision
- The brand
- The people
- The experience
- The engagement
- The customer
- The organisation
- The technology
- The future

Many will say that the customer should come first and I agree but the flow of the book works best when starting with the vision, which encapsulates the needs of the customer anyway.

I hope you enjoy reading the book.

1

The vision

The cornerstone of a successful company is one that has complete clarity of purpose as defined by a company vision that is understandable, actionable and measurable.

CORPORATE VISION

A company vision should describe what the company stands for and why it exists, and also set forth what it aspires to become, achieve and create. In a nutshell, it details the journey the company is on and the direction in which it is heading.

The value of a well defined vision is very well articulated here by [Angela Ahrendts](#) who was responsible for turning Burberry around into one of the most successful fashion brands of today.

“Leaders must unite teams behind a collective vision, removing self and neutralising egos. By putting the brand first, you create a higher purpose that everyone feels they are contributing to. When leveraged

“Strategy without tactics is the slowest route to victory. Tactics without strategy is the noise before defeat.”

Sun Tzu

inside, this emotive inspiring content has the power to reinforce your values and vision, fueling the belief that collectively, great things can be achieved”

Angela Ahrendts, CEO Burberry / Head of World Wide Retail and Sales elect. Apple January 2014

Corporations, divisions or departments only become great when they have developed an actionable vision - one where there is commitment from all functions to embrace the journey and to track progress against it.

So what is the role of marketing in this?

Vision clarity

[Jim Collins](#) and [Jerry Porras](#) shared the following in the HBR article entitled “Building Your Company’s Vision”, which was included in the [HBR Review on Change](#):

“Many executives thrash about with mission statements and vision statements. Un-

fortunately, most of those statements turn out to be a muddled stew of values, goals, purposes, philosophies, beliefs, aspirations, norms, strategies, practices, and descriptions. They are usually a boring, confusing, structurally unsound stream of words that evoke the response “True, but who cares?” Even more problematic, seldom do these statements have a direct link to the fundamental dynamic of visionary companies: preserve the core and stimulate progress. That dynamic, not vision or mission statements, is the primary engine of enduring companies. Vision simply provides the context for bringing this dynamic to life. Building a visionary company requires 1% vision and 99% alignment. When you have superb alignment, a visitor could drop in from outer space and infer your vision from the operations and activities of the company without ever reading it on paper or meeting a single senior executive.”

This articulates very clearly how important it is to create clarity for a company vision as this is the lynchpin on which you build universal alignment and thereby open up the opportunity for success.

So how can marketing help solve this?

Considerations

- Marketing are the content experts so they need to ensure that the vision has both clarity and credibility (it is authentic, based on current reality, facts and future challenges).
- Make sure that the vision is achievable and that it is set within a realistic timescale. Remove the hubris, over self-confidence, big words and unrealistic statements. It has to be empathetic and believable - “yes we can do this”.
- Identify examples and stories that bring the vision to life and make it understandable and relevant to all employees.

So what is a Mission?

There is often confusion between a vision and a mission and the corresponding statements that are developed. There was a [study](#) conducted by Christopher K. Bart, Nick Bontis and Simon Taggar, that confirmed that organizations with clearly defined vision and mission statements, outperform those who do not.

So what is the difference?

We have already spoken about a vision as a view of the future. A vision statement describes where the company wants to be but it does this from a real human value perspective. It sets out to describe how the purpose of the company, and its val-

ues, will contribute to society and make the world a better place. It conveys a deeper meaning than just financial achievement and seeks to inspire, motivate and align the organisation to this desired future state. It also functions as the guide and is sometimes referred to as the “north star” or beacon that helps employees understand how their day-to-day work contributes to long-term achievement.

James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner wrote an article about this challenge for Harvard Business Review, "[To Lead, Create a Shared Vision](#)". They wrote:

“As counterintuitive as it might seem, then, the best way to lead people into the future is to connect with them deeply in the present. The only visions that take hold are shared visions—and you will create them only when you listen very, very closely to others, appreciate their hopes, and attend to their needs. The best leaders are able to bring their people into the future because they engage in the oldest form of research: They observe the human condition.”

So what defines a vision is the human element, the importance of values, the connection with today and the way it provides guidance to the desired future state, that is broader than just a financial goal.

A mission, on the other hand, purports to define the present state and how the organisation will achieve its long-term aspirations. It tends to be more objective in nature and to focus on a shorter timeframe.

One of the best ways to think of a mission statement is that it answers the following three questions:

- WHAT does the company do?
- WHO does it do it for?
- HOW does it do it?

Another way of thinking about vision and mission statements is:

VISION is about leading, it is about inspiration, it is about establishing belief, building momentum, living your core values and defining how you can contribute to making the world a better place in the future.

MISSION is about managing, it is about improving the every day, it is about building confidence, embracing change, enhancing performance, establishing differentiation and being the best you can be.

The key point is that every company needs to be clear about their vision and their mission. Central to this is conveying clarity

in a way that is engaging, memorable, realistic, consistent and cohesive.

Vision commitment

Almost all corporations suffer from short-termism. In many cases organisations make decisions for short-term gains without considering the long-term consequences. This is especially prevalent in the way that organisations manage their relationships with their customers. Too often decisions are made that hold the best interests of the company above that of the customer. This may provide short-term revenue benefit but it erodes trust and reduces the longer-term opportunity that might be available.

I have always liked the character [Jiminy Cricket](#), who is the fictional character that served as Pinocchio's official conscience. I think we all sometimes desire a sounding board, a personal helper who can guide us in making the right decisions both personally and at work on a daily basis.

I see marketing as the Jiminy Cricket of an organisation, the honest broker, the function that can rise above the day-to-day stresses of running a company and help executives make decisions that support the longer-term. It is our role to enable the company to rise above the treetops and to

see into the distance, to see the way forward and to understand the implications of taking any short-cuts.

Considerations

- Marketing to take an active role in the strategic planning process (due to the importance of the customer). This will ensure that there is a customer first (market-in) balance to the planning process.
- Develop and agree some specific milestones (desired achievements) with defined timelines over a three year horizon that can then serve as a longer-term litmus test on progress.
- Ensure there is clear accountability across the functions for adoption and execution of an integrated, uniform approach to delivering superior customer experience and more valuable customer relationships. Improving customer experience is not a quick-win: it is always a long-term and resource intensive challenge.

Vision tracking

The vast majority of companies use a [Balanced Scorecard \(BSC\)](#) as their strategy performance management tool. The usual characteristics for a balanced scorecard are:

- Focus on strategic initiatives that support the corporate vision
- Selection of a small number of performance metrics to track
- Mix of financial and non-financial data items

However, most corporate performance goals are too heavily focused on revenue and profit based metrics alone. These are clearly extremely important but they are generally not the best data points to evidence progress against a company vision. This is especially true where a new pricing model or route to market has been introduced. A good example would be a software company moving from a term license pricing model to a subscription based model (where revenue is spread out over a two or three year period rather than being taken up front).

Clearly any balanced metrics that are adopted for use in a balanced scorecard are going to be as unique as the company's vision, its strategy, its tactics, its competitive position, the market it's in and the company itself.

So whilst I am sharing some non-financial measures below, I am not intending for these to be in any way prescriptive. These suggestions are only meant to promote

your own thinking about the measures that would best support your own unique situation.

Customer Segment Share (CSS)

This is important as it sets out to track the changes in a market segment and your company / product performance within it.

Measures should include:

- Size of market segment
- % share of segment

Customer Acquisition Cost (CAC)

This is the time it takes to payback sales & marketing costs for acquiring a new customer.

- Usually presented in months

Churn and Renewal rates (C+R)

This is about tracking the status of the overall customer base and measures should include:

- Total number of customers
- % renewal rate
- Number of lost customers

Customer Lifetime Value (CLTV)

The CLTV is the net present value of the recurring profit streams of a given customer less the acquisition and any ongoing sales & marketing costs. A host of other

measures can be included in this including:

- Average basket / order size
- Share of wallet
- Number of products bought / held by customer
- Frequency of purchase

Based on an average CLTV for a specific customer segment there is also the opportunity to identify the specific % of CLTV achieved for that customer.

Community Lifetime Value (new CLTV)

Given the influence that individuals can exert on other members of a community, it also makes sense to think of Community Lifetime Values. An obvious example of this would be households or friendship circles for mobile phone contracts.

This approach has significant potential benefits for two reasons:

- It identifies and reflects the role of influence amongst your customer base
- It evaluates an individual's contribution to value not just on their own activity (which may be low) but also on the influence they exert on the broader community (which may be high)

Customer health score

For those companies that have a sophisticated management of their customer data, they can also look to develop a customer health score.

The purpose would be to measure the strength of existing customer relationships and then to use this to identify “low strength” relationships with high untapped potential. The measure for assessing relationship strength should extend beyond Net Promoter Score (NPS) measures to include observed customer behaviors and reactions to specific events.

The overall goal is to determine which measures of relationship strength are most highly correlated with measures of financial value.

The suggested approach would be as follows:

- Identify the customer segment to study
- Develop estimates of current and potential value for customers in this segment.
- Identify a set of potential relationship strength measures (these are engagements, responses and / or data points that might indicate relationship health. e.g. number of times signing on to online banking or number of customer inquiries made

- Identify the relationship strength measures that aligns with value. Use analytics to identify connections between engagement and % of potential value that could be attained through relationship

The result would be a statistical model that would provide a relationship strength score. This could then be:

- Tracked through the balanced scorecard, so you not only know the size of your customer base but you also know how valuable the relationships are
- Used as a base for determining a set of different customer treatments based on relationship health (that reflects the relationship journey stage the customer is at)

Scorecard governance

With these additional, more non-financial data metrics, it is recommended that marketing take responsibility for these measures and that they are communicated and discussed on a regular basis. It is also important that marketing ensure that there are agreed actions or responses agreed when performance exceeds or underperforms expectation. Knowledge / insights in themselves are not enough and have no value unless action is taken.

The key challenge to gaining commitment to these metrics is that they are long-term

indicators that are often overlooked as organisations focus on the next quarterly results.

In this way, marketing should act as the company conscience, responsible for ensuring the organisation understands, commits and evaluates their performance against the long-term vision. Back to the role of Jiminy.

Considerations

- Ensure that the balanced scorecard measures are extended to include metrics that better reflect progress against long-term vision
- Ensure that the balanced scorecard can be visually displayed as a dashboard.
- Ensure there is a formal review process in place, at least monthly
- Recommend that there is an agreed set of actions developed to respond to positive or negative performance so variances to goals are acted upon
- Finally, try and connect all the customer performance metrics into a customer lifecycle so progress of customers through the various stages can be tracked

The concept of Total Cost of Ownership (TCO) can work very well when applied to the customer lifecycle as this helps directly

identify where the issues or barriers are and at what stage there is a blockage in building new relationships and enhancing existing ones. Is the problem with awareness, conversion, up-sell or advocacy or something else? It also helps correlate specific indicators to long-term goals. For example, if web traffic numbers are falling how is this impacting the longer-term development of more profitable customers?

There is no benefit in doing four out of five things well in regard to customer engagement if the one element that you don't do well ends up breaking the chain.

SOCIAL PURPOSE

Corporate transparency is now changing the way that customers think about companies. Customers are now taking an interest in the social responsibility of the organisation from which they are buying. Companies that put shareholder return above the needs of society as a whole are slowly being discarded by customers who are putting community needs above their own individual needs.

An organisation's social purpose is therefore becoming increasingly influential and needs to be part of the overall company

vision. This is important for both customers as well as employees, both of which are seeing this as part of the basis for their ongoing relationship. Companies are moving more and more to becoming broader communities where there is enhanced participation and influence across all members (both inside and outside the company).

In addition, I like to think that the essence of the brand promise has gone from a product promise (function) to a customer promise (experience) and is now leading to a **social promise (influence)**.

A brand promise is the promise that you make to your customers that identifies what they should expect for all the interactions that they have with your people, products, services and company.

So what do I mean by social promise?

Very simply, there is a promise to put society (community) at the heart of the brand. The brand will first and foremost promise to do what's best for society. The brand will achieve this by considering and responding to the sum of all influences; the influence the brand has on society and the influence society has on the brand.

In my mind, successful brands of the future will be those that convey and live by a set of social ideals. Ideals that are influenced by and that resonate with the savvy, conscientious and informed customers of today.

Considerations

- Understand the impact your company has on the environment, on society and in local communities
- Identify and establish a social purpose for the company that aligns with the company vision
- Embed this social purpose into the brand values that you wish the company to portray and live by
- Identify how you can develop a culture that reflects and supports this social purpose
- Help employees bring the social purpose to life and to be able to demonstrate the commitment and passion of the organization through acts not just words

COMMUNITY

One of the most obvious outcomes of our love affair with social media is that we are becoming more and more connected with the broader world about us and not just

the community in which we live and work. So will this influence our brand choice?

Certainly this is the viewpoint of [Simon Mainwaring](#) in his article "[Purpose-Driven Social Brands Will Win Marketing 3.0](#)" who says *"It's no longer good enough to just be on social media." Marketing 3.0 will be won by those who become purpose-driven social brands, and to do so, marketing, sustainability, CSR, and Foundation leads can no longer operate in silos, but instead must align to bring a cohesive brand story to life."*

Edelman undertook a research study in 2012 named [GoodPurpose](#) where 8,000 customers were interviewed from 16 different markets to assess customers' views on the role of social purpose in companies. Based on the results, [Carol Cone](#) wrote the following:

"To be successful today, leading brands and corporations must stand beyond making profits. Edelman's 2012 Trust Barometer found that tomorrow's trust is built on societal performance through the treatment of employees, putting customers ahead of profits, and investments in the environment, society and local communities. Edelman CEO Richard Edelman called this seismic shift an organization's

need to go beyond earning a “license to operate” to earning a “license to lead.” A critical way to do this is by bringing society “inside” the organization to gain business and social impact.”

So today’s customer is better educated, informed and connected than ever before and is now more conscious of the world around them. This enlightenment is starting to influence customer priorities and decisions. Are customers really so selfish that only their needs and expectations matter? I don’t think so, and increasing connectivity may well change this forever.

Imagine a Starbucks where you can see a live feed from the coffee growers or in a Burberry store where you can hear about some of the community initiatives taking place to support the factory workers. Would we pay more, wait longer or take a less packaged product if we knew that our actions would make a positive difference to the people we impact? This is especially so in local communities and there are many examples of local initiatives where this trend is already underway.

It is an interesting world we live in and I believe global connectivity will influence customers to support companies that “make a difference” rather than just satisfy

their needs. It is already not just about the customer.

There is a social platform called [neighbourly](#) that today is already helping local communities and organisations to make this a reality. They help connect the needs of local community projects with the resources of companies, both large and small to create mutual value for everyone. It is a real win-win.



Considerations

- Develop a specific social programme or programmes that all employees can participate in
- Regularly share and communicate community initiatives across the company and the positive impact that the company is having on local communities
- Support and empower employees to participate in local community projects
- Capture these local community stories and integrate these into your overall brand content marketing plans

CORPORATE RELATIONSHIPS

One of the outcomes of embedding a social purpose into a company philosophy is that it establishes the fact that there is a wider community at play. It helps to build a wider, more productive and more valuable community that is built on the principles of mutual value exchange.

[Philip Sheldrake](#) in his book [Attenzi](#) positions this as “*treating others as you would have them treat you*”. This could be quite a change for some companies in the way that they interface with other stakeholders in their broader community.

A very obvious example of this is the £36 billion in late payments owed to SMBs (Small and Medium Businesses) by large corporates in the UK alone. This is a staggering amount, by any measure, and is actually putting businesses out of the market. The response has been that the government has created a [Prompt Payment Code](#) to which organisations are asked to adhere. So far, this is having limited impact.

.....BUT what will make a difference is when customers find out how corporates are putting local businesses out of business through late payments. The seeds are sown, the world is changing and organisa-

tions need to respond now before their reputations are severely and irrevocably dented.

CORPORATE TRANSPARENCY

I believe corporate transparency is worth a mention in its own right.

What is corporate transparency? Well it has three main components:

- **The knowledge economy.** The fact that customers know so much more about companies, brands, products and employees due to the information that is available on the internet.
- **Corporate openness & honesty.** The need for companies to earn the trust of their customers and to demonstrate honesty in what they do. Customers want the real facts when something goes wrong like a product recall or a service complaint.
- **Customer data and privacy.** Customers want to have control over their personal data and to know how it is being used by the corporation.

These trends are forcing companies to develop more structured approaches to how they manage the interchange of informa-

tion between themselves and the outside world.

Information has been set free and organisations and marketing in particular need to have a strategy in place to manage this.

Considerations

- Recognise that every communication has to be honest and authentic
- Develop and share your customer data privacy approach with your customers
- Make it really easy for your customers to know, access and to be able to change their communication preferences

CORPORATE STRATEGY

It is important to understand that to fulfil a vision a company must implement a business strategy.

The strategy defines the set of activities and investments to be made to fulfill the vision. It is important to realise that there will be a series of investments to be made that have may have important inter-connecting dependencies. It is therefore essential that these are identified, understood and prioritised.

This also means that the longer-term outlook has to be considered and therefore a business strategy for the next financial year should not be developed in isolation. It is certainly appropriate therefore, as part of the planning process, to consider a three year timeframe.

This is a good time to consider the debate of Deliberate Strategy versus Emergent Strategy. Mintzberg and Waters first developed their classification of business strategies in 1985 in their paper "[Of Strategies, Deliberate and Emergent](#)".

One way to consider deliberate and emergent strategies is to see them as two ends of a continuum. On one end, a deliberate strategy must be realised exactly as intended with the assumption that no external forces would have influenced it. On the other end, an emergent strategy has no clearly spelt out intention from central leadership and it develops based on influences and outcomes of realised actions.

The fundamental difference therefore between the two types of strategy is that the deliberate focuses on getting things down in a planned, controlled way whereas the emergent strategy embraces the concept of adapting your strategy as you continuously learn.



A good analogy is that you are setting out on a car journey. You have a clearly defined destination in mind (vision) but there are two different approaches you could take to get there. On one hand, you have a highly planned route, knowing where you will stop, how long for, how long it will take etc. On the other hand, you set off, open to be influenced by what you find, hear and see and adapt your journey as you go.

No company commits entirely to a deliberate strategy as this negates the ability to learn or to an emergent strategy as this provides no control. Companies therefore seek to take a blended approach where they can still exercise some control whilst also benefiting from continuous learning.

So why is it important to consider this now?

The real catalyst is the staggering pace of change in the current business environment. This is opening up the opportunity for established organisations to be disrupted by agile start-ups that bring new products, services, channels and business models to market in very short timeframes.

This speed of change means companies have to be more open to considering an emergent approach to business strategy. The advantages of this is that it brings flexibility, increased responsiveness, and an increased willingness to learn in a complex, uncertain and changing environment.

This is a complex topic and there is no easy answer but in conclusion, companies need to blend these two disciplines. The relative emphasis on one or the other may shift from time to time but the need to exercise control whilst continuously learning and adapting remains constant. More information and insight can be found in the attached article from [Dr. Tendayi Viki](#)

Whatever approach is taken, a good maxim is that the real value is in the actual planning itself rather than the plan.

Irrespective of whether the company adopts a more emergent approach (strategic guidelines) or a more deliberate ap-

proach (detailed strategic plan), the company still needs to cascade this information down through the organisation.

This ensures alignment around overall objectives and the desired outcomes that are sought. The traditional way of communicating this information would be through the application of a [Strategy Map](#). A strategy map is used to:

- Communicate the strategy (strategic guidelines / strategic plan) across an organisation
- Convey the key objectives and desired outcomes
- Focus the resource utilisation and efforts of that organisation
- Provide the basis for reporting the progress of the organisation in the implementation of the strategy through use of a balanced scorecard

As part of a strategic planning process it is also important to understand what to stop doing or what not to start doing. Strategy is about priorities and focusing your attention where you can get the greatest progress against your vision. This doesn't mean there aren't other things you could do that would contribute to the end goal. It is always worth identifying these and capturing why they were not included. This ensures alignment, breadth of considera-

tion and helps in the on-going review process as learnings are gathered from realised actions.

Considerations

- Identify quick wins. This builds confidence/motivation, creates momentum and demonstrates success both internally and externally
- Quick wins also provide immediate learning that can better guide future actions
- Start the planning 3 years out and then work backwards. This ensures that the thinking behind the strategy is fully integrated across the entire planning period. It also identifies less short-term risks or knowledge gaps that need to be considered
- Ensure planning consistency and capture objectives, strategy, measures, goals and tactics for all investments. All goals need to be objective, actionable and measurable
- Develop dynamic and creative videos to communicate the strategy to all employees
- Start early if you need to, to ensure that you are up and running by the start of the next financial year

2

The Brand

A brand, especially when it is a corporate brand, is often only seen as a creative platform that has been developed to ensure consistency of communication. In these cases marketing is often seen as the brand steward, with the role of ensuring that all communication is “on brand” and is positive and consistent. This, however, is just touching the surface as a well managed brand is so much more.

[David Aaker](#) sums it up perfectly when he conveys that branding is *“Far more than a name and logo, [a brand] is an organization’s promise to a customer to deliver what the brand stands for not only in terms of functional benefits but also emotional, self-expressive, and social benefits.”*

What this means is that the brand is actually the foundation for influencing the customer and the purchasing choices they make. We are all aware that positive and loyal customer relationships fuel commer-

cial success and therefore a great brand is intrinsic to a company’s success.

Not only is this the case with product brands but increasingly organisations are seeing a real benefit in creating a strong corporate brand that is referenced across all products and services that they offer.

This is happening for a number of reasons but two key reasons are:

- A corporate brand better conveys corporate values (which are becoming more important in the purchasing decision process)
- Product brands are difficult and expensive to create and sustain. This is one of the reasons Procter & Gamble (P&G) is cutting back the number of brands they have. [P&G to shed more than half its brands](#)

For a corporate brand to be successful, it requires a high level of strategic alignment.

In the article [“Are the strategic stars aligned for your corporate brand?”](#) which was published in the Harvard Business Review, by Mary Jo Hatch and Majken Schultz, they say:

“A company must align three interdependent elements--call them strategic stars--to create a strong corporate brand: vision, culture, and image.”

This need for alignment is critical for another reason and that is the importance of meeting the customers’ expectations. Their expectations have changed and customers are more demanding than ever before. The end result is that the company needs to act as one and achieve consistency and cohesion between what the company is, how it acts and what it says.

This means every touchpoint with the customer is important and needs to be aligned. [David Cooperstein](#), who was the Head of the CMO practice at [Forrester Research](#), stated:

“In this age of the customer, the only sustainable competitive advantage is knowledge of and engagement with customers”.

So companies need to get these engagements right and the corporate brand is the glue that needs to connect the vision, culture and image together.

The new reality is that vision, culture and image need to be so closely interlocked that they should seem indistinguishable. **This is the Challenge!**

Today these elements are usually managed by different stakeholders, who have different priorities, objectives and initiatives. So successful companies of the future need to find a way to bring these stakeholders together and find a way to make them work together as one team.

The marketing function needs to rise to this challenge and act as the custodian of the corporate brand. In so doing, it needs to take responsibility for engaging stakeholders, empowering and supporting them and creating the right environment and conditions for every employee to live the values of the company.

Considerations

- Establish an internal corporate brand group with representation from all functions, across all key geographies

- Create an HR/Marketing initiative with a common purpose to build a strong working relationship between both functions, which is focused on bringing key cultural values to life
- Develop a company-wide induction programme so new employees understand the corporate brand and are able to fit into the new culture seamlessly
- Build a co-ordinated programme with facilities management in order to ensure that the corporate brand values are embedded into working environments

DNA OF GREAT BRANDS

Every great brand needs to have a strong brand structure where there is clarity and authenticity as to what the brand stands for.

[Interbrand](#), one of the leading brand agencies in the world and the company that invented the brand valuation model (that enables you to assess the contribution of the brand to the business results) have developed a brand genetic code. This [DNA](#) is a great guide for ensuring that a corporate brand is well defined and helps lay the foundation for the brand to become a major contributor to the business.

Their approach includes:

- Internal factors
- External factors



Internal Factors

Clarity

Clarity internally about what the brand stands for and its values, positioning and proposition. Clarity too about target audiences, customer insights and drivers. Because so much hinges on this, it is vital that these are articulated and shared across the organization.

Commitment

Internal commitment to brand, and a belief internally in the importance of brand. The extent to which the brand receives support in terms of time, influence, and investment.

Protection

How secure the brand is across a number of dimensions: legal protection, proprietary ingredients or design, scale or geographical spread.

Responsiveness

The ability to respond to market changes, challenges and opportunities. The brand should have a sense of leadership internally and a desire and ability to constantly evolve and renew itself.

External factors

Authenticity

The brand is soundly based on an internal truth and capability. It has a defined heritage and a well-grounded value set. It can deliver against the (high) expectations that customers have of it.

Relevance

The fit with customer/customer needs, desires, and decision criteria across all relevant demographics and geographies.

Differentiation

The degree to which customers/ customers perceive the brand to have a differentiated positioning distinctive from the competition.

Consistency

The degree to which a brand is experienced without fail across all touch points or formats.

Presence

The degree to which a brand feels omnipresent and is talked about positively by customers, customers and opinion formers in both traditional and social media.

Understanding

The brand is not only recognised by customers, but there is also an in-depth knowledge and understanding of its distinctive qualities and characteristics (where relevant, this will extend to customer understanding of the company that owns the brand).

BRAND MODEL

Every brand needs to be consistent, cohesive and aligned to the company vision. This can only be achieved if a structured brand model is developed which encapsulates all brand elements.

Every brand model needs to be developed by taking into account both internal and external factors and to work across all stakeholders: shareholders, employees, partners and customers. Usually the process involves two phases: establishing the brand definition and then developing & executing on the brand expression.

The following just provides an example of the core components that you would usually see in a standard brand model.

The brand definition phase comprises:

Data inputs

- *Internal assessment*
 - Corporate vision

- Business opportunity and goal confirmation
- Perceived challenges / gaps
- Available resources, capabilities and skills
- Corporate values
- Social purpose and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)
- *External assessment*
 - Market, industry and category assessment and trend analysis
 - Competitive assessment and differentiation
 - Market drivers (motivators & inspirations)
 - Current customer brand perceptions and experiences
 - Customer identification, wants, needs and expectations

Strategic options

- Distilling down the information into the core essence of the brand
- Identifying key brand muscles (the areas of strength that you are able to flex)
- Identifying the varying concepts on which the brand can be established
- Creating hypotheses for the brand positioning

Brand definition

- Brand positioning

- Brand personality
- Brand proposition
- Brand story (brand brought to life as a narrative)
- Brand promise

The brand execution phase which confirms how the brand will be expressed comprises:

Brand messaging

- Messaging framework / map
- Tagline

Brand architecture

- Experiences (how does it behave?)
- Visual identity (what does it look like?)
- Voice (how does it speak?)
- Environment (how does it feel?)

This would include asset development and guideline creation.

The importance of brand architecture is that each element needs to be able to work together. It is about building a “sensory cloak” that can engage all the human senses and create an experience that conveys the brand values consistently.

Defining the “Environment” is part of a brand architecture and is important for a number of reasons, even if you don’t have retail stores:

- It can and should be applied to your workplace
- It is a cornerstone for the design of executive briefing centers and anywhere else that your customers may visit company premises such as offices or factories
- It helps guide product design and product development
- It can be a real differentiator as the physical “touchy feely” has the ability to create very strong memories with customers

To design for an environment, most companies create a design language. This design language would include the visual identity guidelines along with guidelines on:

Forms & Shapes; extreme, simple, geometric, solid, dynamic (conveying movement).

e.g. The modular form of [Uniqlo](#)



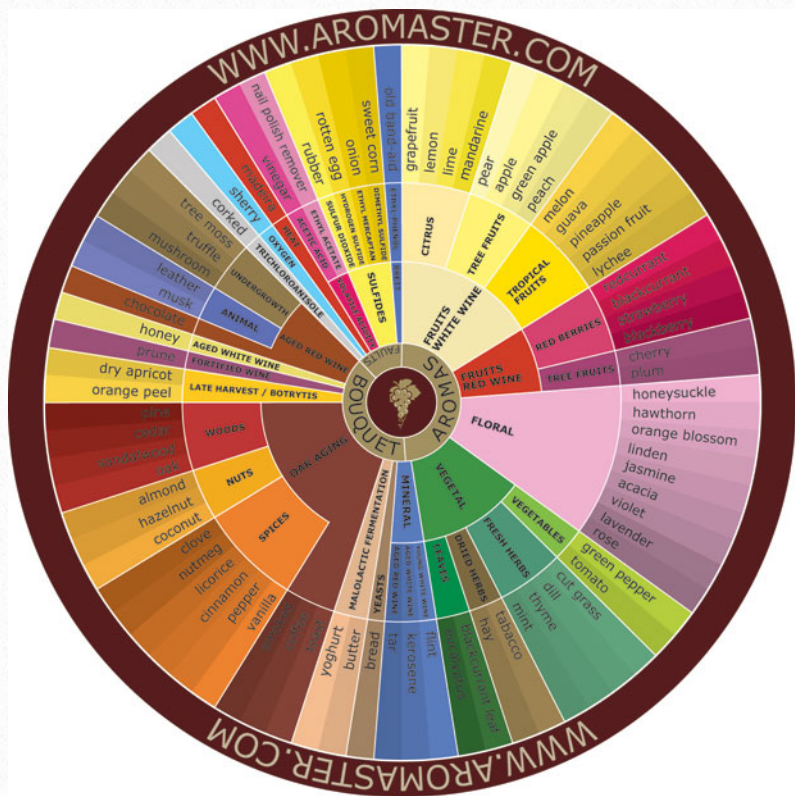
Materials; textures (rough/smooth), functionality, finishes (reflective/matt).

e.g. Great examples here are the introduction of aluminium bottles by companies like Coca-Cola, Heineken and Budweiser.



 if it's hip, it's here. 

Smell; use an aroma wheel to define the smell of a brand. This one is provided by [Aromaster](#), which is a little more interesting as it is a wine aroma wheel.



A great example of this is the wafting of bakery smells when walking past a [Sainsbury's](#) convenience store. Many people will be amazed at just how much companies apply fragrance strategies in the retail and leisure industries today.

One other area that is sometimes overlooked is the area of brand voice. This usually takes the form of a set of guidelines in a booklet that often gets left on a shelf and forgotten about. But the brand voice is very important as it defines the human characteristics that are attributed to and personify the brand. It is a reflection of the brand personality and the type of people that represent the company. The reason this is so important is that in this digital (electronic) world customers seek to build emotional connections with brands. It is what being human is all about.

Campaign development

- Campaign concept development
- Campaign research validation
- Campaign asset development

Activation

- Brand asset introduction
- Current branding update
- Employee engagement
- Brand launch

Engagement

- Customer journey definition
- Experience design
- Experience management
- Localisation
- Personalisation

I will not be going into detail on any of the elements of the brand model here, as there are people who are far more capable than me of articulating this. I will therefore leave it to the experts.

....However, I would like to cover the Brand Promise as this sits at the heart of every brand and invariably is an area that companies often get wrong.

BRAND PROMISE

The brand promise describes what we say we will deliver to our customers and what they will gain from engaging with us.

A strong brand promise is one that connects your vision, purpose, your positioning, your strategy, your people and your customer experience. It enables you to deliver your brand in a way that connects emotionally with your customers and differentiates your brand.

A promise, however, is only worthwhile if the company can keep it. If any aspect of the brand, which could be product, packaging, advertising, availability, Point of Sale (POS), engagement or service doesn't deliver on its promise then its reputation—and sales—will likely decline.

A brand promise needs to be delivered at every touch point, at every engagement with the customer. In many cases this will involve company employees, whether in a retail environment, at a call center, at an event, in communications or responding to a service need.

This is supported by [David Aaker](#) who states: *“The brand will only deliver on the brand promise if the employees ‘believe’ and live the brand in all the customer touch points.”*

Considerations

- Start with employees and build a culture that can successfully deliver the brand

promise by focusing on these employee initiatives:

- Play to people **strengths** and focus on values where there is already belief, adoption and competency. Quick wins establish credibility, momentum and validation
- Keep it **simple**, thereby reducing reasons and barriers for not embracing corporate values
- Give people **space** to express themselves and to be able to demonstrate desired behaviours
- Provide a **support** system with authority at individual level to make decisions that uphold the brand promise in the eyes of the customer

BRAND REPUTATION

However, a brand promise is no longer enough to convince an audience of the values and merits of an organisation's product or service offering. Customers are now relying very heavily on the experience of other users to determine the viability of a brand. A wealth of information is available as individuals share their experiences through word of mouth, social and e-commerce channels.

Every organisation needs to recognise that **brand reputation** and how it acts is now more important than what it says.

“Be honest, transparent, trustworthy and deliver on your promises by doing exactly what you say you will do.”

Considerations

- Identify key influencers and build engagement programmes that will amplify positive sentiment
- Identify customer proof points that validate brand promise
- Capture customer advocacy and build into future brand content
- Identify and communicate employee stories that support the brand promise

BRAND ENGAGEMENT

Everything in this chapter so far has been about establishing the brand framework but what is truly important is how the brand emotionally connects with the customer.

The reason for this is best described by the branding consultant [Jim Stengel](#), former global marketing officer of Procter & Gamble and author of [Grow: How Ideals Power Growth and Profit at the World's Greatest Companies](#), who says:

“We're seeing more of an emphasis on brands building emotional relationships with customers because it's powerful and it works. When you do it, you have a much stronger affinity, a much stronger business, much stronger growth and much stronger results.”

The ability to establish an emotional connection with a brand is centered on establishing trust. [The Values Institute](#) conducted a survey with 1,220 US customers and identified five values that influence trust in a brand:

- **Ability** (company performance)
- **Concern** (care for customers, employees and community)
- **Connection** (sharing customers' values)
- **Consistency** (dependability of products/services)
- **Sincerity** (openness and honesty)

3

The people

I have recently read a number of articles that discuss the differences between **leadership and management** and what constitutes best practice. I believe this topic is now top of mind as recognition is growing that people and thereby talent are the fulcrum on which any successful company needs to establish itself.

A very smart colleague once said to me that there are three competencies that you need in any successful organisation and each one is intrinsically linked.

The first is functional competence; the ability, talent and skills to conduct tasks, to execute processes, to undertake agreed actions and to deliver on the agreed plans of the organisation. Clearly you need people who are knowledgeable on a subject area, are confident enough to make decisions and can deliver on the outcomes that add value to a business.

The second area is managerial competence; the role of management is to enable the functional teams to perform to the best of their ability. It is about unlocking their potential and enabling them to deliver exceptional work. This includes:

- Structured planning
- Resource allocation
- Clear goal setting
- Removing challenges and barriers
- Developing skills
- Aligning expertise to areas of need
- Ensuring the talent available best fits the needs of the business

It is also about how to promote and achieve collaboration. Two minds are always better than one and it is therefore essential that management enables and promotes collaboration at every opportunity.

The final area of competence is leadership; leadership is about defining the long-

term direction of the company and providing a working environment that enables and empowers the organisation to successfully achieve its goals.

My personal view is that this all starts with a corporate vision and a great vision can positively impact a company in two ways. It can:

- **Provide clarity of purpose** along with a very well defined journey as to how success will be achieved.
- **Create the right environment** by establishing a set of principles and cultural values that motivate, inspire and impassion everyone to go the extra mile and deliver their best possible work.

I am a great fan of [Jim Collins](#) and I believe his description of a Level 5 leader in [“Good to Great”](#) hits this nail on the head when he says:

“A Level 5 leader displays a paradoxical blend of personal humility and professional will.”

It is the ability to create and establish absolute clarity of purpose whilst ensuring that success is only seen through the action of others that would seem to define great leadership.

A quick real-life story. I was attending the usual monthly executive team meeting and the CEO walked in and said “OK we have our vision, our agreed activities and overall goals. Lets not review those today. What I would like to do instead is to focus on the 44 managers who report into this team. It is incumbent on us sitting here today to support, equip and empower this group to perform to the best of their ability. It could be providing more decision-making authority, removing barriers, mentoring or any number of activities but the benefit to the organisation is that if we help our colleagues improve productivity by 10%, we have not only improved the working environment but also delivered five additional heads to the business.”

When I recount this story it is always met with praise but also with the response that no one has experienced such an approach themselves. In my opinion, this is one of the best examples of what great leadership means.

Considerations

Interestingly, if you follow this logic, leaders need to create a vision and culture that supports managers who then need to use this empowerment to unlock the potential of all employees. It is in effect an upside down organisation chart.

So in this type of organisation, here is a list of behaviours I would hope to see:

- A vision and clarity of purpose brought to life through great storytelling, using real-life stories of employees, partners and customers
- Momentum created through continuous engagement and communication
- Personal conviction built through authenticity, trust and direct face-to-face engagement
- Leadership providing direction rather than directives
- An empathetic working environment that builds connectivity and collaboration
- Promotion of diversity of thought as this enhances innovation, sharing and transparency
- Humility winning over hubris
- Empowered people who are confident to break new ground
- A caring culture as this deepens relationships and enables personal goals to be connected to company objectives
- Supportive management as this enhances productivity
- A fun environment as this is the best way to motivate the delivery of outstanding work

For those of you, seeking to take a true leadership role, then it is worth drawing to your attention the premise that traditional functional hierarchy is being severely challenged. What stands to replace it is a [heterarchy](#) system of organization, where the elements of the organization are unranked (non-hierarchical) or where they could be ranked in different ways. These systems are not mutually exclusive and you can have heterarchy systems that include hierarchical groups.

The rationale is that a corporation adopting some form of heterarchy would benefit in the following ways:

- It is easier to extend the network to resources outside the organisation. This is the principle of a social business
- The organisation is more adaptable to change and therefore more responsive to market / competition changes
- Knowledge can be shared and applied more successfully as traditional silos are removed
- Opportunity to innovate is enhanced as it is easier for effective collaboration to occur with a more diverse group of stakeholders

Irrespective of the type of organisation structure, great leadership requires focus in two areas:

- ***The people you work with and how you can empower them***
- ***The ability to establish clarity of understanding***

This brings me to a great story about [Albert Einstein](#) and one that always amuses me. The correlation to this theme on leadership, being a combination of vision and the success of others, is frankly pretty weak, but the story is fun none the less.

One day during a speaking tour, Albert Einstein's driver, who often sat at the back of the hall during his lectures, remarked that he could probably give the lecture himself, having heard it so many times. Sure enough, at the next stop on the tour, Einstein and the driver switched places, with Einstein sitting at the back in his driver's uniform.

Having delivered a flawless lecture, the driver was asked a difficult question by a member of the audience. "Well, the answer to that question is quite simple," he casually replied. "I bet my driver, sitting up at the back there, could answer it!"

Considerations

- Consider employing a journalist who can help craft the vision story in a way that empowers and inspires every employee
- Be consistent in the storytelling, whether it be internal, external, executive meetings, employee roundtables, office updates or social events
- Take a transparent and pragmatic approach to how company progress is shared both internally as well as externally
- Bring progress to life through real employee and client stories that emphasise everything great about the company
- Build an internal story programme where it is easy for employees to contribute and also to be recognised and praised

CULTURE

The culture of a company is the company's soul and heartbeat. The beliefs and subsequent behaviours of a company must guide but more importantly impact their future commercial success.

A company culture needs to be embedded in the way every employee behaves and what every employee cares about.

A great culture should be **HIP**:

- **Help** every employee define what it means to be an employee (not the other way round) as it is people that create and sustain a company culture
- **Inspire** every employee to be and to achieve the best they can
- **Provide** the environment to support and help every employee deliver the best possible work they can do

It is also important to recognise that everyone is different. Some people are introvert and some are extrovert. It is **not** about making everyone and everything the same, it is about creating a culture where diversity is recognised, encouraged and supported but can come together under a common set of values and beliefs.

This is also important to recognise from a working environment standpoint and to ensure that the needs of every employee are taken into account. So there needs to be areas for privacy, for social gathering, for fun, for creative expression etc. It is not a case of one size fits all.

Considerations

- Start with culture and establish a marketing function that is built on respect, transparency, collaboration, shared success and fun

- Great culture will attract great people

Jim Collins once said: *“If I were running a company today, I would have one priority above all others: to acquire as many of the best people as I could”*.

- Get to know the skills and competencies of your team members and focus their efforts on areas where they excel
- Always recognise, support and motivate your team members by focusing on the positives, whether it is success or opportunities to improve. This will ensure your team contributes more so imagine everyone gives a further 10%, you have just increased your full-time employees (FTEs) by 5 people for a team of 50
- Allow people to be personally accountable and give everyone the chance to show what they can deliver
- Set goals on outcomes and not activities, this way you allow freedom to experiment and innovate

So, in summary, if you get the right people onboard, establish a culture in which they can express themselves and then you empower them with the best possible insights, you will have gone a long way to establishing a foundation for a successful culture, team and company.

DRINK YOUR OWN CHAMPAGNE

One other aspect of culture is to create an environment where employees are committed to and passionate about using their own products and services. You should always remember that every employee is also a customer.

By “drinking your own champagne” you gain the following advantages:

- You get to know and understand your products better
- You become your own best advocates
- You can test and try out new ideas and concepts, at a very early stage
- You become experts in knowing what your products can deliver and this in turn can create compelling case studies
- You can create market momentum, through word of mouth through friends and family

Considerations

- Make sure resources are set aside to support “Drink your Own Champagne” initiatives
- Develop and implement a structured internal communications programme to build awareness, support and enthusiasm for utilising your own products

MUTUAL VALUE EXCHANGE

Companies often only look at the return on their investment without considering whether they are delivering mutual value in return to the customer.

A great example of this is in the UK where various companies were offering different HDMI cables from £6 up to over £80 per cable and claiming there was a discernible difference in picture quality. Then the news broke that the type of cable made no difference at all to the quality of picture delivered. Clearly these retail stores were trying and succeeding to profiteer on the sale of these cable accessories.

So what’s the likelihood of these customers buying their next large purchase from these companies? Hum, that’s an easy one.

This type of strategy is usually driven by short-termism, where there is a desire to focus on the immediate sale rather than on the long-term opportunity . However, a number of industries, such as financial services, do use [Customer Lifetime Value \(CLV\)](#) metrics so they take a longer term approach. Again this is based on a company first, inside-out, strategy.

A great example of this is the mis-selling scam of Lloyds Bank who sold protection policies for fraudulent transactions on stolen cards **BUT** banks are already obliged to compensate customers for fraud. Hence this is worthless! Where was the assessment of mutual value exchange when this strategy was being put together? Here is the article: [Lloyds face new mis-selling scandal](#).

Companies need to understand that in these days of transparency where information has been set free, customers will find out.

The future therefore of customer relationships is about fair, equitable balance of value between both parties. One of the ways to embed this philosophy into all future marketing is to support mutual knowledge exchange. The concept of creating a partnership where information can be exchanged to create more value for both parties.

Considerations

- Marketing need to understand the value equation and seek customer feedback for validation
- Value needs to be defined objectively using agreed metrics and workable methodologies

- Communication and messaging in relation to this value needs to be honest and transparent
- Opportunity for better engaging the customer around their personal data

PAY IT FORWARD

I had the sincere privilege of vacationing in Bermuda on a couple of occasions and it has left me with a heartfelt impression of just how well connected everyone is on this island. Everyone seems to know everyone else which is not so surprising when you consider that the country is 27 miles long and only 1 mile across at its widest part. But what is surprising is just how friendly and caring everyone is. My initial observation is that they live in this wonderful country so why wouldn't they be?

However, having spent a few days there I started to realize that there is a sense of collective here. It is as though no one wants to let the community down. It is more than peer pressure; there is an embedded and heartfelt belief in the value of contributing to a wider community and upholding values that are commonly shared. Everyone takes pride in contributing to a greater cause even when it re-

quires the individual to go out of his or her own way.

There was a terrific post recently by [Arianna Huffington](#) related to this topic. It was titled "[How to Immediately Improve Your Life \(Hint: It Starts With Improving the Lives of Others\)](#)". I will not try and distill this down, as everyone should read the entire article. However my take on this is that in a faster paced, complex, stressful and more unforgiving world people can cope better, be happier and healthier if you care and contribute to others.

Bermuda it seems is a great example of this maxim and you feel that the physical boundaries of the country have created an environment where people are naturally better connected resulting in a more caring society where compassionate empathy is normal.

So is a more caring society starting to establish itself in the virtual world? It is interesting to note that the fastest growing news site is [Upworthy](#) whose mantra is: "*Things that matter. Pass 'em on.*"

Is this a sign? It would be a wonderful if society was starting to live by the philosophies which were so well espoused in the Hollywood film "[Pay It Forward](#)". So for

companies that wish to matter and grow their businesses long-term it is important to consider delivering value whatever that may be without expecting an immediate return. Inevitably, this value will be returned at some point in the future and will often be far greater than the short-term gain would have been.

This is echoed by a quote from [Jay Baer](#), author of "[YouTility: Why Smart Marketing is about Help, Not Hype](#)" and encapsulated in Bryan Kramer's Human to Human: #H2H book.

"If you sell something, you make a customer today, but if you genuinely help someone, you create a customer for life."

4

The experience

One of Steve Jobs's great sayings was **“You've got to start with the customer experience and work back toward the technology - not the other way round.”**

Another great saying was delivered by [Graham Atkinson](#), who was the Senior Vice President and Chief Marketing and Customer Experience Officer at Walgreens, who said: **“Don't let your marketing get ahead of your customer experience delivery”**.

Both these sayings emphasise that customer experience should be the first area you consider when establishing your marketing strategy and associated plans. It is absolutely at the heart of marketing's responsibility and the one single area that challenges us the most as this spans almost all the functions in an organisation. It requires the marketing function to be able to identify, understand, define, integrate and influence every single touch point with

a customer across the lifetime of the relationship.

To create the right experience, the message, communication or offer needs to be weaved into the engagement. It should not be seen as being disruptive (however it could be unexpected) and it should seamlessly integrate into the ongoing narrative (journey). The experiences that work the best are those that are directly relatable to the specific individual. In other words they connect and relate to the known likes / needs of the individual.

To do this marketing must identify, review and define the customer journey and every conceivable interaction that takes place as a customer moves from the first time they are aware to being a devoted advocate. This requires the customer journey to be mapped in real detail with a clear understanding developed of each specific touch point and the correlation to each other.

For each touch point the following key questions need to be answered:

- Who is responsible?
- What processes underpin it?
- What resources, technology etc. are required to manage it?
- What is the likely frequency of use?
- What is the overall level of importance / impact on a customer relationship?
- How does it impact other touch points?

Here is more information on [customer journey mapping](#), provided by one of the leading consultancies on this topic, [Mulberry Consulting](#).

Considerations

- Establish a customer experience team with representation from all functions
- Develop a detailed customer journey map that identifies all the possible touch points between the brand and the customer, including product and packaging. Use technology to reduce complexity, improve collaboration and project manage agreed actions
- Also put yourself in the shoes of the customer and experience what they experience on a frequent basis. Go into the market, be a mystery shopper, buy online

- Employ a [UX designer](#) in the marketing team. This will make the biggest positive transformation in how marketing and other functions interact with customers

CUSTOMER JOURNEY

Historically, a customer journey had three stages, each of which was managed by a different function within an organisation:

- **Marketing;** creating awareness, interest and propensity to purchase
- **Sales;** converting the interest into a sale
- **Service;** managing customer support needs post sale

But now, the customer journey is far more complex and involves multiple functions at each stage. Most companies now map out a customer journey into the following stages:

Awareness

- Who you are, what you stand for (your core values), what you offer and why the product or service can meet their needs and expectations

Knowledge

- Learning more about the company and product or service, technical specifications, components, social responsibility

Validation

- What other people say, assessing reviews, testing it, looking at options and most importantly validating what the company is telling you

Conversion

- Actually making the sale, taking delivery and becoming a customer

On-boarding

- Opening the packaging, setting it up, trying it out and ensuring time to value is optimal

Up-sell

- Considering other offers from the same company and making an additional sale, thereby deepening the relationship

Advocacy

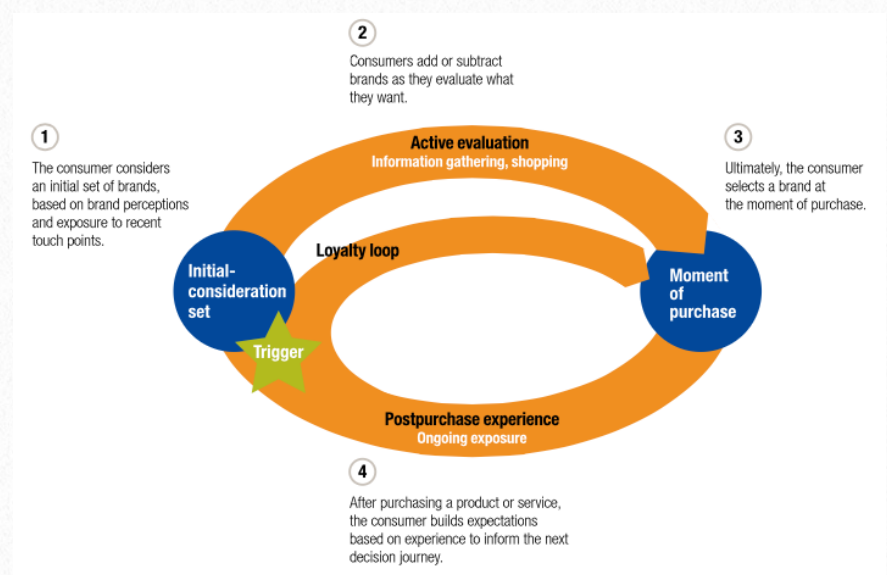
- Enabling happy customers to share experiences and participate in communities. Ensure mutual value exchange where advocacy is recognised and rewarded

One of the challenges for marketing is to help customers connect the different stages of the relationship so it is cohesive, seamless and valuable.

It is also worth mentioning that the description above reflects the way that a brand can build an emotional connection or relationship with a customer. However the actual customer decision-making

process is a circular journey that the customer goes through every time they consider a purchase decision.

Mckinsey wrote an article on the [“Consumer Decision Journey”](#) back in 2009 that provides some insight into how this process has evolved over time.



PERSONALISED INTERFACE

There is also progress being made in the establishment of personalised interfaces between companies and individuals. This is where the interface that the customer engages with is unique to them.

In the Business to Business (B2B) market, a great example of this is provided by a company called [Postwire](#). Their system enables customers to engage through one personalised interface where they can collate content, retrieve and send messages and easily collaborate or share information with their colleagues.

I believe the same, however, is on the horizon for the Business to Customer (B2C) market. The Hi or Human Interface Project is an example of how a group of influential thought leaders envision the future of customer engagement. Their premise is that customers will want to take more control over how companies and brands engage with them. The result is that each customer will be able to customise a personal interface specifically for their needs and preferences. This type of application would then act as the conduit through which they can engage with multiple companies and brands. By doing this the customer will have two real and very valuable benefits:

1.) **Knowledge sharing;** The ability to manage the knowledge sharing between various parties including how their own personal data and preferences are shared and applied

2.) **User experience;** An enhanced user experience as they will not only receive the information they want/need but also have it presented exactly as they like

A real-life example of this concept is the [digital mailbox](#) at Australia Post where customers can direct all their physical mail such as statements, bills, offers etc., to one digital interface. However, I believe

that it will be the next iteration that also embeds communications from prospecting companies that will form the basis for significant adoption (as all communications can then be managed through one portal).

Considerations

- Establish a marketing strategy and plan that is based on the customer journey
- Identify metrics that can track and connect progress across the customer journey
- Establish customer segments for each phase of the customer journey and understand how these segments are performing and evolving

TELLING THE STORY

As soon as you establish a customer journey framework as the underlying basis for all marketing activity it has one major and highly significant impact. The customer journey is very correlated to a story, and engagement along that journey is best accomplished by building that story one step at a time.

In fact, storytelling has been a fundamental part of human society since time immemorial. It has been the process by which we share, interpret and pass down knowledge and experiences.

The interesting aspect of storytelling is that it is the most effective way of transferring knowledge when people are gathered together in a social setting. The advent of social media and the creation of communities, hangouts and forums have created an environment for storytelling to again take center-stage and thrive. As individuals we love to hear about the experiences of other people through stories. There is nothing we enjoy more than listening to a story; we engage more intimately with a storytelling narrative than we do with other communications. This is because we all have a cognitive memory that is designed to understand, remember and tell stories. This is the way we think.

As we embrace the fundamental principles of a customer journey, we also need to change our approach to all forms of marketing communications from advertising to direct marketing. We need to see each engagement as part of an ongoing conversation.

One of the most significant impacts brought about by social media is that customers prefer a more personalised, human approach that is conversational in nature. This is now the way customers expect to engage with brands.

In addition, customers don't just want to hear about the product. They want to be engaged emotionally and hear about how customers have found the process of interacting with the product. They want to understand the brand experience through the eyes of another person and to understand the emotional experience it created. It's all about empathy and how we can relate to the experience of others. We no longer believe in brand rhetoric, we want to hear the truth. Please engage our hearts as well as our minds.

So if you're not thinking of your brand as a reflection of the individual stories of your customers, then you may well have challenging times ahead.

"Great brands are reflections of the stories of individual people like you and me".

A great example of this is [Dove Sketches](#) which won gold at the Cannes 2013 Lion awards. In their marketing campaign Unilever very successfully communicated the Dove brand as a reflection of the individual experiences of a number of people who narrated their personal stories. This narrative was compelling, believable, unique and emotionally inspiring and in my mind is the only way that brands can now convey their values in a way that truly engages an audience on an emotional level.

Considerations

- Think “**conversations**” and not communications
- Understand how to effectively convey experiences
- Adapt advertising, campaigns and communications to a customer journey framework
- Personalise each customer engagement based on the nature /stage of the relationship that they have with you

STORY DNA

My father was a city journalist back in the days when [Fleet Street](#) in London was the center of the UK newspaper industry. He once said to me that great writing was based on a combination of clarity and authenticity. It is a simple notion; your audience needs to quickly and clearly understand the purpose whilst at the same time believing what you are conveying.

This is something that has stayed with me throughout my entire career and I think it has as much relevance now for brand marketing as it does for newspaper journalism.

Every brand comprises a brand promise, which is the all-enveloping commitment that an organisation makes to its audience. This promise identifies what that audience

should expect through the sum of all interactions they have with the people, products and services of the company.

With the fragmentation of media and proliferation of different communication channels, where there is more noise than ever before, brands have to find a way to break through and differentiate. They need to convey a clarity of purpose that is distinct, appealing and empathetic in terms of shared values. This purpose I believe needs to be more than just a good product or service at a good price; customers now expect some form of loftier goal. They want brands that care, care about communities, environment, human rights, fair trade and humanity.

In addition, brands need to be believable. We have gone from a society where we would blindly buy into a brand promise to one where brand reputation is far more important. Brands are now defined on ***how they act rather than what they say***. Customers now heavily influence brand perception by conveying and communicating the experiences they have had through word of mouth, social, communities etc. and this sheer weight of voice is more authentic and influential than what a brand can possibly communicate.

VISUALISATION

The sheer noise and level of communication that is conveyed to customers is overwhelming. In fact, according to statistics provided by [David Shenk](#) in his book [Data Smog](#) he says:

“In 1971 the average American was targeted by at least 560 daily advertising messages. Twenty years later, that number has risen six fold, to 3,000 messages per day.”

In addition, time is more precious and life is clearly more complex. All of these aspects combine to make clarity, the ability to convey a message quickly, even more important. This is why visualisation is so key.

To support this, studies have shown that the human brain deciphers image elements simultaneously, while language is decoded in a linear, sequential manner therefore taking more time to process. Our minds react differently and more quickly to visual stimuli.

Another interesting set of findings is from psychologist [Albert Mehrabian](#). Here are some much over-simplified statistics from Albert's research on the effectiveness of

spoken communications in relation to the communication of feelings and attitudes:

- 7% of message pertaining to feelings and attitudes is in the words that are spoken
- 38% of message pertaining to feelings and attitudes is paralinguistic (the way that the words are said)
- 55% of message pertaining to feelings and attitudes is in facial expression

And if you need further proof then here are some statistics from [Jell Bullas](#) in an article titled [“6 Powerful Reasons Why you Should Include Images in your Marketing”](#):

- *Articles with images get 94% more total views*
- *Including a photo and a video in a press release increases views by over 45%*
- *60% of customers are more likely to consider or contact a business when an image shows up in local search results*
- *In an e-commerce site, 67% of customers say the quality of a product image is “very important” in selecting and purchasing a product*
- *In an online store, customers think that the quality of a product's image is more important than product-specific information (63%), a long description (54%) and ratings and reviews (53%)*

- *Engagement rate on Facebook for photos averages 0.37% where text only is 0.27% (this translates to a 37% higher level of engagement for photos over text)*

Considerations

- Focus on what you can take out rather than put in and still be able to tell the story coherently
- Use imagery / visuals / video wherever possible
- Be honest
- Eliminate words that can't be validated and don't differentiate your brand in the mind of the customer e.g. world leading, state of the art

Postscript

I heard of one marketing team that hired a young film producer. This is really no different from PR and marketing teams hiring journalists. If you are embarking on a significant video programme, it is certainly something to consider.

5

The engagement

Every customer is different, unique and human. It is sometimes easy to forget that there is a real, live person who will be the recipient of your marketing activity.

This is why we must never get caught up in just the numbers. It is one of the great challenges, especially when using digital channels, that when response rates go down, we respond by putting the level of messages up to compensate. This is why number of marketing emails is still going up.

BUT this level of message saturation is just not sustainable as:

- Opt-outs continue to climb
- Reputations are starting to be tarnished

The vision for marketing is to be able to treat everyone as an individual and if we are to weave a message into their hectic lives, it is because we are confident that we have something to say that will be of

interest to them. In fact it needs to be something that **will help them**.

The Oxford English Dictionary defines engagement as the “*action of occupying or attracting someone’s interest and attention*”.

In order for marketing to gain someone’s interest and attention we need to know as much about their possible likes, dislikes, beliefs, views, opinions as possible and that’s why we need to start with their data.

DATA

[Arthur C. Clarke](#) once said:

“The Information Age offers much to mankind, and I would like to think that we will rise to the challenges it presents. But it is vital to remember that information — in the sense of raw data — is not knowledge, that knowledge is not wisdom, and that

wisdom is not foresight. But information is the first essential step to all of these.”

So data is the starting point that leads to insights which then provide some sense of predictability, all of which enables better decision making about which customers to engage with which offer.

Less data means less understanding and thereby a higher probability of not meeting the needs and expectations of the customer, thereby causing annoyance and a negative impression.

This not only impacts that campaign performance but, more importantly, there are potential highly significant long-term impacts which include opt-out and mental switch-off. The first inhibits you from engaging in the future and the latter means that, even if you can do so, it will not be noticed.

There are a lot of different data sources for a customer, including:

- Demographic data
- Address data
- Transaction data
- Contact data (historical interactions between the customer and the corporation)
- Behavioural data (likes, interests, hobbies etc.
- Social media data

- Preference data
- Relationship data (responses to surveys)

Many articles stress the importance of listening to the customer but there is a flaw with this. It is the same issue that the [Net Promoter Score \(NPS\)](#) programme suffers from, namely it only captures what someone says rather than what they do. It is the whole premise of “*actions speaks louder than words*”. What marketers have to become good at is capturing the actions of the customer, especially in relation to marketing engagements. It is not only the responses BUT also the non-responses that count!

Considerations

- Always start with the data you have available
- Understand the gaps and put in place initiatives to fill those gaps
- When dealing with BIG DATA, always identify the SMALL DATA i.e. the data that is important and helps you really understand the customer
- Use predictive analytics to help identify these important data points, the ones with the stronger correlations, that indicate higher propensity to act

CONTEXT

Context can be described as any information that helps to characterise the situation of the customer. Primary elements are location, physical environment, time and activity (reason for interaction).

Customer context can help in a number of ways:

- It provides an indication of the emotional context of the engagement e.g. why are they calling? Do they have a service issue or want to close an account?
- It provides an indication of what they are doing and where they are at the point of interaction e.g. are they at work or at home? etc.
- It also provides an indication of the environment they are in e.g. is it raining? Is it night-time? etc.
- Understanding context helps you understand the emotional and environmental status of the customer at the precise moment of interaction

Context can be captured in a number of ways and is very beneficial in ensuring that the most appropriate offer / treatment is made to the customer. Google know this well and apply context to search rankings.

However, the true power of context lies in the fact that human understanding is im-

proved (it is faster and more deeply understood) when the message matches the location, environment and time of the interaction.

So, when considering the context of the customer at point of interaction, it is important to recognise that this can influence the following three areas:

- The brand's understanding of the status of the customer at point of interaction
- The message that is therefore delivered to the customer by the brand based on that knowledge
- The speed and ease of understanding by the customer of that brand message

INSIGHTS

Once you have sufficiently robust levels of customer data, the data can then be analysed using predictive analytics to help create more effective customer engagements.

Predictive analytics is the branch of data-mining concerned with the prediction of future probabilities and trends. The purpose of it is not to tell you what **will** happen in the future, but to tell you what **might** happen in the future. It is basically taking the data you have and predicting

the data you don't (such as response rates).

The predictor

The central element of predictive analytics is the predictor, a variable that can be measured for an individual or other entity to predict future behavior. For example, age, gender, purchase history or recency of use can all be predictors with a high score indicating a higher likelihood of response versus a low score indicating a lower likelihood of response.

The model

Multiple predictors can then be combined into a predictive model. The right combination of predictors will perform better prediction by considering multiple aspects of the customer and their behavior. It is this predictive model, which, when applied to the latest customer data, can be used to forecast future probabilities with an acceptable level of reliability.

Best predictive models

The real trick is to find the best predictive model and this is challenging. There are many different options and model types, such as linear formulas and business rules, that use weighting, rules or other mechanics to determine precisely how the predictors should be combined.

Model validation

In predictive modeling, data is collected, a statistical model is formulated, predictions are made and the model is validated (or revised) as additional data becomes available.

One of the key benefits of a predictive model is that it enables you to engage with a smaller subset of your customer base, (where predictability to respond is highest) thereby decreasing costs, improving response rates and improving the overall customer experience. It is a win-win situation. More importantly, it is better for the customer as they either receive a communication that is helpful or they are not disrupted by something that is irrelevant.

Considerations

- Establish a marketing sciences team
- Use predictive analytics to improve market and customer insights that:
 - Deliver more credibility across the organisation
 - Are better able to guide cross departmental decisions
 - Remove subjective viewpoints and perspectives out of any customer-based debate
- Data is meaningless unless it has been converted into actionable insights. Al-

ways ensure that data is supported by recommendations

- Ensure that every decision is informed by insights (increasing objectivity)
- Make reporting very easy to access, understand and act on at all levels in an organisation thereby encouraging application of insights

SEGMENTATION

The use of segmentation is changing. We have all heard that marketing is all about a segment of one.

So how can segmentation still help us?

Customers should and **MUST** be treated as individuals and not as a number in a specific segment. However, every customer can be placed in one or more segments. By doing this, you are able to understand and track how the segment is changing over time. In addition, you will be able to confirm your performance within that segment whether it be just share or on other variables which provide you with an indication on segment health e.g. purchasing behaviour.

Considerations

- Create a structured, uniformed segmented view of the market so everyone is looking at the market in the same way
- As part of this, make sure that the segment definitions are clear and aligned and the same for everyone. e.g. how do you define an enterprise business?
- Track customer segment changes so you are able to determine how segments are evolving and what this means to your business e.g. is the segment growing or declining?
- Set targets based on market / customer segments so you can better gauge progress at a micro level

PR

In many organisations, Public Relations (PR) is included as a function within the marketing department. In others, it is separate and often in these cases their focus is only on investor relations.

The role of PR and how it connects with marketing is not clear and is subject to many different viewpoints. **The Chartered Institute of Public Relations (CIPR)** explains the role of PR as follows:

“Every organisation, no matter how large or small, depends on its reputation for sur-

vival and success. Customers, suppliers, employees, investors, journalists and regulators can have a powerful impact. They all have an opinion about the organisations they come into contact with - whether good or bad, right or wrong. Their perceptions drive decisions about whether they want to support those organisations.

In today's competitive market, reputation can be a company's biggest asset, making it stand out from the crowd. Effective PR helps manage reputation by building good relationships with an organisation's stakeholders.

Public relations is about reputation – the result of what you do, what you say and what others say about you. Public relations is the discipline that looks after an organisation's reputation. Its aim is to win understanding and support, and influence opinion and behaviour. It establishes and maintains goodwill and mutual understanding between an organisation and its publics”.

However your company structures marketing and PR, it is clear that both teams are in the role of reputation and managing influence (whether received or provided).

Considerations

- Marketing and PR need to develop and agree an influencer strategy
- The influencer strategy should confirm:
 - Who do we want to influence?
 - How are we going to go about influencing them?
 - What opinions and behaviors would we like them to exert?
 - How would we like them to respond?
 - How do we want to be influenced?
- There needs to be agreement on:
 - Roles and responsibilities for implementation of the influencer strategy
 - Objectives and metric / methodology to be applied
 - Information capture, sharing and reporting
- Finally most companies have a Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) team which is also focused on reputation and influence. Clearly they also need to be included

ADVERTISING

Advertising is a complex area and understanding the level of impact that advertising has on the customer is being helped by companies like [Neuro-Insight](#), led by the brilliant [Pranav Yadav](#).

Neuro-Insight is a market research company that uses unique brain-imaging technology to measure how the brain responds to communications. Neuro-Insight measures brain activity indicating how strongly experiences are being stored (encoded) in long-term memory – looking not at what is already in memory, but what is being put in, on a second by second basis.

The best way to think about this is if you can create a magical moment, then the customer will capture this in their memory just like a camera records a photograph. When you consider all the sights and sounds which are competing for the attention of the customer, it is clear to see that only a small fraction of these experiences make it through the clutter.

Neuro-Insight have developed many findings through their research but the main one for me is captured by their post on [“Harmonising Media & Creative - First Time, Every Time”](#).

“Marketers can optimise their communications effectiveness by tuning their media and creative strategies together, rather than executing them as independent strategies. This harmonisation can have a substantial pay off – but it requires a re-think of the ‘one size fits all’ media invest-

ment model. Changes in media consumption and the evolution of scientific methods of measurement have paved the way for a sharper focus on the message and media interaction.”

The degree of interactivity, such as movement and sound, also have a significant impact on advertising recall (memory encoding). Movement includes both the movement within the advert as well as the delivery mechanism itself e.g. on the side of a bus.

There is also increasing correlation between different channels at the same time. This requires the management of those channels to be very strongly coordinated while potentially using modified experience design.

Examples:

- Two-screen consumption
- Use of iBeacon technology in-store

I would also like to connect this back to the brand architecture and associated creative. A good example of this is a key research finding from [CCICOLOR - Institute for Color Research](#).

Research reveals people make a subconscious judgment about a person, environment or product within 90 seconds of ini-

tial viewing, and that between 62% and 90% of that assessment is based on color alone.

- Blue - Honesty, peace, tranquility, loyalty, trust, confidence.
- Brown - Solid, reliable
- Gray - Neutrality, stability, and wisdom.
- Green - Growth, money, nature, health, wisdom, calm
- Orange - Warmth, luxury, enthusiasm, vibrant and expansive.
- Purple - Beauty, luxury, wealth, mystery, royalty, and spirituality. Justice and truth.
- Red - Heat, energy, power and passion. Danger, fire, speed, competition, aggression.
- White - Purity, simplicity, innocence, peace. In some cultures: death - know your market.
- Yellow - Warm, fun, free, intellect, faith, friendship. optimism, happiness, idealism, imagination.

Is it a coincidence that all the social media brands use the colour blue e.g. LinkedIn, FaceBook, Twitter?

Considerations

- Focus on the desired experience and develop the creative inline with the media vehicle
- Understand the environment
- Understand the likely context of the customer at point of engagement
- Follow these principles; clarity above all, visual appeal, use visual hierarchy (to focus on what's important), conserve attention and focus on one takeaway (memory)

PROGRAMMATIC MARKETING

I can't really write a book on marketing without mentioning programmatic marketing. Borrowing from [John Nardone](#), the CEO and Chairman of [X+1], he describes programmatic marketing as follows:

"Programmatic marketing uses real time systems, rules and algorithms to automate

the delivery of data driven, targeted and relevant experiences to consumers as they interact with a brand's many touch points. The experiences include targeted offers, messages, content or ads across paid, owned and earned channels. The best programmatic marketing recognizes the consumer as he moves between channels and touch points, so that each interaction informs the next. Owned touch points include the marketer's website, mobile apps, Facebook page and email. Earned touch points are those created by the consumers themselves. Programmatic buying is the paid part of programmatic marketing: the automated purchase of data driven, targeted ads whether they be online display, mobile or video ads."

This is a very broad topic that needs a book in its own right but here are some key considerations.

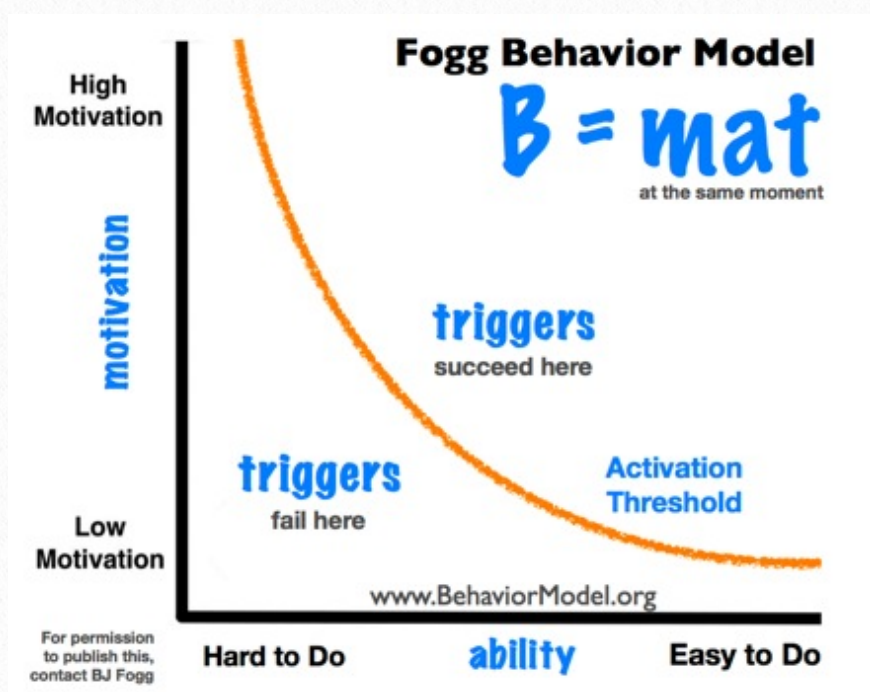
Considerations

- Always be helpful and provide information that has value
- Connect interactions into an ongoing dialogue by recognising what messages have been interacted with before
- Don't over target on programmatic buying as there is an unseen negative, the

mental opt-out (where the message may be viewed but not seen)

CALL TO ACTION

If you are seeking to initiate a response to the advertising then the [Fogg Behavior Model](#) is an excellent guide to determine how to do this. This was developed by [Dr. B.J. Fogg](#) from Stanford University.



The principle of the model is that customers will take action when you present the trigger (call to action), when their motivation is at their highest and it's easy to take that action.

If the customer has high motivation but the action is hard to do, the customer will be frustrated and conversely if the trigger is combined with low motivation but the action is easy to do the customer won't care.

INTERACTION

One of the ways that digital has impacted marketing is that there are now so many more ways in which a customer can interact with a brand.

Interaction: If you interact with someone—by talking, looking, sharing, or engaging in any kind of action that involves the two of you—you can be said to have had an interaction with that person.

Customers are initiating interactions with brands more than ever before and this is known as **Inbound Marketing**. An excellent introduction to [inbound marketing](#) is provided here by Hubspot, who are regarded as the instigators for this type of marketing strategy.

Inbound Marketing is about creating and sharing content that will be of interest and will resonate with your desired customers. By creating this type of content you will encourage both your customers and new prospects to engage with your company / brand and to continue to do this on an ongoing basis.

It is not only about providing the right content but it is also about presenting this

content in the right format, at the right time and in the right place. If you can achieve this successfully your customers will not see this as being interruptive as you will be providing content that they are looking for.

In fact, if done really well it will not even be seen as marketing in the true sense of the word but more about sharing, caring and helping.

This is the kind of marketing people will love.

6

The customer

You will have noticed, throughout this book, that I have only used the word customer (and not the word consumer). There is a valid reason for this.

Wikipedia's definition for a consumer is as follows:

“A consumer is a person or group of people, such as a household, who are the final users of products or services. The consumer's use is final in the sense that the product is usually not improved by the use.”

In this way, a consumer is conveyed as a passive entity, that sits at the end of the process, with the sole purpose of consuming or using the product or service that has been purchased. This does not reflect the growing change in businesses who are seeking to have a far more participatory relationship with their customers. Relationships built on higher levels of engagement, influence and information interchange. An

obvious example being the role of customers in co-creation.

So, no more use of the word, consumer please!

The Customer

It is clear that the more you can align your interactions and associated communications to the needs and expectations of the customer, the more likely it is that they will respond favorably. The more help you can provide, the more value you will be delivering and the better the engagement will be perceived. This is a no-brainer.

As this book has really been all about customers then why do we have a separate chapter on them specifically? Well, I believe there are four distinct areas about customer engagement that need to be highlighted. They are obvious to many but in more cases than you can imagine they

are often ignored or simply poorly considered.

- **Localisation;** adapting the experience to reflect the local culture
- **Personalisation;** adapting the experience to reflect the specific status of the individual
- **Advocacy;** equipping and empowering advocates to share their positive stories about your brand
- **Word of mouth;** knowing that much of this advocacy may not be captured as it takes place in the physical world

CUSTOMER LOCALISATION

Marketing has always been local. People have connections and ties to the local community, to their home town and to where they live which influences their beliefs, needs and areas of interest. Location is key to understanding the emotional heartbeat of a customer. This is not about context (where they are and what they are doing at a specific point in time), this is about the emotional connection that the customer carries with them wherever they go.

Localisation is important and there is significant evidence that companies that take into account history, culture, tastes, be-

liefs, propriety (conformity to conventionally accepted standards of behaviour or morals) and language are more successful.

Considerations

- Do not assume that local market characteristics apply globally. They do not and, if applied, can often have far reaching negative effects
- Ensure that the master or source content can be adapted for international markets by avoiding single market word crafting, slang and colloquialisms
- Integrate localisation into the original content development as the ability to be more internationally consistent means global brand cohesion, faster localisation, less cost and more potential reuse
- Also ensure your experience design is internationalised across all aspects including product design, packaging, documentation, advertising and customer interactions
- Make sure your design accommodates the impact of different languages:
 - Displaying characters beyond your alphabet (such as diacritical marks and non-Western letters)
 - Allow room for text to expand e.g. English to German
 - Allow room for text to contract which is the case in many Asian languages

- When you localise, avoid making changes to the source material as the ripple effect can add significant delays and cost

CUSTOMER PERSONALISATION

The meaning of the term personalisation, when specifically used in relation to marketing, has undergone somewhat of a change over time.

Personalisation in marketing was originally introduced with the advent of direct marketing, which centered around direct mail. In this case, personalisation was making the communication personal to the recipient, in other words, using their name and referencing specific elements of the relationship.

The meaning of personalisation has evolved, especially as marketing embraces the concept of marketing to a segment of one. Personalisation is now not only making the communication personal (in terms of demographic and relationship data) but also making it relevant. This is achieved by assessing all available data available on the customer and then analysing their propensity or level of interest in a specific offer. In this way the customer will only receive communications or offers that are

predicted to be of interest or helpful to them.

It is all about answering these questions:

- *Will they care?*
- *Is it important to them?*
- *Do they benefit?*

It is important when someone refers to personalisation that the level of meaning is clear.

- **Basic;** incorporating personal information into the communication
- **Intermediate;** analysing available historical information to assess level of potential interest in offer
- **Advanced;** incorporating real-time contextual information to better refine likelihood of interest (looking at weather, location and time of day as examples). If the interaction was inbound it would also seek to apply the reason why the customer sought to engage e.g. do they have a problem, are they seeking to check status on an order, do they want help buying or are they wishing to terminate a contract? etc.

Product or service personalisation

One other area of personalisation that needs to be mentioned is the personalisation of the product or service.

This is especially relevant to bricks and mortar retailers who are trying to differentiate their offering from online stores. A great example of this is the store [Normal](#) in New York that sells a single, custom-made product — a 3D-printed headphone that fits your ear, and your ear alone.



I believe this is just the start of what customer personalisation may mean, with brands personalising the communication, the offer, the experience and the product specifically for the individual.

Considerations

- Consider introducing a Customer Officer, whose responsibility is to develop deeper customer intimacy. This will be focused on harnessing customer data, pulling together the different customer-facing functions, setting standards / rules for customer engagement and integrating technologies

- Establish a single view of each customer, that pulls together all relevant customer information into one place
- Make this single customer view available to all customer-facing departments
- Score every customer against each potential offer or treatment to assess level of relevance / interest. Don't communicate to those with low propensity. The desired outcome is to be able to deliver **less** communication but with **increased** levels of response
- Apply eligibility rules based on individual customer preferences and corporate policies e.g. frequency on which offers can be made. This has to be implemented across divisions / functions etc.
- Try and capture customer context when it is an inbound engagements and include in scoring mechanism e.g. why did the customer engage? (can be captured via the [Interactive Voice Response](#) (IVR) or provided to a customer service agent)
- Try and apply environmental context such as GPS location, weather conditions, season and time of day

CUSTOMER ADVOCACY

All of our efforts in marketing are to create customer advocates, individuals who are satisfied with what we offer them, loyal to the company and brand and more impor-

tantly, happy to share this with the broader community.

The most important aspect of customer advocates is that there has to be a mutual value equation in play for them. If they provide the brand with value through their advocacy then the only way to sustain this position is to return the favour and provide mutual value back to them.

This value may be no more than recognition and thanks, but it is imperative that it is provided.

There are now companies like [Influitive](#) that are providing engagement platforms for the B2B market that enable companies to establish more intimate relationships with their advocates. These platforms often include gamification (for recognition) and rewards in order to repay the benefits that their advocates provide.

Advocates can be any stakeholder (customer, partner, investor, employee etc.), so you should always consider including your employees in any advocacy programme that you develop. As [Alistair Eglinton](#) says:

“It is a very pleasing when one encounters employees in junior roles that exude in all their behaviours what makes their product

or service distinctive. They are brand champions and should be encouraged and empowered at every opportunity. Their advocacy will drive your business forward.”

WORD OF MOUTH MARKETING

In addition, Word Of Mouth Marketing ([WOMM](#)) is recognised in many circles as the most powerful and effective form of advocacy. In fact, it is probably the most effective form of marketing, full stop.

Some facts provided by [Ted Wright](#) at [Fizz Marketing](#):

- 76% of Americans don't believe Ads (Yankelovich, 2010)
- 92% say word of mouth is the best source of product ideas (McKinsey & Company, 2010)
- 15% of every conversation includes a branded product or service (Northeastern University 2010)

So even if you can't capture the value your advocates are providing, be aware that it is still happening out in the market and is creating value for your brand.

It is worthwhile considering how this word of mouth can be supported and here are four principles that underpin a successful WOMM programme:

- **Engage** - Engage with customers. Listen to what they are telling you. Observe what they are doing. Become part of the conversation. Be there for them and let them know that their advocacy is recognised and appreciated
- **Excel** - Give and demonstrate to them the best parts of the brand / company. Validate why they are right and why you excel. Build their confidence that you are the best and will never let them down
- **Equip** - Provide content on your great products and exceptional service, augmented with incredible/funny stories or interesting/unknown facts. Give them reasons to share their stories
- **Empower** - Provide advocates with easy, interesting and novel ways to engage & share. Recognise their contributions and their importance to you and ensure they feel they have received something in return
- Establish a community or support a community developed by your customers where advocates can engage and share their stories with other customers
- Arm your advocates and empower them to share the best stories by making it easy for them
- Ignite word of mouth marketing in key geographic / community / tribal clusters. WOMM is local so recognise that different tactics will work in different situations

Considerations

- Develop a structured customer advocacy programme where there is a mutual exchange of benefit

7

The organisation

Successful organisations of the future will be companies that can embrace four significant characteristics to win the hearts and minds of the customer.

They need to be:

- **Connected** (to be able to ensure a consistent and fully integrated experience across all touch points as perceived and experienced by the customer)
- **Agile** (to be able to adjust quickly and creatively to the changing market and the world in which the customer lives)
- **Innovative** (to be able to keep wowing the customer and ensuring competitive differentiation)
- **Collaborative** (to be able to respond quickly to the changing needs and expectations of the customer)

In the “*Age of the Customer*” marketing is the function that needs to lead the way and help the organisation becoming a winner. By acting as the voice of the cus-

tomers, marketing needs to make sure that the entire organisation puts itself in the shoes of the customer, or, as the adage goes, “*see the world through the eyes of your customer*”.

CONNECTED ORGANISATION

Your customers expect an organisation to be connected. Their expectation is that however they interact or are engaged, the organisation should act as one. This means that the company must be able to recognise the full relationship that the customer has with the company, irrespective as to whether the various interactions took part with different divisions or functions within the company.

Considerations

- Ensure that the entire organisation agrees and is aligned to the concept of **one company** in the eyes of the customer

- Establish a single customer preference center so all divisions / functions put the customer first and reflect their wishes
- Ensure agreement and adherence to a single, integrated customer governance structure that defines rules on engagement and frequency of interaction
- Establish outside-in customer metrics in which all customer-facing departments have a stake

AGILE ORGANISATION

Agility is important as it enables an organisation to respond more rapidly to changing market conditions. Creating an agile environment helps support creativity and innovation and can reduce the constraints imposed by the usual planning and execution boundaries. The foundation for adopting an agile approach is to ensure that you set clear objectives and always focus these on defined market outcomes. By empowering execution to take its own path, you will over time create a culture where people will try new tactics and processes to gain improvements.

Considerations

- Adopt a flexible organisation structure. In fact, place the customer at the top and then organise your resources from there

- Introduce specific projects to manage one or two key initiatives that have representation from different teams with different skill sets
- Deploy a [Minimum Viable Product \(MVP\)](#) approach. It is better to start and learn than to over prepare and never experience
- Test, test and test again. You will not get everything right all the time so keep trying new ideas and concepts as this is the only way to learn and improve

INNOVATIVE ORGANISATION

The word innovation is significantly overused in corporate circles and is often seen as the utopian goal and the mechanism for guaranteeing success.

But what is innovation and why do companies place so much emphasis on it?

Innovation, in very simplistic terms, is doing something new or different, that is smarter or better and that will make a positive difference to the performance of the organisation.

Being innovative for innovation's sake is not the answer. Innovation has to be able to contribute something to the business. The desire is to take an innovative idea all

the way through from conceptualisation to execution, with the outcome that the company has benefited in some way. This may either be enhanced knowledge and understanding or perhaps some form of commercial gain.

Innovation doesn't have to be transformative in nature, it doesn't need to be a world-changing invention and it also doesn't have to be restricted to specific elements of the company, such as marketing or product development.

Innovation can help every part of the business, every function, every process, every product and every customer interaction. Innovation can be applied to products, services, processes, work environments, in fact any area where a change can provide an enhancement.

Innovation - whether small, incremental, large or disruptive - is all about change.

Resistance to change can often be the barrier to innovation and therefore having a positive, transformative culture is crucial to embedding innovation into the way the company operates. This requires:

- A working environment that supports continuous improvement or enhanced learning

- Acceptance and encouragement in taking defined risks, but knowing that the company will benefit, even if it is just knowing that it doesn't work
- Structured programmes involving all employees in idea creation such as idea contests and innovation competitions
- Sanctioned time and resources set aside for experimentation
- Collaboration and networking to be actively encouraged and financially supported
- Highly visible and engaging communication programme sharing information on innovation projects and successes. If it is front of mind with employees and they understand efforts will be recognised, they are more likely to embrace the idea
- Invite outside companies such as start-ups to come in and present their ideas in an innovation workshop

Companies that are successful at becoming innovative are ones who have been able to create an **“Intentional Innovation” culture**. As mentioned in a previous chapter, marketing has a key role to play in culture and so by association becoming an innovative organisation is highly dependent on marketing creating the right corporate conditions for innovation to blossom.

Laura McLellan, a senior analyst at Gartner, recently presented **“Chief Marketing Technologists Symbolize Marketing’s Changing Role”** at the 2014 MarTech conference. Included in the presentation was a model for how Gartner is seeing large companies deal with the dual — and often competing — challenges of agility and scale: by explicitly creating “bimodal” organisations, which have parts that operate around scale and stability and parts that facilitate speed and innovation.

Gartner for Marketing Leaders

Implication – IT moves to a bimodal organization

	Mode 1		Mode 2	
	Reliability	Goal	Agility	
	Price for performance	Value	Revenue, brand, customer experience	
Think Marathon Runner	Waterfall, V-Model, high-ceremony IID	Approach	Agile, kanban, low ceremony IID	Think Sprinter
	Plan-driven, approval-based	Governance	Empirical, continuous, process-based	
	Enterprise suppliers, long-term deals	Sourcing	Small, new vendors, short-term deals	
	Good at conventional process, projects	Talent	Good at new and uncertain projects	
	IT-centric, removed from customer	Culture	Business-centric, close to customer	
	Long (months)	Cycle Times	Short (days, weeks)	

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In other words, a company needs to be able to embrace both.

One final word is that I often hear terms like *“fail fast, fail often”* or *“fail often and fail smart”*. It may be semantics but I think this creates barriers in itself. The word fail usually means being unsuccessful in achieving one’s goal or neglecting to do something. There is no positive in the latter and for the former it all depends on what

your goal is. If the goal is to learn, grow knowledge, know how to improve, then you should never fail. You just learn that what you tried did not help you progress.

The key is that companies and employees should invest in growing knowledge and to focus new, innovative and disruptive initiatives on developing **“Profound Knowledge”** as **Philip Shel Drake** refers to it. If companies take this approach then it should lower the barrier to change and allow more flexibility on trying things where the outcome is as yet unknown.

Considerations

- Encourage your teams to focus on outcomes rather than activities thereby providing them with an environment where they can think out of the box
- Collaborate across departments and geographies so many more diverse viewpoints are captured and considered
- Spend more time with clients on better understanding what is keeping them up at night
- Form strong relationships with a small number of the peer companies who are conveying leading-edge thinking and best practice
- Network and network again, you can never listen enough or have too many viewpoints or ideas

- Give vendors five minutes of your time. It is likely that their company has a number of innovative ideas which underpin their value proposition. Don't you want to learn what it is?
- Set aside funds and implement initiatives to develop your knowledge economy

COLLABORATIVE ORGANISATION

Successful customer engagement and relationship building requires people to collaborate across an organisation. It is imperative that all the various functions work together to a common goal and that is to deliver to the needs and expectations of the customer.

The challenge with collaboration is very well articulated in a an article by [Ron Friedman](#) called "[The Collaboration Paradox: Why Working Together Often Yields Weaker Results](#)". Included in this article he talks about the silent killer of collaboration that often goes undetected:

"Attached to every meeting, conference call and mass email you're exposed to is an invisible price tag. Economists call it opportunity cost, and it refers to all the tasks you're not getting done while you're busy "collaborating"."

In a response to these challenges Ron also provides some great advice on how to collaborate successfully by asking the question "*If the research says collaborations often undermine performance, why did it work so well for [The Beatles](#)?*"

The Art of Successful Collaborations

[Paul McCartney and John Lennon](#) were not psychologists. But their approach to collaboration highlights many of the recommendations experts are now offering organizations for making groups more effective.

Find teammates who do something you can't

McCartney excelled at melody, Lennon at lyrics. His songs were uplifting, Lennon's had an edge. McCartney was left-handed and, importantly, Lennon was not. Playing together, they each benefited from seeing a song's chord progression reflected back at them, making it easier to improvise notes that fit the scale.

The lesson: Collaborations are most effective when teammates complement rather than replicate one another's abilities. Skill duplication leads to power struggles.

Differentiate between roles

Social loafing isn't inevitable. It happens when responsibilities are ambiguous and collaborators aren't clear on where their role ends and another's begins. When McCartney and Lennon collaborated, it was clear who served as the lead songwriter and who was there to offer suggestions.

The lesson: *Delineating responsibilities at the start of a project gives everyone at the table direction and a sense of ownership.*

Insist on homework.

McCartney and Lennon are thought of as a songwriting team, but the truth is they conceived of their songs alone. They collaborated after they had gotten a piece as far as they could, and were ready for suggestions. Most of the heavy creative lifting happens when we're by ourselves, working on our own. We're in a better position to evaluate the merits of an idea after we've given a topic some thought, not when encountering it for the first time.

The lesson: *Use meeting time to exchange ideas, not generate them.*

It is also highly likely that the people with the different skill sets and diverse points of view are not sitting next to you in the office. It is therefore worth considering various technologies that are able to bring people together virtually in a way that promotes interaction, sharing and knowl-

edge exchange. A great example of this is [SoCoco](#) who have a solution that creates a virtual office for your company. It is great, take a look.

As a final note, there is a great article on this subject, penned by Tom Lowery, in the Huffington Post titled [“Human to Human \(H2H\) -- Collaboration is the New Competition”](#)

He ends the article by saying “*Collaboration is an experience that integrates people, technology and business through which extraordinary things can happen and businesses can increase profits*”.

Sounds like a true win-win to me.

The home truth is that the ecosystem of companies is widening and those that embrace and engage with a wider community are those that are more likely to win in the long run.

8

The Technology

I could not write a book on marketing without including a section on technology and its use within a marketing department. The first and only thing to say is that technology is an enabler. It does not define what you are trying to achieve **BUT** it does influence how you go about achieving it. Yes it may comprehensively change the nature of customer engagement with new behaviours and new channels but it doesn't change the overall reason for the interaction in the first place.

The real challenge for technology is that we all get so tied up with the measurement that we lose sight of the real human being that we are trying to successfully engage.

I believe [Seth Godin](#) sums this up the best in one of his blogs titled "[Avoiding the false proxy trap](#)".

Sometimes, we can't measure what we need, so we invent a proxy, something

that's much easier to measure and stands in as an approximation.

TV advertisers, for example, could never tell which viewers would be impacted by an ad, so instead, they measured how many people saw it. Or a model might not be able to measure beauty, but a bathroom scale was a handy stand in.

A business person might choose cash in the bank as a measure of his success at his craft, and a book publisher, unable to easily figure out if the right people are engaging with a book, might rely instead on a rank on a single bestseller list. One last example: the non-profit that uses money raised as a proxy for difference made.

You've already guessed the problem. Once you find the simple proxy and decide to make it go up, there are lots of available tactics that have nothing at all to do with improving the very thing you set out to achieve in the first place. When we fall in

love with a proxy, we spend our time improving the proxy instead of focusing on our original (more important) goal instead.

Gaming the system is never the goal. The goal is the goal.“

AMEC, the international association for the measurement and evaluation of communication, have developed an approach called the [“Barcleona Declaration of Measurement Principles”](#). This very much supports the need to capture outcomes as confirmed by their second principle “Measuring the Effect on Outcomes is Preferred to Measuring Outputs”.

So in very simple terms use the technology to help you achieve your goals but don't allow technology to define what your goals should be!

MARKETING TECHNOLOGY

As we all know, customer engagement is becoming more complex every day as more data sources become available and there are more ways and channels by which a customer can engage and interact with an organisation. Technology is crucial to help us gain some understanding and control over this complexity and to help us:

- Connect customer insights with engagement
- Improve response times
- Enable efficiency
- Provide organisations with wisdom for improved decision making

Considerations

- Always start with the desired outcome, then process, and once defined then look at technology enablement
- Deploy a “test, learn and adapt” approach as it needs to be an iterative process
- Fully commit, don't half bake
- Involve everyone who is a stakeholder throughout entire process

“So how do you introduce technology into a marketing department and make sure that it is deployed successfully?”

On the basis that great marketing will always be a blend of art and science, it is important to understand that you will have team members who are better skilled in one than the other.

Considerations

- Recognise that your team members will have different skill sets, some more creative, others more logical

- Organize your teams to reflect creative excellence as well as analytical excellence
- Always ensure that you balance the creative and the logical and ensure strong collaboration
- Finally create a happy environment as a happy motivated team will deliver more outstanding work

So borrowing from the old joke of how to tell a pessimist from an optimist:

So what's the difference between a logical, analytical marketer and an arty, creative marketer? Well a creative marketer will say that the glass is half full whereas the analytical marketer will say that the glass is twice the size it should be.

CMOs and CIOs

I often hear about how the Marketing and IT functions struggle to collaborate and how the CIO and CMO need to work closer together.

There are two main reasons why I find the focus on this specific area to be annoying:

- **Firstly;** it must be a team effort and not about how well the two heads of department get on. It is imperative that there are collaborations / interchanges at

all levels in both departments. The main reason is that the desired customer experience must be the key influencer and therefore UX designers and users are core to this! We need to build IT / Marketing relationships from the ground (or experience) up.

- **Secondly;** marketing needs to work well with all the other departments across the company as well. Why single out just one function? It is just as important that marketing can work well with operations, product management and sales, especially if they are wishing to effect an integrated, consistent and cohesive engagement of the customer across all touch points.

EXPERIENCE THROUGH TECHNOLOGY

The reason why the CIO/CMO debate is now front and centre is nothing more than this crazy notion that the marketing function will spend more money on technology than IT. Yes, marketing will need to use more technology and yes it will cost more but which is the best function to enable that. It must be IT, it is their core competence. It is just not realistic to expect marketing to have the skills and knowledge to do this, and if they do? Well, if they are too focused on technology then it is highly

likely that they will NOT understand the **ART of marketing.**

What we really need is clarity on roles and responsibilities and from my point of view marketing should be responsible for the customer experience and IT should be responsible for the enablement. There, done and dusted.

If both parties start with the customer and work back from there then this so-called problem should be overcome. To help achieve this, I would recommend that marketing consider doing the following:

Considerations

- Gain an understanding of the IT discipline, IT infrastructure and more importantly everything that IT enables across the customer journey. This links how IT enables and supports customer relationships and thereby the commercial success of the company. Link this back to what type of customer experience is and can be delivered so there is a direct correlation between experience and technology
- Approach this from the perspective of the customer and the desired experience that needs to be created and agree on a common set of customer experience goals

- Understand and agree on what the impact will be of not investing collectively in the customer. Use the balanced scorecard to demonstrate the connection between customer health and commercial success
- Never start with the technology or system!
- Always start with the experience and desired outcome, then the process and then the enablement

9

The Future

There have been many articles highlighting the trends that are impacting the future role of marketing. Many of these talk about the impact of big data, the importance of analytics, the need for attribution/performance measurement and the increasing need for technology enablement.

Here is a great list from [Ryan Somers](#) at SAP in his blog entitled "[10 characteristics of an evolving CMO](#)". In this he identifies the most widely recognised and evident qualities required by a modern day marketer.

- 1. Visionary:** *Looking into the crystal ball to find the edge in the marketplace and communicate short and long term goals.*
- 2. Strong Ego:** *Creativity is important but confidence to rise above the cynics is critical to implement your vision.*
- 3. Risk Taker:** *Differentiation is needed for success. Taking risks, being fearless of fail-*

ure, and learning from actions is how innovation occurs. Acting and failing today is often more valuable than delaying and missing an opportunity tomorrow. We learn from our failures, inaction isn't as quite as forgiving.

4. Simplistic: *"Less is more" but not always easier. Simplification is difficult but in today's market, there is no other way.*

5. "Ear to the Ground" Mentality: *Representing the voice of the customer - the CMO must understand their wants and needs to tailor the best strategy for the ever-changing, culturally diverse, global customer.*

6. Ace of all Trades: *As we continue to see IT and Marketing converge, the CMO needs to understand what makes other departments tick and speak their language. By 2017, the CMO will spend more on IT than the CIO and needs to be an expert outside of Marketing.*

7. Tech-Savvy: *Speed kills and understanding the technical landscape allows the CMO to not only develop a strategy, but also see the project through from end to end – rather than handing it off to the CIO.*

8. Data Driven: *Big Data has taken business by storm and is the ultimate treasure chest of information. Transforming it into Smart Data is the key that unlocks the gold.*

9. Revenue Focused: *Bells and whistles are great, so are fancy commercials but at the end of the day, nothing is more important than increasing revenue. Understanding the value of each initiative is a critical piece toward becoming a best run business.*

10. Cross Departmental Liaison: *“Marketing is the connective tissue between sales and product teams with the voice of the customer at the center” said Nick Besbeas, VP of Marketing at LinkedIn. Each team is critical in its own way, but to provide the best experience for the customer, the CMO needs to ensure integration.*

However I think there are some less obvious but important areas that will be influencing marketing leaders in the near future and they are as follows:

1. Marketing to be assessed on share performance

There is increasing hype that marketing will be held responsible for revenue performance. Clearly marketing will always have a responsibility to contribute to revenue achievement but other functions such as sales will also be major influencers to successful performance. The important aspect is that marketing need to have clear responsibility for share of market (rather than revenue per se). This requires marketing to take responsibility for strategic focus by applying models such as RWW (Is it Real? Is it Worthwhile? Is it Winnable?). They need to align the organisation to those areas where the company can compete successfully and win well. So marketing should focus more on the “where” rather than the actual conversion.

2. Marketing to build brands based on behavior not just messaging

Successful brands of the future will be dependent on a strong, well-defined culture. A culture that ensures a brand’s core values and overriding proposition are brought to life by every employee every time a customer interacts with an organisation. So very simply, marketing needs to take responsibility not only for how employees describe the company and its offerings but more importantly how they behave. This

includes work environments, incentive plans, performance review programmes etc.

3. Marketing to work closer with HR

Marketing is becoming more and more a people function. It is becoming the glue that helps align every employee to act and behave in a way that supports the strategic direction, core values and culture of the company. Internal communications are now as important as external communications and it is imperative that marketing takes responsibility for building brand understanding, commitment and passion amongst all employees. This includes induction programmes, training, internal events etc.

4. Research to be centered on customer journey management

Brands need to build long-term relationships with customers and to do this companies need to clearly understand in finite detail exactly how a customer engages with a brand / company from first touch all the way through to point of advocacy. This encapsulates and requires a very integrated approach with both sales and customer service. Understanding this journey is a must have and marketing need to lead this initiative.

5. Focus will be on user experience

The expectation of customers has risen dramatically. There is also a very saturated media environment, as highlighted before. It is clear that for a brand to break through, be noticed and to influence it has to create a magical moment, a user experience that grabs the attention of the customer. Marketing needs to take an active role in ensuring that the experience at every touch point whether product, packaging, marketing communication, point of sale or customer service is compelling, consistent and inline with brand positioning and customer expectation.

Finally, I cannot talk about the future of marketing without mentioning technology which as we all know is taking a more active role in all of our lives, both professionally as well as personally. This is not just about marketing; it is about every department or function within a company, whether it be electronic-invoicing, recruitment, vendor management, logistics etc. Marketing needs to embrace technology as much as any other department. It is more than a trend; it is now a way of life and clearly every marketer needs to be comfortable, knowledgeable and willing to

invest in technology to improve business performance.

Technology will sit at the heart of every successful social business of the future.

10

Postscript

Have you ever been to a black tie event wearing a white tuxedo or an outfit that was different from everyone else? You end up with that uncomfortable feeling. You made the decision to wear the outfit as you wanted to express yourself, mix it up, to change the status quo. On the other hand you have become ever more visible. This is very much the life of a Chief Marketing Officer (CMO).



It reminds me of [Steve Jobs](#) and the TV campaign he inspired by [Think Different](#). *“Because the people who are crazy enough to think they can change the world, are the ones who do.”*

Changing how people think is one of the hardest things to do, to enable people to see the world from a different viewpoint but that is in essence the new charter for any executive, especially in marketing.

I am also constantly surprised by job advertisements that are seeking a CMO who is a digital disrupter. Digital disruption is fundamentally changing the commercial model of the company. There is a clear difference between delivering fundamental changes to the shape of a business and making brands more relevant in the digital channel. Making fundamental changes means we have to go back to the basics in creating human relationships and realizing this is not just about a brand promise but rather it is about defining the vision and strategic direction for a company. In 99 out of a 100 instances, this is not what the CEO is looking for. Invariably they are just looking to marketing to grow more of the

same business but through the digital channel.

This comes back to the topic of the book and the reason I put pen to paper (so to speak). Marketing can be a major contributor to a business, if understood and empowered in the right way. It should not be pigeonholed. Coming back to the chess analogy, if you take away a number of the pieces, you will never be able to win.

In addition, to create a dynamic, successful and thriving marketing function takes time and, above all, it takes people with a diversity of different skills.

So many times, I see that management (rather than leadership) never really get to know their people, truly get to know their team. It's fundamental that you identify what each individual is passionate about and what they are really good at, then align this to the needs of both the business and the customer. This is at the heart of creating a great marketing team.

We're living in the dawn of technology and a social marketing revolution that has been forcing organisations to be ever more transparent, focused and relevant. The only way we can keep up is by putting the customer at the top of our organisation chart. When the customer is the focal

point of what we are doing we can begin to see the challenges we need to meet and what outcomes we are seeking. This means that to be successful, executives need to provide clear guidance on where the organisation is going but more importantly support and empower their teams, especially those that are on the front-line and engaging with customers every day.

Creating a successful marketing team doesn't start with planning your team structure. Does your team structure have dotted lines, direct lines and every other type of line? When you have dotted lines and dashed lines in a certain sequence in Morse Code, it means SOS (Save our Souls). The big challenge is that you don't need dotted lines if you align the team around the same customer goals. Get your planning right and the team structure along with associated roles and responsibilities will take care of themselves. It is the essence of a social business.

A great example of this is how Innate Motion describe and present their team.

Here are some other questions to ask yourself:

Is your marketing plan defined by a budget in a spreadsheet?

If the first question being asked is what in-

vestment budget do you need next year, you have lost already. A plan should start with desired outcomes and then identify the resources required to deliver on them. This then becomes a prioritisation exercise based on customer needs and not a financial numbers game.

Do you take outside calls?

I have an open door to everyone. You never know where the next great idea will come from. In addition, the world is changing so fast that to keep pace you have to remain connected. And always remember that someone who is willing to start a company and put everything on the line sincerely believes they have seen something that no one else has. Don't you want to know what that is?

Does everyone complain that you have too many initiatives at the same time?

Changing people's perceptions and priorities has to happen if you want the business to change. This means executives need to be the catalysts for change by constantly changing the status quo with initiatives that build motivation, passion and innovation. Try and test new things; some may not work perfectly but if they have contributed to how people think, what they know and what skills they have

acquired, then there is still enormous benefit to be accrued.

The challenge facing marketers is significant. So when deciding which tuxedo or outfit to wear to the party, ask yourself whether you are prepared to stand out and be different. ***“Because the people who are crazy enough to think they can change the world, are the ones who do.”***

I wish you well in all future endeavors and if you missed this link first time round here it is again. Steve Jobs holding his internal meeting on [Think Different](#). It is **brilliant** and conveys what marketing can do in a short video so much better than this book could ever do. If all this book has gained is to enable you to see this, then it was all worthwhile.

Here's to your future success!

The Author

*David can best be summed up as a “**Brand marketer who loves technology**”.*

David started his career in British American Tobacco and spent 20 years in various roles that included brand marketing, trade marketing and commercial management. This provided a very good platform for understanding the power of brands and how best to connect an audience with a brand. There are very few industries where the only differentiator between you and the competition is your brand.

From there David helped co-found an internet start-up company that helped marketing departments brief, source and fulfill marketing requirements for all the goods and services that marketing functions require to run global campaigns. Key clients included SABMiller, Procter & Gamble, Unilever, British American Tobacco, Pernod Ricard and Coca-Cola. This provided David with a very strong technology background, specifically in cloud based software and digital disruption.

David then took his knowledge of brand marketing and technology enablement and joined a small boutique consulting company in London that helped clients improve the operational efficiency of their marketing departments. This covered a wide array of different activities including media production, agency relationships, print management, merchandising sourcing, asset management, content management, MRM etc. Clients included SABMiller, Electrolux, Shell, O2 (Telefonica), Sony Ericsson, British American Tobacco and Universal Pictures.

Latterly David has headed up the marketing function as Chief Marketing Officer in a number of software companies including Capital ID, Portrait Software, Pitney Bowes Software and Tungsten Corporation. Responsibilities have included corporate marketing, product marketing and field marketing.

David's latest venture is to support neighbourly.com, a social network that helps companies find, support and participate in community projects that they care about. It is about connecting vision, corporate values, culture and brand together through authentic local community stories that have the power to transform customer engagement. This has the potential to fundamentally change both how businesses operate as well as the future role of marketing.

David has also spent approx. 15 years living abroad in places such as the Middle East, South Africa, Hungary, South Korea and the USA.

Outside interests include cycling, water skiing, kayaking, running and travel.

Please feel free to contact me directly at david@market-in360.com

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