

THE MARKETING ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND



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Editorial

True Professionalism – A future reality or a continuing Pipedream in Marketing?

Critics often charge that marketing is the functional area most likely to be the source of unethical behaviour in a business. As evidence, these critics point toward instances of deceptive advertising, unscrupulous sales tactics, misrepresented product capabilities, and unfair pricing tactics. For more than a century, marketers have been singled out as the perpetrators of unethical actions against buyers. This is because marketing is the business function most responsible for communicating with prospects and customers and satisfying their needs. As such, the actions of marketers are very clearly in the public view and susceptible to close scrutiny.

Individual marketers currently have to balance their own personal value systems, with the interests of a firm's internal and external stakeholders. When they enter exchange relationships, marketers must consider the interests of several organisations, including their own – with very little (beyond the law) to use as a guide.

This can be a very difficult balancing act – resulting in making marketers an easy target for critics. Further the business community and society in general tend not to have a lot of respect for our professional standing. Even our own Code of Conduct is not as specific as say that provided by a true profession – such as Law.

At MAANZ, it is our strongly held position that it is in all our interests to establish a strong and detailed professional code of conduct. Unquestionably, in the past many if not most marketers would have eschewed such a code as limiting. Equally, today the standards required by governments and society are getting more precise – so there a growing obligation for practitioners to be more ethical and professional in their conduct.

Strong professional and moral guides and limitations on behaviours are needed to support and enhance our activities and differentiate us from those who would not be so bound. These obligations and constraints will benefit and assist (not hinder) marketers who wish to be true professionals to properly execute exchanges and build relationships of trust with all parties – including the public. The interests of marketers who seek the highest level of professionalism in their conduct are "best served . . . by seeking to build *relationships of trust and respect* with the various publics with whom the marketer is involved. In the process, [the best interests of] society [are] also served."

To this end we have been working with a number of other professional associations to create a higher level code of professional conduct for those marketers aspiring to be at the pinnacle of their profession. Not everyone will want to reach this level (which may suggest something) but we are going to assist those who do – stay tuned.



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Brian Monger (Dr.)
Executive Director

Quotations

"You can tell whether a man is clever by his answers. You can tell whether a man is wise by his questions."

*"Effective communication is 20% what you know and 80% how you feel about what you know."
"Design is the contrast of the core of limitations therefore there are no boundaries. It is simply an interpretation of creativity."*

"God wisely designed the human body so that we can neither pat our own backs, nor kick ourselves too easily."

*Confidence comes from persistence, patience and passion
The Moment You Stop Learning, You Stop Leading
Know the other and know yourself
One hundred challenges without danger;
Know not the other and yet know yourself,
One triumph for one defeat;
Know not the other and know not yourself;
Every challenge is certain peril.*

Sun Tzu

"You can make more friends in two months by becoming really interested in other people than you can in two years by trying to get other people interested in you."

- Dale Carnegie

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If your automated email marketing campaigns or initiatives are generating good ROIs, don't get pampered into inactivity.

First, a good result isn't the same as a great result.

Second, the email marketing environment changes so quickly that you need to be flexible enough to respond to new challenges and exploit new opportunities.

So keep on testing, testing, testing to find incremental improvements. And monitor performance and the market to spot critical developments demanding a response.

Constant improvements in email marketing practices are raising the quality bar across inboxes. A few years ago, people were excited to get an email... any email. Now, your email is constantly being compared with the rest of the inbox, and facing ever-tougher criteria to qualify for reader attention.

Equally, email technologies constantly open new opportunities to get more out of your lists. For example, are you integrating customer and marketing databases to optimize contact frequency across all channels? Do you segment your readership? Are you customizing emails based on a recipient's past click through behaviour?

4. Check your assumptions regularly

The dynamic email marketing environment also means that things which held true yesterday don't necessarily hold true today. Studies show, for example, that the supposed "best day to send marketing email" changes.

Numerous factors outside your control affect reader response to your missives. Keep a constant test regime going to monitor changes in preferences and winning response triggers through time. More important, look critically at generalized conclusions that are published (including in articles like this!). Each organisation has unique audiences, offers and objectives. So the insights from one organisation's campaign or a survey's "average" result might not apply to your situation. It's the T word again: test!

5. Don't buy a wreath for the email marketing funeral

As part of the traditional economic development process, it's incumbent on supporters of new technologies to cast doubts on the viability of the older ones. I suspect that back in the 1870s one of Alexander Graham Bell's assistants pronounced "the letter is dead."

Some proponents of RSS technologies, for example, like to describe email marketing in the past tense. But don't believe a word of it.

What is happening is that email marketing is getting more sophisticated and challenging. There is no more low-hanging fruit.

Don't get down about the medium because of a few PR sound bites from those touting alternatives. Base your strategic and budgeting decisions on hard data, campaign experiences and objective trend analysis.

Having said that...

6. Consider other delivery technologies for your email content

Just because email marketing is alive and well doesn't mean you should stop investigating new forms of content delivery. Integration has become the watchword in e-commerce, with the realization that the more channels you offer the shopper, the more they'll spend and the more shoppers you'll get.

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Organisations need to take a strategic view of marketing, which involves not just physical goods but also the myriad services surrounding those goods.

Services play a vital role in our economy. For us marketers in the services industry, it's important to understand the key factors that enable us to profitably acquire and keep customers.

We have identified four factors that make a difference and represent best practices for marketers. Input from hundreds of organisations, representing a multitude of diverse industries, identified these four components as the critical success factors:

1. Having a marketing plan
2. Having a marketing budget
3. Identifying and securing resources
4. Defining and establishing metrics that demonstrate Marketing's impact on the business

The organisations that consistently address these four factors are more likely to achieve their revenue and profitability business goals.

Let's take a closer look at the four components, and while reviewing each think about how your organisation is performing.

1. A Marketing Plan

A marketing plan serves as a road map or blueprint that guides a firm's course of action. A good marketing plan should include at least a clear set of quantifiable objectives and a set of strategies, tactics and milestones that support the objectives.

Two years ago, 75% of organisations surveyed didn't have an approved plan. They suffered from long sales cycles, weak pipelines and high customer churn. Today, most organisations have come to realize that although without a plan they may be engaged in many activities, they are not necessarily moving forward.

The winners realize not only that an approved plan matters but also that the timing of the plan is important. An approved plan halfway through the year impedes a winner's ability to make sufficient impact on the year as a whole.

One item that distinguishes the winners is the inclusion of a compelling, well-developed positioning platform. It clarifies why people should buy from you and how you are better and different from the competitors. Developing a positioning platform requires you to understand your target, its problems and needs, and then to purposefully position your offer specifically to meet those needs - in short, to be customer- or market-centric.

Many of the research respondents indicated that they often end up revising or redoing their positioning again and again. The lack of a consistent positioning platform ends up confusing the market. Targets are not able to understand why they should select your firm over another. This results in longer sales cycles and a lower conversion rate.

On the other hand, the winners have done their homework and are confident in their positioning and invest in it for the long term. Having a plan is a good first step, but without adequate resources, people and funding, achieving a plan is as good as wishing on a star.

2. The Budget

The marketers who are the most successful are those who have an approved budget. They do not have to go back to the well to request funds time and time again. They did their homework when they developed their plan, and the rationale for the plan supported their investment requests.

Having a stable budget that is really committed to and owned by Marketing enables Marketing to operate on a long-term basis rather than just day to day. As a result, looking at the big picture and

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categories, from television to print, direct marketing, and Internet advertising. Along with Thailand, leading contenders came from Japan, Australia, Singapore, India and Malaysia.

The Bangkok winners in the television advertising category are Saatchi and Saatchi, with eight awards; BBDO Bangkok, seven; Ogilvy and Mather Thailand, six; J Walter Thompson, three; Y and R Thailand, three; Creative Juice/G1, three; Far East DDB Pcl, one; TBWA Thailand, one; and Ongoing, one.

Dentsu Inc of Tokyo won the coveted Best Film award for its "husky girls" advertisement created for Ajinomoto Stadium.

Overall, Thailand's agencies won 65 awards, taking second place just two awards behind winner Singapore.

The top three advertising agencies in the Asia-Pacific AdFest were Creative Juice/G1, with 17 awards; Saatchi and Saatchi Singapore, 15; and M and C Saatchi, Sydney, 10.

Creative Juice/G1 won the Best of Print Award from 1,362 other entries with its advertisement for Tamiya Assembly Toys, a Sphere Action Figures product.

TBWA Japan won the top award for outdoor advertising with an entry entitled "Impossible Sprint", made for Adidas.

Saatchi and Saatchi Singapore won Best of Direct Marketing for its "Gear Up!" advertisement for the Republic of Singapore Navy.

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Skilled Workers under Our Noses?

There's no doubt most employers desperate for staff are looking for young people to train for long-term jobs. Hence the Government's move to direct more youngsters into trade schools than university. But there has also been criticism that business itself is not using the expertise of its older workers to train the next generation.

Indeed the other great employment issue facing the Government is the question of what to do with the growing army of unemployed older Australians. Again it attempted to address the issue during the last federal election and has even appointed a minister responsible for getting mature-age people back into the workplace.

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Getting On With the Show

Presentations have come a long way since the days of textas and butcher's paper, writes Terry Lane.

Microsoft PowerPoint is the de rigeur application these days for anyone planning on spruiking to a crowd. Blackboard, whiteboard, butcher's paper and overhead projector are all obsolete. The 35 mm slide projector is somewhere in the cupboard but who knows where we last had it.

These days bullet points are compulsory but why stop there? PowerPoint can use text, graphics, images, video and sound and produces a stand-alone presentation that tells the story without the need to stand up and read out the words on the screen.

A pal popped around the other day with 20 beautiful digital photographs he had taken on a recent trip to outback New South Wales and he wanted them turned into a PowerPoint presentation to astonish family and friends.

He wanted an overture, pictures, titles, captions, music - the works.

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The first step was to create a title slide in Photoshop by combining some of his images into a collage, leaving room in one rectangle for the text. We picked a font, inserted the text in Photoshop and faded it so that it merged slightly into the background.

We did this so that in PowerPoint we could make the title emerge in the same font, but in brighter colours, from the background by choosing "box in" from the transition options. Having prepared the main title slide we then used Photoshop to create caption and credit slides, plus a uniform background to be put into PowerPoint using the Background Fill/Choose Picture command.

He wanted music, so we ripped it from his CDs using Windows Media Player and cut it using the freeware audio editing application Audacity (audacity.sourceforge.net/). Audacity easily cuts, pastes, fades in and out, amplifies sound clips and exports clips as either WAV or MP3 files.

Next we had to guess the resolution of the notebook and projector that would show the presentation. Most systems have at least 1024 x 768-pixel resolution, so we changed the images from a Nikon D70, which come out of the camera at 300 dpi, into 72 dpi files, smaller than 1024 wide and 768 pixels high.

We had one small misgiving.

The presentation was being prepared on a PC, but what if the projection system is Mac based? Then the images would be far too bright when projected because of the difference in gamma between the two systems. We should have checked but we were lucky. The projecting notebook turned out to be a Windows PC.

Mr de Mille wanted an overture for his epic, meaning music at the beginning before any pictures were projected. PowerPoint is not at all happy when it encounters empty, black background slides so we inserted small black images onto the background and gave them durations and transitions, even though there was nothing to see. This way it is possible to start the music with a black screen by inserting the sound from file and right clicking on the little loudspeaker icon, choosing Custom Animation/Multimedia Settings and setting the number of slides for which the sound file will play. We had already cut the sound to length with an end fade using Audacity.

The idea was to create a show that would take care of itself, with all the durations and transitions set in the program itself. Then it had to be packed onto a CD using Pack and Go (we were using an older version of PowerPoint - the most recent versions have a process called packing to CD) and we included the PowerPoint viewer in the package just in case Mr de Mille wanted to view his masterpiece on a PC without PowerPoint installed.

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Marking Time on the Bench

If you are not comparing your business performance with that of the opposition, you will soon find yourself losing out.

In sports arena, checking your performance against that of the opposition makes sense. This applies whether you play a team sport such as Aussie rules or an individual sport such as tennis. If it makes sense in sport to check your performance against that of the competition, why do so many businesses fail to?

In business, if you are not regularly comparing your performance with that of the opposition, for such things as gross profit margin, stock turnover, wages as a percentage of sales, and customer satisfaction, you can quickly find yourself struggling to make a profit.

