

Contents

Contents	1
MAANZ Opinion	1
Quotations	3
From the Media	3
Advertising and Events Here	17
Marketing Essential Articles	18
Articles	19
The Classic 4 P Marketing Mix Strategy	50
Other Approaches to the Marketing Mix	51
How Many More Ps Can we Squeeze into a Marketing Mix?	52
Professional Certificate and Diploma Courses	58
Corporate Membership Benefits	59
If you are focused on a successful career in Marketing	60
Do your own career a favour by recommending a colleague join the Marketing Association.	60

MAANZ Opinion

Thana Marketing – The dark side of marketing strategy

Thana-marketing (from the MAANZ Glossary www.marketing.org.au/glossary_of_marketing_terms).

“The systematic, covert, and (initially) profitable maltreatment of target customers through the use of misleading and deceptive marketing practices.”

Thana is short for a Latin word "Thanatos", which means 'dark' or 'bad'.. **Thana marketing refers to the systematic, covert, and (initially) profitable maltreatment of target customers through the use of misleading and deceptive marketing practises.**

A Thana marketing mix represents a **'hidden set' of interrelated Ps** (the "8Ps that dare not speak their name" according to Mark Wickham) that potentially comprise a mix of management conduct and philosophy that corrupts the marketing concept and underpins society's contempt for marketing and immoral business practices.

Thana-Marketing Mix categories include: (1) Misleading representations; (2) Misleading pricing; (3) Price-fixing; (4) Anti-competitive practices; and (5) Harassment.

The 8 P's of the Thana Marketing Mix

The eight (Thanet-Marketing mix P's suggested by Mark Wickham in a Journal article "Thana-marketing strategy: exploring the 8ps that dare not speak their name" are:

Promise breaking - Any promise by the firm to provide a product (goods or services) with no intention to do so

Postponement - Any act that serves to delay or deny the supply of information/products/services to the consumer. It may also refer to a firm's attempt to deny the consumer their right to complain, cancel orders or seek compensation for damages. ;

Procrastination - Any act that serves to delay the firm's agreed rectification of a product or service failure. It may also extend to delaying a consumer's wish to cancel their contract/relationship with the firm;

Pretence - Any act or omission by a firm that serves to establish a false expectation in the consumer's mind (upon which the consumer acts) concerning the delivery/operation/return of a product or service. For example: provide false or misleading information; the firm relying upon ambiguity in contract negotiations; including illegal caveats in contract negotiations.;

Presumption Any act by a firm that assumes facts in to a transaction not agreed to by the consumer. For example: that an agreement included a minimum term contract that the consumer must honour; that the firm may charge additional fees due to ambiguous clauses included in any fine-print.;

Persecution - Any punitive act or threat by a firm that seeks to bully the consumer in to ceasing their actions or claims against it. Examples include: cancelling services, actual reporting of the consumer to credit agencies, suspending the client's services but continuing to charge their credit cards/bank accounts;

Pressure - Any act by a firm that attempts to bully the consumer into submission. For example: harassment for 'non-payments' of disputed accounts; service staff trained in the delivery of verbal abuse; threats to report the consumer ;

Protestation - Any act by the firm that denies responsibility for any wrongdoing and/or product or service failures. It may extend to the firm shifting blame for any obvious product or service failures to the consumer and their role in the transaction. For example: blaming the consumer's computer set-up or software for Internet service failures; blaming after-sales service failures on 3rd parties to the transaction.

Another example would be major banks' efforts to minimise the number of costly face-to-face transactions they process by 'under servicing' this customer segment and by emphasising the relative ease and convenience of online banking or ATM services.

While **de-marketing strategies** are usually legitimate and formulated to maximize the value proposition a firm is able to present to their desired (i.e. most profitable) target customer segments (Gordon, 2006; Wall, 2005). By eliminating unprofitable segments, or removing its offerings from certain market positions, firms are able to focus their allocation of resources more effectively, and to establish a well defined and more easily defensible market position.

Thana-marketing strategy however is the purposeful development of programs to sucker in target markets to exploit them.

While the marketing strategy literature has largely focused on the positive aspects of marketing and de-marketing strategy, there appears to be a neglected area of marketing strategy that deals with the maltreatment of profitable customer segments (or 'desired target customers) for the same end of maximizing return on investment.

There is ample evidence in the court system of firms attempting to covertly and deliberately diminish their customer value propositions, not for the purposes of de-marketing but rather to maximise their return on investment by renegeing on their commitments to the customer.

This covert and deliberate marketing strategy (thana-marketing strategy) is largely intuitive in nature (i.e. many people readily espouse their belief that business and marketing is inherently unethical) and warrants further investigation. Research since the year 2000 seeks to explore the

Brian Monger

(Based on an idea originally raised by Frank Voehl in the MAANZ Smarter Marketing group on LinkedIn and the work of Mark Wickham – referenced above)

[Back to top](#)

MAANZ MAANZ MAANZ MAANZ MAANZ MAANZ MAANZ MAANZ MAANZ MAANZ MAANZ MAANZ MAANZ MAANZ MAANZ MAANZ MAANZ MAANZ

Quotations

"A good advertisement is one which sells the product without drawing attention to itself." - David Ogilvy,

I'd rather have a lot of talent and a little experience than a lot of experience and a little talent. - John Wooden

"Insanity is doing the same thing over and over again while expecting a different outcome." - Albert Einstein

Things turn out best for the people who make the best out of the way things turn out." - John R. Wooden

It is commitment, not authority that produces results. - William L. Gore

The time to be toughest is when things are going the best. - Donald E. Keogh

[Back to top](#)

MAANZ MAANZ MAANZ MAANZ MAANZ MAANZ MAANZ MAANZ MAANZ MAANZ MAANZ MAANZ MAANZ MAANZ MAANZ MAANZ MAANZ MAANZ

From the Media

Mars and FA in World Cup clash with Nestlé

Mars and The Football Association are considering legal action against Nestlé, which they believe has breached sponsorship rules in its latest ad for its Kit Kat brand.

Mars, which last October announced a five-year partnership with The FA, is an official supplier to the England team.

The confectionery company is now in discussions with The FA about the possibility of initiating court action against Nestlé over its football-based ad campaign, 'Fingers crossed', created by JWT London and currently airing on TV. They believe Nestlé is guilty of "passing off" an association with the England team, despite not being an official sponsor.

Indonesia leads online growth in Southeast Asia

Indonesia marks a 48 per cent growth in online usage in Southeast Asia according to the second annual Net Index Study 2010 by Yahoo.

Online usage jumped 26 per cent in Indonesia compared to 2009. This is mainly due to an increase of internet usage through mobile and accessing print materials online. Tier 2 cities are also 'leapfrogging' from home-access to mobile internet access.

Indonesia's tariffs and 3G expansion play a key role in the growth. Social networking usage has also reached 77 per cent, growing 19 per cent from last year.

Vietnam separately sees an increase in online news reading and gaming. 97 per cent of respondents obtain news online through online newspapers, local news sites and internet portals. Social media usage on the other hand returns a lower percentage with online forums and communities taking 40 per cent and blogs 29 per cent.

Mobile internet usage in Vietnam is still low, but has already jumped 9 per cent since 2009 (totalling 19 per cent). Ho Chi Minh and Da Nang lead in the most usage of mobile internet.

The Net Index Study highlights three main changes this year. First being that regional users are consuming more online media on the go. Secondly, increased user engagement in social media, in terms of both contributing and distributing. Lastly, people are consuming large amounts of entertainment content including news, gossip and gaming information.

"At a time of explosive internet growth and adoption in Southeast Asia, Yahoo is leading the industry in its commitment to equipping marketers with the insights necessary to tap into the massive opportunities available in this region," said Ken Mandel, regional VP of advertising marketplace at Yahoo! Asia Pacific.

The annual Net Index Study examines internet usage trends in Indonesia, Malaysia, Vietnam and the Philippines. The index is a partnership between Yahoo, TNS, Nielsen and Synovate.

Procter & Gamble Targets "Disruptive Innovation"

Procter & Gamble, is looking to "disruptive innovation" as a means of driving growth both during and after the downturn.

According to Melanie Healey, P&G's group president for North America, the recession has not reined in the company's desire to modify its portfolio, marketing strategy or working practices.

Its recent activities in the US have included rolling out a branded e-commerce platform and Future Friendly, a communications campaign based on saving energy.

The company currently spends around US \$2bn a year on research and development, and attributes a further \$350m in annual funding to generating consumer insights. The company says the information provided by shoppers is one essential ingredient in helping create products that effectively meet the highly diverse requirements of its customers.

In tough economic times, you have to be even closer to your consumer and understand what they want and need from the brand.

In responding to these trends, Procter & Gamble has introduced low-cost extensions to ranges such as Era, Bounty and Charmin in a bid to attract people who are looking to trim their expenditure.

It has simultaneously launched premium offerings like Olay-X, Always Infinity and Tide Total Care to differentiate its products in a variety of ways.

"Value is not just about price. It is about benefit and how the brand's purpose fits into our consumer's life. We are changing how we communicate with our consumers,"
Brand Week

Facebook 'quadruples' number of advertisers over a year

Facebook has said that it more than quadrupled the number of its advertiser clients since the start of 2009 and claimed it has become "absolutely core to marketing campaigns". The world's biggest social networking site, did not divulge actual figures.

According to US advertising data supplied by ComScore, it ran 176 billion display ads in the first quarter of 2010 in the US alone, up from 70.7 billion in the previous year's quarter.

It also grew its share of the US display market from 11% in the fourth quarter of 2009, to 16% in the first quarter of this year, putting it ahead of rival Yahoo!, whose share fell from 13% to 12% in the same period.
www.marketingmagazine.co.uk

eCommerce revolutionises Asian mums' buying habits

Mothers have long been identified as the key target market for consumer brands, but a recent study shows just how much new media channels are impacting their purchasing habits.

Dubbed 'Secret online lives of Asia's mothers', the research from Microsoft and Starcom MediaVest Group shows certain nuances of mums from eight key markets across the region. However, one aspect that should really get marketers and brands excited is the growing acceptance of e-commerce and how mothers are embracing online shopping.

In terms of numbers, over two-thirds of the 2,859 mums polled had purchased child/family products online and close to 70 per cent plan to do so in the next 12 months. For individual markets, online shopping for kids and family is most popular with mums in China (87 per cent) and Korea (82 per cent). When it comes to buying products for personal use, Chinese and Korean mums also lead, with 94 per cent having made an e-purchase.

Across other parts of Asia, percentages of mothers shopping online might not yet yield high numbers owing to lesser e-commerce infrastructures. But uptake of e-shopping can only grow as new generations of online savvy young women enter motherhood and e-commerce infrastructures evolve to deliver against mums' online shopping needs and expectations of the total shopping experience.

But brands also need to be aware that expectations of shopping online also differ by market. In Taiwan, mothers love online shopping as it frees them of in-store consultant pressures. In Malaysia, meanwhile, mums appreciate special offers and promotions. In markets such as Japan, China and South Korea, mum-targeting websites offering cheaper alternatives to retail shops figure highly too.

Kenneth Andrew, marketing director, Microsoft Advertising Greater Asia-Pacific, says more interactive online spaces in the lead-up to the purchase decision or to engage mums in the lead-up are critical. "When exploring creating an online experience to influence purchasing decisions, brands need to consider where mothers across Asia will access their content," he says. "This will mostly be in spaces that brands already own - micro-sites and corporate pages. These types of spaces can include interactive aspects like e-commerce, feedback pages and company blogs."

Social spaces such as networks, forums and blogs are now important as well, as the majority of mothers (85-86 per cent) are active readers of online social content and three-quarters of them are contributors. Two-thirds are social networkers and 56 per cent update their profiles each week.

Therefore, through giving mums an optimal online shopping experience, coupled with them gravitating towards social and interactive spaces, mothers will continue to be ideal brand ambassadors.

www.media.asia

Australian Defence Force kicks off digital pitch

Defence Force Recruiting has launched a review of its creative digital agency arrangements, following the reappointment of George Patterson Y&R as its lead creative agency this week, AdNews magazine revealed today.

The digital agency review was opened this week and agencies have until 30 June to respond to the request for tender.

The review comes ahead of the expiration of the current digital agency contract on 30 September. The incumbent agency Visual Jazz has worked with the DFR for five years.

A defence spokesperson said "It is anticipated that a one month transition period will occur on 1 September 2010."

www.adnews.com.au

Toyota plots brand rehab in US

After turning in the worst performance in May sales among major automakers in the U.S. market, Toyota is launching a new marketing campaign (and charm offensive, led by Toyota president Akio Toyoda) to try to get American consumers thinking once again about what once made the Toyota brand so great.

It is clear that many potential car buyers remain leery of Toyota's products and promises in the wake of the company's massive safety recalls early this year. Naturally, Toyota wants to shift the conversation to more positive messaging.

www.brandchannel.com

APMA and Communications Council join forces

The Communications Council, Australia's peak advertising body, have announced the formal amalgamation with the Australasian Promotional Marketing Association (APMA), an organisation representing leading marketing activation agencies in Australia and New Zealand.

Coca-Cola builds new social media model

Coca-Cola, is building its social media strategy on four key pillars which can inform the creation of truly "compelling" content.

The company estimates there are 5,000 "mentions" of its flagship product on English-language websites every day, a total that could be three times higher worldwide.

"When you think about what your homepage is ... it's not necessarily just your brand page. It's Google.com. It's Digg. It's Twitter. It's YouTube. It's Facebook," said Natalie Johnson, its digital communications manager.

"It's all of these other sites, because that's where people are going to obtain their information."

In seeking to react to this trend, the beverage maker has built a model based on the "4Rs" - reviewing, responding, recording and redirecting.

Firstly, services offered by firms like Radian6, Sysomos and Scout Labs allow Coca-Cola to track the online "buzz" surrounding its brands. This provides an insight into popular sentiment and helps generate ideas that can genuinely connect with this vital demographic.

"We're trying to make sure ... as we listen to the conversations that are discussed online, as we review them and we start to engage, that we're creating compelling information," said Johnson.

Coke has also tasked "subject matter experts", extending beyond its marketing and PR departments to encompass technical and nutritional experts, to respond to the queries of netizens. It also has a "blog squad" of social media "power users" tasked with dealing with the questions of individual authors on the internet.

"People don't want to hear sales talk ... they want information that is relevant to their daily life," said Johnson. "The more 'link love' or 'link juice' that we have out there the better our Google scores are,"

"By doing this, by working with search engine marketing teams and doing natural search we have the ability to share information with various different audiences quickly."

More broadly, Johnson said Coca-Cola's approach was inspired by "four truths" that have been key in leveraging these emerging channels. "We believe that we don't own our brands," she added, citing its partnership with two consumers who originally created its Facebook profile as one demonstration of this strategy.

Finally, marketers must realise "every day is an election day" and remain consistently involved in the social media world.

PSFK/YouTube;

Diet Coke launches Facebook hub for Love it Light drive

Coca-Cola has launched a pan-European content hub on Facebook in support of its Diet Coke brand and its 'Love It Light' strategy.

The hub, developed by FullSix, is aimed at 17 to 29-year-old women and features news, gossip, fashion, music and humorous content, and the link will be included on outdoor, TV and radio advertising.

FullSIX has also created a series of webisodes based on the puppet characters in Diet Coke's TV ads, Eleanor, Bernadette and Irene. Each short film, featuring the iconic 80s anthem, Maniac, is housed on YouTube as well as the Facebook hub, with the characters shown in 24 scenarios throughout the year.

Users are able to leave video messages for characters, as well as sharing them with friends across Facebook, Twitter and YouTube, via a social media-sharing toolbar.

Diet Coke has also partnered with online portal Netvibes to deliver up-to-the-minute music and fashion tips, and relationship advice. The brand will also run rewards activity throughout the year, including ringtones, wallpaper and competitions, which also link through to the Coca-Cola loyalty site, Coke Zone.

To support the hub, Diet Coke has launched an online ad campaign across targeted sites, including tailored ads on Facebook. Social media agency, Mediatronica, will seed the content online through Twitter sponsorships and toolbar buys.

Aussie icon Uggs in battle for name

The commonly used name for Australia's iconic sheepskin boots, "uggs", could be under threat of another copyright claim.

American company Deckers tried to claim the name in 2003, but the national trademark regulator ruled the term was generic and could apply to any kind of sheepskin boot.

Deckers, which owns the name Ugg Australia in other countries, has reportedly made a second attempt with IP Australia to prevent local companies from using the name.

It has also threatened action against Australian companies selling ugg boots on internet sites such as eBay.

Ugg boots started out as an icon of the Australian surfing culture in the late 1960s and has since developed into an international fashion footwear item.

PepsiCo moves away from "big brand" marketing

PepsiCo is seeking to move away from marketing based on a "big brand" philosophy and towards an approach that connects with its target audience in a more direct way.

Frank Cooper III, chief consumer engagement officer for PepsiCo's US beverage arm, argued that changing preferences and habits mean many traditional methods of advertising now seem outdated. "We want to become a catalyst in the culture rather than act like a big brand announcing something," he said.

As part of this process, the owner of Gatorade and Tropicana is trying to build stronger bonds with its dedicated customers, who can often be ignored in favour of attracting new buyers.

"One of the most valuable – yet underrated – assets any company has is the wisdom and passion of its most loyal consumers," said Cooper. Stimulating online and offline conversations with, and between, brand advocates can help encourage positive word of mouth, a currency that is always at a premium in the FMCG sector.

PepsiCo estimates that 90% of shoppers place the most trust in recommendations from sources like friends and family, while 70% have a similar confidence in user-generated reviews on the web. "We found that our consumers' social relationships serve as the foundation for our most effective marketing," said Cooper.

"Rather than focusing on how to sell the product attributes to our consumers, we looked to add value to a community or a real-life social network," said Cooper.

Consumers in china adopting new digital habits

Consumers in China are adopting a wide range of new digital behaviours, although popular habits remain distinctive among different demographics.

Ericsson, the communications giant, has estimated that there are 380 million internet users and 770 million mobile phone subscribers in the country at present, with considerable room for growth still remaining.

According to the company, average annual earnings in China's largest urban centres rose by 8.8% to US\$2,515 in 2009, and 87% of city-dwellers are confident about their economic prospects in the coming 12 months.

Some 94% of this group own a mobile phone, 65% have a PC with an internet connection, 60% pay for a fixed line phone and 20% possess a laptop, totals that have climbed by at least a quarter in the last five years.

With regard to the web, 44% of netizens streamed video at least once a week, with 40% visiting online communities, 19% utilising internet banking platforms and 12% buying goods via this channel during the same period.

A further 22% went online through their mobile phone with the same degree of frequency, including 15% who logged on to instant messaging properties, 12% who sent email and 10% who were active on social networks and forums.

For over two-thirds of this cohort, the main reason for surfing the mobile web was to "kill time", compared with 54% that cited the portability of wireless devices and 21% that argued it was a good way to socialise.

Elsewhere, 88% of young consumers in first, second and third tier Chinese cities revealed that they browsed the internet every day.

More than four in ten members of this segment also accessed the mobile web once a week, with 28% chatting on instant messaging sites, 19% contributing to online communities and 18% sending email.

Almost half of this demographic said that having a web-enabled phone allowed them to "interact with my friends any time", and 34% agreed this medium was "as important" as its desktop equivalent.

The online audience had also expanded in size to reach 107 million people in rural regions of China by early 2009, the last date for which official government statistics are available.

Ericsson suggested that approximately 30% of these less-developed markets currently receive mobile services, with China Mobile drawing a majority of its customer base from such areas of the country.

"In rural communities, the use of mobile phones and the internet is focused more on the basics and fun," Ericsson said.

Ericsson; WARC

Free in-home vehicle charging stations

Ford announced a partnership with Coulomb Technologies to provide nearly 5,000 free ChargePoint Networked Charging Stations to individual customers and public locations.

There's just one catch, of course. Customers can only get the free in-home station if they buy the Ford Transit Connect EV, expected to roll out later this year. And only customers in 9 designated markets--Austin, Detroit, Los Angeles, New York, Orlando, Sacramento, the San Jose/San Francisco Bay Area, Redmond, Wash., and Washington, D.C.--are eligible for the offer.

Approximately 2,000 customers will receive in-home charging stations, while 2,600 stations will be set up in public locations. Public stations don't require the purchase of an EV.

Ford and Coulomb's \$37 million project is made possible in part thanks to the DOE's Transportation Electrification Initiative, which provided a \$15 million grant for the ChargePoint program. The other \$22 million come from other sources, according to Ford.

The tiger is back

It appears that a celebrity of Tiger Woods' stature can survive a sex-riddled scandal. After his public apology, Woods was featured in April in a self-abasing Nike ad. Although the ad was deemed by experts and consumers alike to be largely ineffective, it marked the return of the beleaguered golfer to the airwaves, and to the game.

His latest advertising appearance is for Electronic Arts (EA), the video game publisher, promoting the upcoming Tiger Woods PGA Tour 11, which hits stores on June 8th. The "Welcome to Team Golf" ad depicts Woods as a US team player facing off against a European squad, since the video game offers the ability to play as part of a team.
www.brandchannel.com

M&M Pretzel Chocolate Candies

M&M's Pretzel Chocolate Candies is part of a new line-up of "sweet and savoury" products announced by Mars. The other additions, rolling out over the course of the year, are Snickers Xtreme Bar and Dove Sugar Free Chocolates with Peanut Butter Crème, among others. Bowling said the idea of putting a pretzel inside the candy stemmed from "years of consumer focus groups" and the observation that "sweet and salty is very popular among fans of Mars' products."

Mars calls it one of the biggest product launches for M&M's in a decade, and it comes as sales of mass market, affordable sweets have benefited from consumers making small splurges in a downturn. (Sales of premium confections, however, have dropped, per a Mintel report.)
www.brandweek.com

Social media "next big threat" for brands

The majority of marketers in the UK believe social media will become the "next big threat" for corporations seeking to safeguard the integrity of their brands.

Marks & Clerk, the law firm, surveyed 266 senior executives, representing both clients and agencies, to ascertain their views on the current role of the web.

Overall, 81% of the panel agreed the internet fosters a culture where the intellectual property of brands is more susceptible to exploitation, and that the existing legal framework is inadequate.

Some 73% claimed brands were "more likely to be subject to unfair treatment online than offline" and 64% said the rise of new media had made it harder to "police and protect the reputation of their brands."

Regarding search, 63% of contributors argued Google's recent decision to allow companies utilising its AdWords system to bid for terms trademarked by their rivals was "unacceptable".

A further 71% added they were "uncomfortable" with this idea, while 61% suggested Google and the advertisers concerned should be held responsible for any misuse of the name of an asset belonging to another firm.

Elsewhere, 62% of those polled predicted social media would evolve beyond being a communications channel to become a "substantial sales and revenue source" in the next two years.

Indeed, 20% reported that services like Twitter and Facebook already fulfilled such a purpose, indicating how rapidly these portals had made an impact in the e-commerce arena.

However, 69% of executives were of the opinion that social media would be the next battleground for brands, particularly if these sites adopt a similar model to Google's paid search, a move Twitter has already begun.
Marks & Clerk; WARC

BP launches spill ad

BP, has rolled out advertising addressing the crisis.

A full-page ad in the New York Times shows BP workers on a boat somewhere in the Gulf, looking to contain the spill. Copy reads: "We will get this done. We will make this right."

Text in the ad goes on to say the spill was "a tragedy that never should have happened," and refers to the unsuccessful "top kill" operation. But the ad assures readers that BP employees are working "around the clock" to contain and collect most of the leak.

www.brandweek.com

New breed of web giants emerging in China

Major websites like Facebook and Yahoo continue to command the highest number of visitors worldwide, but several portals in China are starting to catch up without even having branched out overseas.

Google, the online giant, has released a list of the most popular websites across the globe in April 2010, excluding its own homepage and properties like YouTube.

Facebook received 540 million unique visitors in this period, which was equivalent to a reach of 35.2% and indicated the unparalleled growth it has experienced since first launching in 2004.

The world's biggest social network also recorded 570 billion page views in the fourth month of this year, well over ten times the number posted by any of the other services featured in the top 100.

Yahoo claimed second place in the rankings with 490 million users and 70 billion exposures, as well as boasting a penetration rate of 31.8%.

Wikipedia, the user-generated encyclopaedia, was in fourth on 310 million visitors, and was also the highest-ranked portal that did not run any form of advertising.

Microsoft's corporate hub featured alongside its MSN and Live offerings in the ten services that enjoyed the most interest, with a combined 880 million consumers logging on to these platforms. The organisation's three primary internet properties reached 53.3 billion page views, supplemented by the total of 2.7 billion hits registered by the 110 million users of its "decision engine" Bing.

In the social networking category, Twitter's audience of 96 million people delivered 5.4 billion page views, totals that stood at 72 million and 27 billion respectively for MySpace.

Orkut, which is owned by Google and enjoys high levels of usage in countries such as India and Brazil, also posted 45 million unique visitors.

Elsewhere, CNET was the most popular news provider with 55 million users, with the BBC on 45 million, China's Ifeng on 41 million, CNN on 34 million and the New York Times on 26 million.

The potential scale of China's future trajectory in this area, was shown by the impressive headline scores of some of the country's largest sites despite the fact internet penetration currently stands at around 25%.

Baidu, the dominant search engine in the local market, saw 230 million people enter enquiries and look for information in April, generating a collective 70 billion impressions.

QQ, the email and instant messaging site, boasted 170 million users, with Sina, the news and entertainment portal, on 130 million and its rival 163.com on 98 million.

Some 98 million shoppers accessed Taobao, the premier ecommerce platform in the world's most populous nation, with this total only likely to expand in the future.

The growth of online video in China was also demonstrated by the fact 89 million viewers streamed clips on Youku, ahead of its main competitor Tudou, on 66 million.

Overall, 66 of the top 100 websites had formal advertising programmes in place at present, according to Google. To view the list in full, click here.

Google; www.warc.com

Cadbury ditches Flake strapline

Cadbury's Flake is ditching its famous strapline 'Only the crumbliest, flakiest chocolate' in a strategic marketing move, ending more than half a century of ads.

The latest TV spot for the chocolate bar will mark a shift in strategy for Cadbury's Flake, and one of the longest-running straplines in the country, in an attempt to boost sales by new owner Kraft.

Cadbury has opted to swap the familiar dulcet tones of the Only the Crumbliest, Flakiest jingle and the famous Flake girl succumbing to the mouth-watering chocolate to focus on the chocolate bar.

www.marketingmagazine.co.uk

Google launches historical photography website

Google has teamed up with social engagement company We Are What We Do to create a website which allows consumers to "pin" old pictures of towns and cities on contemporary photographs.

The site, entitled Historypin, lets users share their personal photos by loading them up to a specific location on Google Maps or image on Google Street View.

Historypin is being rolled out in partnership with a number of brands, including Harrods, Trinity Mirror and The Savoy. Additional images are being provided by the Conservative Party.

Nick Stanhope, managing director at We Are What We Do, said: "Historypin aims to be the world's largest communal archive of historical images and stories. The unique way users can upload, review, comment on and share images via Historypin creates a fascinating window to the past."

Twitter to sell advertising

Twitter has unveiled a long-awaited advertising scheme that it claims could mint money for the company. The business has long concentrated on scooping up users for its service, and money from venture capitalists rather than on finding a way to make profits from its growing audience. Now it needs to show that these investments have been justified.

Some social-marketing experts claim that the nature of Twitter's service, which involves communicating via 140-character "tweets", makes it tricky to generate revenue. Twitter's bosses disagree, but are treading carefully. For now, they are only letting advertisers such as Starbucks and Virgin America, an airline, place so-called "promoted tweets" at the top of results lists on the service's search engine. This is similar to Google's sale of ads based on keywords in searches. Those that are not popular with Twitter's users will be removed.

Alarmed at this prospect, some users have already urged Twitter not to "pollute" their thoughts with ads and have threatened to leave if it does. Yet unless there is a mass revolt in the coming months, it is almost certain to press ahead.

Some critics point out that ads on Google command premium rates because its users are often looking to make a purchase. Twitter's audience, they say, is less likely to be shopping, and will thus be less prized by advertisers. Twitter's chief operating officer, disputes this, arguing that people often use it to search for, say, immediate reactions to product launches.

Facebook remains Twitter's main rival. It will shortly be revealing more data that is likely to make it even easier for people to establish connections with other websites and to pull information from elsewhere back into Facebook. With such a formidable foe, Twitter needs all the friends—and advertisers—it can get.

WD-40 fly the flag for England's World Cup team

WD-40 has launched a promotion giving away a free England van window flag with every can of WD-40 smart straw.

According to WD-40 interest has been so high the initial 56,000 flags are now wedged in cars and vans across the country. "

Optus in court over 'unlimited' plans

ACCC takes the telco to the Federal Court for contravening law
The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) has taken Singtel Optus to court for its allegedly misleading use of the term "unlimited".

According to the ACCC, Optus told customers in advertisements they would get unlimited calls on its \$70 pre-paid Turbo Max plans. But when customers checked the fine print, it also came with a number of limitations and restrictions.

The ACCC has accused Optus of breaching section 52 of the Trade Practices Act 1974, which states “A corporation shall not, in trade or commerce, engage in conduct that is misleading or deceptive or is likely to mislead or deceive.”

The case has been fast tracked and will first reach court under Justice John Middleton in the Melbourne Federal Court on June 25.

This isn't the first time Optus has been hit by regulatory bodies. In mid-2009, Optus subsidiary, Prepaid Services, was taken to court over allegedly misleading behaviour. Earlier that year, the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) took Optus to court and the telco was fined \$110,000 for breaching the Spam Act.

Snacks, the new “meal” restaurants are serving up

Research from Mintel Menu Insights found that snacking is the new way to order at restaurants.

Menu items that contain the descriptors “snack,” “snackable,” or “snacker” have increased by a staggering 170% since 2007 and growth is expected to carry on as restaurants continue to explore this new trend. “Snacks are providing a huge opportunity right now for restaurants ranging from quick service to fine dining,” notes Eric Giandelone, director of foodservice research at Mintel. “By innovating menus with various snacking options, restaurants can boost sales throughout the day and drive guest traffic during non-peak hours.”

Consumers are more likely to visit restaurants in the early and late afternoon for snacks, the 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. time slot being most popular with 37% of Mintel's respondents.

Spending, however, peaks in the early evening. Only 19% of respondents purchased snacks from a restaurant between 6 p.m. and 8 p.m., but the average amount spent is \$4.26 per person versus only \$3.79 across all other time periods. “Snack options need to be appropriate for the time frame,” adds Eric Giandelone. “Heartier and pricier fare may have more appeal later in the day, while light options may work best in the morning or early afternoon.”

The majority of snackers (64%) look for a beverage when snacking, whereas 61% opt for something portable. Meanwhile, just over half (52%) crave an indulgent snack and 50% want something salty to nibble on. Only 32% of snackers choose a healthy option, which counteracts the health conscious trend that is being seen in the restaurant industry.

Mintel Menu Insights

Google remains the leader among search engines,

According to data released from Experian Hitwise 85.18% of all searches by Australian internet users were via google.com.au for the four weeks ending 1 May 2010, with google.com and google.com.au combined representing more than 90% of Australian searches online.

Australians know their brands well with single word searches increasing by 3.61% for the month of April year on year. In fact, 49 of the top 50 search terms for this month were brand names.

Conversely, Yahoo!7 Search has lost share of search this year with 2.38% of web searches; while Bing currently holds 3.65% share. Areas that experienced the greatest growth in search for the month of April year-on-year include travel, health and medical, sports and aviation.

Experian Hitwise

Green brands find favour in emerging markets

Consumers in emerging markets such as China and India are the most interested in green brands, a new report has revealed.

National Geographic partnered with Globescan to survey 17,000 adults in 17 countries including Brazil, China, Germany, India, Japan, Russia the UK and US.

In terms of rating purchase habits, the report looked at factors such as whether shoppers would pay a premium for eco-friendly brands, opted against offerings with excessive packaging and regularly bought "used" items.

Indian consumers posted the highest overall score on 61.4%, falling to 56.2% in South Korea, 54.3% in China, 53.8% in Brazil and 53% in Mexico.

Japan was the best-performing advanced market on 51.1%, compared with 46.3% in France, 45.3% in both Germany and the UK and 43.5% in the US.

Measured against two similar studies in 2008 and 2009, respondents in emerging economies like Brazil and Russia are all placing a heightened focus on modifying their behaviour in positive ways.

This was also true of their counterparts in the US, which suggests that the financial crisis has not wholly undermined popular concern regarding issues such as climate change.

One activity that has people to save money and help the environment, the number of individuals who were buying more pre-owned goods reached 25% across all of the countries assessed.

This figure has jumped by 11% since 2008 among Americans to 35%, with China posting an uptick of 11% to 25%, totals that stood at 21% and 42% in India respectively.

In contrast, 72% of Russians said this was not an area they were interested in pursuing, as did 58% of the Japanese sample and 53% of Spaniards.

However, 39% of the Japanese panel would be happy to spend extra on products boasting strong sustainability credentials, with 46% of Chinese, 47% of Argentines and 42% of Australians of the same mind.

Such a view has held by just 20% of Russians, 30% of Indians, 31% of Brazilians and a third of contributors in France and the UK.

Elsewhere, 60% of Indians stated that they bought green brands either "often" or "all of the time", a path followed by 59% of customers in China, 53% in Russia and 46% in Brazil.

Uptake levels came in at 41% in Mexico and 39% in Australia, with the latter of these two nations falling exactly in line with the average across all of the markets featured in the study.

However, only 22% of Japanese participants made frequent purchases of these kinds products, with the UK on 27%, South Korea on 30% and the US on 31%.

A majority of consumers in China and India "avoided excessively packaged goods", with over 40% of Russians, Japanese, Germans and South Koreans also choosing to leave these items on store shelves.

These two countries also came out more than 10% ahead of every other nation when it came to consciously ignoring brands they perceived to be detrimental to the environment.
National Geographic; WARC

Tsingtao taps Chinese tourism with expo campaign

Tsingtao beer is a staple in Chinese restaurants around the world, making it one of the best-known and recognisable Chinese brands anywhere.

But Tsingtao Brewery Co.'s core target market has always been sales in China, the world's largest beer market by volume, and its ad campaigns at home are normally aimed at domestic consumers, not foreigners.

This summer, however, Tsingtao is tapping into rising tourism traffic to China, particularly Shanghai, site of the 2010 World Expo. The Qingdao-based brewery is promoting its iconic beer brand as a cultural ambassador for China and Chinese drinking culture.

Tsingtao has launched a series of cheerful and quirky cartoon illustrations to capture the attention, and thirst, of international visitors to China. Print ads created by Ogilvy & Mather, Shanghai greet visitors to the World Expo with the slogan, "Drink Tsingtao, Understand China," a variation on the World Expo's theme of cultural exchange.

One ad, for example, introduces the Chinese custom of penalizing a late-comer with three beers to chug, as illustrated by a cartoon character balancing three full mugs.

"Tsingtao is truly forging a new creative direction by leveraging unique aspects of Chinese culture to connect with the 70 million expected visitors from home and abroad in a playful and memorable way," said Joyce Chang, managing director, Ogilvy & Mather, Shanghai.

The campaign is running in English rather than Chinese, an unusual marketing decision for ads appearing in the mainland -- especially since they will, Tsingtao hopes, appeal to modern, urban Chinese consumers as well.

The brewery wants Tsingtao's image to appear more youthful and energised to domestic consumers at a time when young, trendy and increasingly well-off consumers are turning to foreign-made premium beer brands as well as imported spirits.

The Law Institute of Victoria to launch the first edition of the National Guide of Expert Witnesses

In July the Law Institute of Victoria plans to launch the first edition of the National Guide of Expert Witnesses.

Containing an extensive listing of experts across many specialist areas this publication will be an invaluable resource for lawyers. Expert witnesses are frequently required by our members and the greater legal profession when preparing cases and for court appearances.

The Guide will be distributed free to practising lawyers in July via the Law Institute Journal, New South Wales Law Society Journal and the Queensland's Proctor journal. It will also be distributed to the national media.

This means that over 46,000 copies will be distributed to lawyers in Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland.

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6 Ideas to Boost Catalogue Sales

Even that powerful selling tool known as the catalogue can show, signs of fatigue. How do you counter competition, new trends, economic slumps, and direct mail overkill? DOC2.DOC

Parallel Marketing

Parallel marketing is the technique of turning traditionally non advertising tools into powerful marketing devices. It was probably created originally to promote professional services without violating canons of behaviour, or as a genteel way to sell products or services without seeming to be "commercial." DOC3.DOC

Serial Selling

Writing a series of collection letters can be as much fun as tap dancing on a high wire. The objective is to persuade a slow-paying customer who has hitherto shown no interest in writing cheques to ante up some money. DOC4.DOC

Copywriting Tips for Direct Marketers

There are certain axioms of experience that copywriters call on to simplify their task and polish their final product. Here are some of them. DOC5.DOC

Climbing the Seven Steps of a Sale

The oldest sales formula around-"AIDA"- has been with us for so long that we may have forgotten where it originated. It was 1925 when E. K. Strong, in his book *The Psychology of Selling*, first proposed this formula for salesmanship. He said that, in order for the salesman to move he prospect through the phases of buying readiness, it was necessary to: "A, get Attention; I, arouse Interest; D, stimulate Desire; A, ask for Action." DOC9.DOC

The impact on awareness and recall is even more pronounced when a home-page ad coincides with what Facebook and Nielsen term "organic" social advocacy, i.e. an item in a user's news feed indicating a friend has become a fan of a brand.

In short, so-called earned media generated when people mention or advocate brands makes the paid media considerably more effective, according to the study.

Increased recall

Facebook-home-page ads on average generated a 10% increase in ad recall, a 4% increase in brand awareness and a 2% increase in purchase intent among users who saw them compared with a control group with similar demographics or characteristics who didn't.

But the increase in recall jumped to 16% when ads included mentions of friends who were brand fans, and 30% when the ads coincided with a similar mention in users' news feeds. Brand awareness saw similar bumps: up 2% from just a home-page ad, 8% with a "social ad" bearing mentions of friends who were brand fans and up 13% when a home-page ad appeared along with a mention of friends who were brand fans in the users' news feeds. Purchase intent was 2% higher among viewers of home-page ads vs. non-viewers, but got a four-times-bigger bump, up 8% either from social ads or when ads appeared alongside organic mentions of the brand in the news feed.

The recall levels for home-page ads on Facebook appear "slightly higher than standard norms we've done on other projects," Mr. Gibbs said. "What we've seen in both social ads and organic [mentions] are much higher than we've seen in other campaigns along these lines."

In all, Nielsen projects around 18 million Facebook users saw ads measured as part of the study, of which around a million also saw organic mentions of their friends in social ads. Roughly another million saw organic mentions of the brands featured in the study without seeing the ads.

Based on those numbers, it's still a lot easier -- if not necessarily cheaper -- to buy scale on Facebook than earn it by winning fans. It's also an indication to Mr. Gibbs that marketers need to focus on winning Facebook fans over the long haul if they want to improve their odds of success when advertising there.

Chinese automakers are too ambitious

Local Car Firms Like Chery and Great Wall Don't See the Writing on the Road, Says Yang Jian at Auto News China

The buzzword in China's auto industry these days is capacity expansion -- one automaker after another has announced plans to expand existing plants or build new facilities.

It's a tempting strategy in a market where car sales grew 50% in 2009 and 67% so far in 2010, but some of these plans have obviously gone too far. This week alone, six automakers announced plans to expand production.

To be sure, some companies are struggling to keep up with demand. With an annual production capacity of 360,000 units, Guangqi Honda Automobile Co., a joint venture between Honda Motor Co. and Guangzhou Automobile, sold 365,000 cars last year.

SAIC-GM-Wuling Automobile Co. a joint venture between General Motors Corp., Shanghai Automotive Industry Corp. (SAIC) and Liuzhou Wuling Motors Co. in Liuzhou, Guangxi, has an even more severe bottleneck. Despite its capacity of merely 590,000 units, the joint venture somehow sold more than one million minibuses last year.

Likewise, Geely Automobile can legitimately argue that it needs more capacity in China's vast western market, and Volkswagen Group faces the same problem in southern China.

But it's tough to justify the overly ambitious expansion plans of Chery Automobile Co. and Great Wall Motor.

By Acquiring Volvo, Geely Has a Record to Break for Chinese Companies

Local Firms Have Not Succeeded in Taking Over Foreign Companies, Warns Yang Jian

Chery's web site claims that the combined capacity of its existing assembly plants has reached 900,000 units. Yet the company sold fewer than 440,000 vehicles last year, which means it was using 49% of its capacity.

To put that in perspective, analysts generally argue that an automaker must use at least 80% of its production capacity to make money.

Yet Chery is building two new plants in the northeast port city of Dalian and the northern city of Kaifeng. Their combined capacity will be 400,000 vehicles. As if that weren't enough, Chery also plans to locate a plant in Inner Mongolia with a production capacity of 300,000 vehicles.

Great Wall also dreams of glory. The company says it has a current capacity of 500,000 units, but it sold less than 230,000 vehicles last year. Nevertheless, it announced a plan this week to raise the capacity of its plant now under construction in the northern port city of Tianjin to 600,000 units.

In China's fast-growing market, an automaker can argue that it must grow to take advantage of economies of scale. But Chery and Great Wall are acting as if last year's explosive sales growth will never end -- and their expectations are too high. China's red-hot market is starting to cool off. Industry sales rose a stunning 72% year-on-year in the first quarter, but only 39% in April 2010.

Inventories are building up at dealerships, especially those selling domestic Chinese brands, according to the China Association of Automobile Manufacturers. China's market is easing towards lower and more sustainable growth. It's time for Chery and Great Wall to reconsider their expansion plans.

Yang Jian is the managing editor of Automotive News China, a publication of Crain Communications. (AdAgeChina.com)

Do not get depressed working at your job?

Some people can get tired working in the marketing field and they do not know what to do about it. As a result, here is a list of techniques that a person can use to make their position more enjoyable.

One of the ways to manage your depression at your job is to challenge your negative thinking with positive statements and realistic thinking. When encountering thoughts that make you fearful or depressed, challenge those thoughts by asking yourself questions that will maintain objectivity and common sense. For example, you are afraid that if you do not get that job promotion then you will be stuck at your job forever. This depresses you; however your thinking in this situation is unrealistic. The fact of the matter is that there all are kinds of jobs available and just because you don't get this job promotion doesn't mean that you will never get one. In addition, people change jobs all the time, and you always have that option of going elsewhere if you are unhappy at your present location.

Some people get depressed for a few minutes and do not know what to do. When this happens, a person should take a deep breath and try to find something to do to get their mind off of the problem. A person could take a walk, listen to some music, read the newspaper or do an activity that will give them a fresh perspective on things. Doing something will get your mind off of the problem and give you confidence to do other things.

Sometimes, we can get depressed over a task that we will have to perform in the near future. When this happens, visualise yourself doing the task in your mind. For instance, you and your team have to play in the championship volleyball game in front of a large group of people in the next few days. Before the big day comes, imagine yourself playing the game in your mind. Imagine that you're playing in front of a large audience. By playing the game in your mind, you will be better prepared to perform for real when the time comes. Self-Visualisation is a great way to reduce the fear and stress of a coming situation.

Another technique that is very helpful is to have a small notebook of positive statements that makes you feel good. Whenever you come across an affirmation that makes you feel good, write it down in a small notebook that you can carry around with you in your pocket. Whenever you feel depressed, open up your small notebook and read those statements.

Take advantage of the help that is available around you. If possible, talk to a professional who can help you manage your fears and anxieties. They will be able to provide you with additional advice and insights on how to deal with your current problem. By talking to a professional, a person will be helping themselves in the long run because they will become better able to deal with their problems in the future. Managing your fears and anxieties takes practice. The more you practice, the better you will become.

Stanley Popovich

Stan Popovich is the author of "A Layman's Guide to Managing Fear Using Psychology, Christianity and Non Resistant Methods" - an easy to read book that presents a general overview of techniques that are effective in managing persistent fears and anxieties. <http://www.managingfear.com/>

Advertisers should tackle loneliness of Chinese youth

Internet Addiction Has Created a Nation of Isolated Kids, Says O&M's Kunal Sinha

Mental health is of growing concern in China, following a series of knife attacks in schools and suicides in Chinese factories, but one potentially serious issue is being ignored. Scratch the veneer of their busy, productive lives and teenagers and young adults in China share a common characteristic: loneliness.

Having grown up bereft of companionship, especially in the bigger cities, a whole generation of young people is seeking refuge in front of computer screens.

A recent study by MTV revealed that China is the only nation in Asia where online friends outnumber real-life friends. Digital media experts tout this statistic as a great reason for marketers to use social media in ad campaigns.

But I think these figures are potentially dangerous to the mental health of China's youth. So does the China Youth and Children Research Association, which says 60% of college students in China feel isolated. Their research suggests that 30 million youngsters below the age of 17 are suffering from mental problems and anxiety disorders, and that depression rates among college students are on the rise.

"My students usually come to me and say that they don't know how to communicate with people. These students usually have low self-esteem, they feel isolated and excluded," said Tong Xiaojun, associate professor at China Youth University for Political Sciences in Beijing.

Today's youth generation is blocking out the sounds of the outside world with headphones. Barely out of the cocoon created by their over-protective yet hard-driving parents, they are retreating into another kind of shell. Once they join the workforce, pressure will increase in the form of intense competition for jobs, recognition, mates and income to buy material goods that signal achievement.

All that glitters: What's in store for China's luxury fashion market?

The roll-call of fashion designers raising their profiles in China over the past few years reads like a Who's Who of contemporary couture greats, from veteran designer Karl Lagerfeld of Chanel to Miuccia Prada of the fashion house that bears her name to Burberry's creative wunderkind Christopher Bailey. The visits are confirmation that the world's top luxury fashion brands see China as one of the most important growing markets.

But looking past the publicity and ribbon-cutting at the ever sleeker, flashier boutiques opening across the country, there's a debate about how much hope the high-end fashion chieftains should be pinning on the economic juggernaut. China currently makes up less than 10% of the global US\$206 billion luxury-goods industry, and even if its share grows in step with the buying power of Chinese consumers, it could take several years before it has a chance of surpassing the sector's more mature markets in the U.S., Europe and Japan.

That's not to say China isn't highly enticing. Of China's 100 largest cities -- which include Beijing, Yantai and Zhanjiang -- consumption is expected to double between 2008 and 2015, says a report published last autumn by McKinsey & Company. The consultancy expects consumption in other cities, including Shanghai, to jump more than 50% over the same period. Filling the fashion houses with optimism is that many of those consumers will soon be able to splurge on designer clothes and accessories as McKinsey's predicts that the number of wealthy households in China -- that is, urban households with annual income of some RMB 250,000 -- will increase from 1.6 million in 2008 to more than four million by 2015.

How times have changed. Even in the country's largest urban centres, there was not much in the way of high-end fashion labels until the economic reforms began taking effect in the early 1990s. "Over the years, we have noticed that Chinese consumers have become more discerning about the clothes they wear, the food they eat, the cars they drive, the cosmetics they use, the houses they live in and the furniture they have inside those houses," says Franz Kraatz, senior vice-president of sales and operations at Lane Crawford, a Hong Kong-based department store chain, which opened a 7,000-square-meter shop in Beijing in 2007, which stocks around 600 of the top high-end brands from Europe and the U.S.

It didn't take long for the likes of Chanel, Dior, Gucci and Armani, among others, to open opulent stores in major cities with the same look and feel -- and merchandise -- as their stores in Paris, Milan, London and New York. Today, Paris-based LVMH, the world's largest luxury group, has 29 boutiques in 25 Chinese cities, having opened its first store in the country nearly 20 years ago in Beijing's Palace Hotel. Gucci of the PPR group, meanwhile, has stores in 23 cities, with five in Beijing and four in Shanghai.

Yet as with other consumer-goods sectors, the learning curve has been steep. "The market is so complex and big, but for a long time, people made the mistake of thinking that China was one place, applying only one strategy [across the country] and selling the same product whether it was in Shenzhen in the south or Chengdu in the west," says Melvin Chua, founder of Ink Pak, a public relations and events business in Shanghai specializing fashion industry. "You would not do that if you were in America."

Location, Location, Location

One of the biggest lessons for foreign companies operating in China is the need to "prioritise" on which cities to focus, according to the McKinsey report. As it notes, China has 815 cities, 200 of which with a population of at least one million, compared with 35 in all of Europe. Experts say that much of China's wealth is concentrated along the eastern seaboard, particularly in Beijing, Shanghai and Shenzhen. But that is changing rapidly, as so-called tier-two cities, such as Dalian, Chengdu, Xian and Tianjin, become wealthier.

"China is filled with different cultures and consumer patterns vary from city to city," says Raphael le Manse de Chermont, executive chairman of Shanghai Tang, a luxury-goods chain with 39 stores world-wide, which started out in Hong Kong in 1994 and expanded to both mainland China and fashion centres of world such as New York and

Paris. "'Tier-one' cities are now entering the experimental luxury phase, putting more emphasis on style, 'experience' and personal enjoyment. 'Tier-two' cities are still in the status-driven phase, paying more attention to brand prominence as well as the brand's price perception."

Even among the tier-one cities, there are discernible differences, he says. "Shanghai and Beijing are cities where creativity, innovation and courage converge and this is reflected in consumer's social life. Their social circle welcomes new ideas with an international sense. They are thrilled by buzz and want to be proud of their knowledge and sophistication in front of peers," he observes. "Guangzhou, on the other hand, looks for cues on style from Hong Kong. Hangzhou consumers enjoy uniqueness and freshness. Where new ideas fail in other cities, they might succeed in Hangzhou because of [a willingness to experiment]."

Girl Power

Understanding where to sell their luxury goods is one thing; understanding who will buy those luxury goods is another. In particular, the changing spending power of China's female shoppers is being scrutinised as never before. "Chinese women ... follow trends just as closely as women in New York or Tokyo," says Cao Weiming, managing director of Conde Nast China, which began publishing Vogue China five years ago. "At Vogue, we target both the successful career women and new socialites, who can buy designer brand clothes every month or week and for whom money is not a problem, and the young women, who have just started working and are interested in fashion, and by working hard, can acquire more and more spending power."

Getting a handle on how the spending power of those two groups translates into sales on shop floors can bring surprises. A recent Forbes.com article cites research from U.S. based consultancy Pao Principle, which found that the average female Chinese luxury consumer spends roughly 11% of her income on luxury handbags alone. The consultancy collected data from 356 of mainland China's elite consumers, who had purchased a luxury handbag, watch or piece of fine jewellery in the previous 12 months. With 311 participants buying handbags, Pao Principle found that the average shopper has an annual income is RMB 125,000 (US\$18,380) -- more than three times the average RMB 39,000 (US\$5,700) salary earned in Shanghai -- and bought two US\$1,000 handbags. In contrast, female shoppers in the United States making US\$150,000 or more annually spend about US\$3,000 a year on handbags.

Like anywhere else in the world, brands are important for China's luxury shoppers, male or female. According to Bain, five brands account for more than 50% of each product category, such as womenswear, handbags and other leather goods, jewellery, and watches. When it polled some 1,400 mainland Chinese consumers in July last year about which "three brands you desire the most," Louis Vuitton was ranked the highest among 43% of respondents, followed by Chanel (25%) and Gucci (20%).

But there are signs that tastes are shifting away from the fashion mainstays. "A new group of consumers are also interested in more niche brands, such as Marni, Balenciaga, Lanvin and Stella McCartney," says Cao of Conde Nast.

For its part, Marni, an Italian label, has managed to become popular in China despite a company policy of relying on word-of-mouth marketing rather than conventional advertising to attract consumers to its three stores in Beijing and others in Shanghai, Shenzhen and Hangzhou.

Jimin Lee, the company's China managing director, reckons that the tastes and spending patterns of Chinese consumers are not much different from their counterparts in the West or other parts of Asia, but they need more guidance in terms of understanding a particular look. Another difference is that the luxury customer base is younger in China -- women in their early 20s to early 40s, rather than in mature markets where the age range of customers is between 30 and 60 years old.

"China is dominated by the big European luxury brands. In five to 10 years, there will be a greater presence of niche designer brands plus other lifestyle, multi-label concepts -- in other words, more choice for consumers," says Marni's China managing director. "There is lots of room for evolution in the market."

East Meets West and Vice Versa

One relatively niche designer taking the plunge into the China market is Phillip Lim. A recent visit to China made by the American-Chinese designer was to fit supermodel Du Juan when she launched her cosmetics range last year. Joined by Vera Wang, Jason Wu (who designed Michelle Obama's inauguration gown), Derek Lam, Alexander Wang and Vivienne Wu, Lim is one of a number of ethnic Chinese designers whose name resonates with Chinese consumers.

"The focus this year is in China," says Wen Zhou, New York-based CEO and president of 3.1 Phillip Lim, the designer's New York label, which she helped launch in 2004, when they were both 31 years old (and thus the name 3.1). "His recent trip to Beijing really inspired him in terms of the energy and creativity in the city. He has a desire to develop a richer understanding of his heritage... The timing is right for Phillip to do something very personal and memorable there.

"Our initial approach was to be patient and work exclusively on only a few high-profile accounts, such as Lane Crawford and Joyce," she says. "We did not want to oversupply [the market], as we wanted to build a customer base starting with the early adopters and tastemakers. This gave us time to build our image and get to know our customer better." Time will tell whether that strategy will pay off, but in the meantime, it can expect stiff competition from home-grown designers, such as Shanghai Tang.

Though Compagnie Financière Richemont -- a Swiss luxury-goods company -- bought a majority stake from founder David Tang in 1998, Shanghai Tang continues to bill itself as China's first luxury brand and recently took over its mainland China distribution after operating through a partner. It also continues to wrap its designs around traditional Chinese garb, melding both traditional and modern fashion so that shoppers will find cheong sams in shocking pink and silk Mao suits in electric blue. "Shanghai Tang is proud to be the first luxury brand originating and made in China, and many other luxury brands now use China as a manufacturing base," says le Manse "This shows that brands anticipate strong demand."

But there are also home-grown challenges. For one thing, while China's consumers might be getting wealthier, it doesn't mean they want to do their luxury shopping at home, especially if mainland China's import duties continue drive up prices. It's no surprise then that Bain says higher income households in mainland China -- what it defines as earning RMB 50,000 or more a year -- make 60% of their luxury purchases overseas (compared with 40% of lower income households, earning between RMB 5,000 and RMB 14,900).

The top fashion labels also need to brace themselves for the stress and strain of being part of ongoing global trade tensions. In March, for example, China's state media reported that Chinese inspectors in the south-eastern province of Zhejiang claimed to have found quality-control issues with designer clothes, such as poor colour fastness, from the likes of Dolce & Gabbana, Versace and Hermes that had been made outside of China. The reports said samples were collected from department stores and designer boutiques in the cities of Hangzhou, Ningbo and Taizhou, three of the country's wealthiest cities.

Somehow it all seems fitting, then, that Paris-based Hermes announced in December that it will launch a luxury brand in the spring that will be designed and manufactured in China, with its first store opening in Shanghai. Its name? Shang Xia, or "Topsy Turvy" to Mandarin speakers.

Fee-Fear

I am noticing more and more a serious problem that is occurring with accountants, lawyers, consultants, business coaches, financial advisers and recruiters alike. Nobody knows what to charge. And, all the advice I see being given by "experts" is way off target!

The victims of Fee-Fear are all fine people with excellent credentials, knowledge and experiences to share in helping their clients. But they are totally undervaluing themselves. Maybe you aren't charging enough, either. Take this quick quiz. Score 3 points for "always"; 2 points for "sometimes"; 1 point for "rarely"; and zero for "never".

Do you ...

- * Become anxious and maybe even nervous when you discuss your fees?
- * Feel nervous, self-conscious and maybe a little unprepared when asked what you charge?
- * Negotiate fees or change rates constantly and easily with prospects when they ask?
- * Work exceptionally long hours attempting to generate the revenues you need?
- * Feel as if you undercharge for the sensational results you deliver to your clients?
- * Feel as if you are drowning in a sea of work and pressures?
- * Feel totally and utterly overwhelmed?
- * Wish you could raise your fees and rates, but you are scared about the reaction you'll get from your clients?
- * Wish you could get more clients?
- * Want to generate greater revenues while also reducing the time spent in your office?

If you scored:

0-10: You're doing fine, keep your eye on the game.

11-17: Time to start considering how you can improve and be actively assessing your pricing, marketing and delivery models.

18-24: It's serious and you need to take action now to protect yourself and your business.

25-30: It's critical. Urgent steps must be implemented into your business if you are to survive and maintain your well-being.

Research (in Australia and New Zealand during March 2008) conducted by my research company, The Society for Executive Wisdom provided the following statistics. Respondents to the survey were asked if they were happy with their professional services provider. If they answered YES, then they were asked how much more they would be willing to pay their professional services provider for the work and value they provide. Here's what we learned:

Accountant (n=61) 40%
 Business Coach (n=39) 100%
 Financial Adviser (n=35) 30%
 Recruiter (n=32) 15%
 Lawyer (n=30) 35%
 Computer/IT Consultant (n=20) 45%
 Training Consultant (n=14) 60%
 HR/IR Consultant (n=14) 55%

So, with this information, you have to ask, why are professionals under-valuing their services?

- * Their focus is on time and tasks, not value and outcomes.
- * Lack of confidence in their own worth and abilities.
- * Worry that they won't get the business if they quote fees perceived as being too high.

- * They assess and replicate what their competitors are charging.
- * Readily discount fees at the first sign of objection by the client.
- * Think in terms of 'trading dollars for hours'.
- * Believe that lowering fees will attract more clients.

While there may be a number of other reasons as well, you can be assured that many professionals are over-worked, under-paid, frustrated and unhappy. And, probably not earning the income they should, or are worth. All of this frustration and negative thinking will only perpetuate the struggle to get good clients that you enjoy working with and who pay you what you're worth. The bottom line is many professionals are simply not charging enough!

Get your self-esteem and focus right, be mentally ready and have a system to charge what you deserve.

Consider how much better you will feel when you ...

- * Add enormously to the revenues of your business, quickly.
- * Identify and access the markets for your specific expertise where you can charge what you're worth.
- * Eliminate the competition.
- * Raise your fees.
- * Attract better quality clients and farewell those poor clients who have been holding you back.
- * Save time and money while adding value to your clients and,
- * Position yourself as an expert in your field.

You deserve less stress, greater revenues, more clients and increased profitability. To do this, you will need better self-esteem, which provides you with greater confidence, especially when talking about fees. If you plan to raise your fees and generate greater revenues, you have to believe in yourself, first!

Ric Willmot Ric Willmot, Executive Wisdom Consulting, <http://www.executivewisdom.com/Contact-Us-pg1879.html>

Ad agencies are (still) not result-driven enough:

67% of Marketers in Australia believe ad agencies are still not result-driven enough: they are still far from doing enough to push the all-media marketing campaigns they develop to deliver better results for their clients' bottom line.

That's the observation made by The Fournaise Marketing Group, one of the global leaders in all-media marketing effectiveness tracking, when it recently completed its 2010 Global Marketing Pulse Report.

The report compiled insights from close to 1,000 Marketers around the world on several aspects of their Marketing ROI: from the increased pressure for results they get from top management to the effectiveness of marketing strategies they implement, and their expectations of ad agencies.

Fournaise noticed this Marketers' perception of agencies still not being result-driven enough is a global trend: it is around the 70%-mark in developed economies such as the US and Western Europe (where the fight for the customer wallet is tremendous), and has now exceeded the 50%-mark in developing regions such as North Asia, Southeast Asia and India, where the ever-increasing sophistication of customers makes each sale even more difficult.

The independent Marketing Tracking & Maximisation Specialist also found that Marketers around the world classify ad agencies into three groups: (1) the Result-Drivers who truly believe that the primary purpose of a campaign is to deliver the bottom line results of their clients, and do whatever they can for that (35%); (2) the Result-Pretenders who claim they believe in making campaigns that deliver results, but are internally not prepared to put in place the relevant systems and processes to do so (43%); and (3) the Dreamers who still live in old "Adland" (22%).

Fournaise further identified three of the major weaknesses Marketers believe the majority of non-result-driven ad agencies have:

1) Their customer insights expertise and knowledge is not deep enough (74%). They don't know enough about and don't spend enough time and money investing in better knowing their clients' target audience. They still rely too much on gut-feeling and "hear-say", and often end up developing strategies and campaigns that have little impact.

2) They are too award-driven and see campaigns as a way to boost their creative portfolio instead of boosting the P&L of their clients (71%). This in turn often leads them to be creatively inflexible.

3) Because they usually don't have systematic tracking mechanisms in place to measure the effectiveness of the all-media campaigns deployed, they don't know enough about what worked (and why) and what did not, and have difficulties fine-tuning their strategies and campaigns accordingly to boost their ROI (70%).

"We work with many ad agency networks around the world and it is clear to us that those who, on top of their standard creative services, have the triple combination of (1) customer insights, (2) creative flexibility and (3) systematic tracking mechanisms have a bigger chance of developing campaigns that deliver better results", says Jerome Fontaine, CEO & Chief Tracker of Fournaise.

"The Brands' board of directors and top executives want to boost shareholders' value. And that starts with boosting their top line by acquiring more customers through better Marketing ROI. It is therefore no surprise to see more and more Marketers flock to these result-driven ad agencies" he added.

The Fournaise Marketing Group - The Customer Acquisition Maximiser™ Fournaise is one of the world's leading Customer Acquisition Maximisation companies.
www.fournaisigroup.com

The Luxury Strategy:

Book Review - Break the Rules of Marketing to Build Luxury Brands by J. N. Kapferer and V. Bastien

What makes a luxury brand? In The Luxury Strategy, Jean-Noel Kapferer and Vincent Bastien tell us in great detail what distinguishes "luxury" from "premium" and the merely expensive. And, as one might expect, our emotions play a huge role in the way we perceive luxury.

One of the best chapters in The Luxury Strategy is titled "Anti-laws of marketing." In it, the authors draw a sharp contrast between traditional marketing wisdom and the way luxury product marketers must work. They propose 18 counter-intuitive "laws" for luxury marketing. These laws include "Don't pander to your customer's wishes," a statement that flies in the face of what marketers of high-end products strive for. Kapferer and Bastien note that true luxury products tend to be driven by a creative vision. They describe how BMW has steadfastly ignored customer complaints of poor rear-seat leg room in their 5-series cars in order to maintain their primary focus on performance and driving pleasure.

There are two ways to go bankrupt: not listening to the client, but also listening to them too much.

Want to launch a luxury brand, or polish up the image of an existing ones? In another chapter, "Facets of luxury today," The authors go into depth on some of the characteristics of brands and products that suggest luxury to consumers. Usually these are grounded in fact, but they can also be created. "History" is one such facet. Many luxury brands have long histories of association with events, royalty, and so on.

Note that what is important is not simply the history, but the myth that can be created around it, the source of the brand's social idealisation. Writing 'Established 1884?' does not make you luxury; it makes you old.

History can sometimes be invented. The authors note that Ralph Lauren shops are filled with vintage 1950s black-and-white photos that show exclusive, WASPy environments and sports like polo. In fact, the firm's founder, Ralph Lifschitz, was a teenager at the time those photos were taken.

The Luxury Strategy has comprehensive advice for the development of luxury brands, including chapters titled, "Financial and HR management of a luxury company" and "Luxury business models." Another chapter, "Pricing luxury," goes into detail on pricing strategies. Luxury products have unique pricing issues, including (at times) negative price elasticity.

If you market luxury products, or want to, The Luxury Strategy should be on your bookshelf. You may not need to read every chapter, but you will gain key insights into how to build the brand and, equally important, how to avoid missteps (comparative advertising, for example) that will tarnish rather than enhance the impression of luxury.

Budget - The amount of money available for use to a salesperson or purchasing agent for a particular time period or a particular project... can also be used to describe a sales target (in revenue and/ or units) for a specified time period... also referred to as a quota, goal or forecast.

There are five specific factors to consider when setting the advertising budget:

1. Stage in the product life cycle: New products typically receive large advertising budgets to build awareness & to gain consumer trial. Established brands usually are supported with lower advertising budgets as a ratio to sales.
2. Market share & consumer base: High market-share brands usually require less advertising expenditure as a percentage of sales to maintain share. To build share by increasing market size requires larger expenditures. On a cost-per-impression basis, it is less expensive to reach consumers of a widely used brand than to reach consumers of low-share brands.
3. Competition and clutter: In a market with a large number of competitors and high advertising spending, a brand must advertise more heavily to be heard. Even simple clutter from advertisements not directly competitive to the brand creates a need for heavier advertising.
4. Advertising frequency: The number of repetitions needed to put across the brand's message to consumers has an important impact on the advertising budget.
5. Product substitutability: Brands in a commodity class (cigarettes, beer, soft drinks) require heavy advertising to establish a differential image. Advertising is also important when a brand can offer unique physical benefits or features.

Incentive Program Decisions

In deciding to use a particular incentive, marketers have several factors to consider.

1. Size of the incentive - A certain minimum is necessary if the promotion is to succeed.
2. Establish conditions for participation - Incentives might be offered to everyone or to select groups.
3. Decide on the duration of promotion - According to one researcher, the optimal frequency is about three weeks per quarter, and optimal duration is the length of the average purchase cycle.

4. Marketer must choose a distribution vehicle - A fifteen-cents-off coupon can be distributed in the package, in stores, by mail, or in advertising.
5. Establish the timing of promotion.
6. Determine the total sales-promotion budget - The cost of a particular promotion consists of the administrative cost (printing, mailing, and promoting the deal) and the incentive cost (cost of premium or cents-off, including redemption costs), multiplied by the expected number of units that will be sold on the deal.

Sales Promotion as Brand Builders

- Building brand awareness is a long-term process. Sales promotions are short term and temporary. Here are some tips on how to make sales promotion an effective brand-building tool.

* Make sure the promotion is justified - A new store opening, a company anniversary, and other kinds of celebrations are all good reasons for running a promotion. They put the brand name in the forefront.

* Tie the promotion to a brand's image - Birth dates and anniversaries are good. For example, Haagen-Dazs could run a promotion on or around July 9 for its Dulce de Leche ice cream to coincide with Argentine National Day. (The flavour and name originated in Argentina.)

* Look for every promotion both for the sales job it can do and as a communications tool - A promotion is one of a brand's many voices; it can help build brand awareness if it says the right things. For example, Bayer aspirin could run a coupon promotion, thus offering a price reduction, and use the promotion to reinforce the name Bayer.

Why promoted tweets will change the game for advertisers

Promoted tweets, Twitter's long-awaited new ad platform, will be a certain game-changer for the advertising industry (and everyone else). The sea change is that ad agencies will have to give up their century-old practice of getting paid for media buys and giving the creative away for nothing. From now on, ideas rule.

Until now, Madison Avenue has either ignored or bumbled such remarkable online ad opportunities as advertising on blogs and social bookmarking sites. That's because the budgets are too small to support ad agencies' bloated financial model.

Advertising on blogs and in other emerging media outlets has always needed to resonate to be effective, and traditional agencies have failed to adapt to the differences between new media ads and the tired interruption model of old media.

Agencies easily make \$250-500K (and often much more!) to produce and buy a 30-second TV spot. A company can make a significant brand splash for a week, with advertising on a dozen or more relevant blogs with \$25 or 50K.

While a print ad can easily cost \$250K+ for photography, design, photography, models and production, it's rare to see that size budget for a StumbleUpon campaign or for content sponsorship in a social network.

Madison Avenue has not wanted to be bothered with the (relatively) small budgets involved in even the biggest blog and social media ad campaigns.

So the push/interruption/how-obnoxious-do-we-have-to-be-before-you-look-at-these-damn-banner-ads school of advertising keeps feeding on itself in the endless quest for more money.

But relevancy will now rule on Twitter's promoted tweets, and other online advertising is sure to follow. Because, if people don't find promoted tweets interesting enough to interact with and share, the ads will be banished.

Promoted tweets will use a "Resonance Model," which will combine earned and paid media. There will be, he said, a multiple axis of engagement that measures not just click-throughs, but also replies, favouriting, link clicks, the influence of the people who re-tweet, the use of a hash tag in conversations about the PT. There will be a total of nine resonance factors in all.

When promoted tweets don't resonate, they will simply disappear. Twitter's Chief Operating Officer Dick Costolo explained at last week's AdAge's Digital Conference and again at Twitter's first developer's conference, Chirp, that Twitter will continue to be to many real-time transparent communication that represents the interests of users. If the ads don't resonate, they will not continue to run.

There will be no way to make them bigger, to add more flashturbation, to make them louder, to make them cover the other tweets we're trying to read. They'll live and die on how much they resonate -- like ideas have done for centuries.

B.L. Ochman

B.L. Ochman is a marketing strategist and blogger and can be found Twittering, at WhatsNextOnline.com or with her newest venture, Pawfun.com.

Learning from mistakes

5 of the biggest screw-ups of my life

Learning from mistakes is the most effective way to learn. These are seven of the biggest screw-ups in my career as a marketer. I hope you learn from my mistakes. I sure have.

You Can Be as Big as You Believe You Can Be

When I was 20, my goal was to make \$5,000/month and that's how much I started making two months after I set the goal for myself. About three years later, I found a mentor who told me I wasn't making more because I didn't want to. "That's ridiculous," I said. "Of course I want to make more." But he was right. I was setting my own limits. I needed to dream bigger. My mentor recommended a book called *The Magic of Thinking Big* (<http://www.amazon.com/Magic-Thinking-Big-David-Schwartz/dp/0671646788>). Read it; it'll change your life. It sure changed mine.

Integrity Doesn't Have Grey Areas

You either do the right thing or you don't. There aren't grey areas. Your reputation is the only asset you can't recover once you've lost it, so think twice before you do something that could compromise your integrity.

I know what you're thinking, "I never cheat." But, integrity is a lot more than not cheating. One time, when I was 17, a guy called me and wanted to buy a product I knew wasn't right for him. But he wanted it so I sold it to him anyway. I shouldn't have. I should have told him that the product he wanted wasn't going to help him. Sure, I would've made \$50 less but I would have earned his respect, he would have trusted me and recommended me to his friends. And, even if none of that had happened, it was the right thing to do. This is the most valuable lesson I learned in my life.

Systems Are Everything

My first companies were a big mess. We didn't have any systems. We just took care of stuff as it came along and we put out fires as they appeared. Now we have systems for everything and our company is a much better place to work. Everybody is happier, things get managed and done, and the best part is that because we have systems in place, we can grow our business without having to work harder.

If you still don't see value in creating systems, think about how McDonald's works like a Swiss clock with low-qualified, minimum-wage employees. That wouldn't be possible without the most effective systems in the world.

Breaking Even Is Good

We're all in business to make money. But, there's a lot more you can get from your business:

- * An education you couldn't get anywhere else (not even in the best business school in the world).
- * Life skills that you can't learn any other way (persistence, communication, empathy, etc.)
- * Connections (that you'll be able to leverage later in your life).

Keep working on making more money but if you aren't profitable yet, appreciate all the other great things you're getting from your business.

Happiness Is More Important than Profits

Last week I read a book from a guy who claimed that profits are everything and you should be willing to sacrifice everything, including your own happiness, to increase profits as much as possible. I feel sorry for that guy. I really do. There's so much more to life than profits!

A few years ago I was making a lot of money doing something that I hated. I was miserable. I used to wake up sad and was always stressed. Then a friend of mine said something interesting: "you should follow your passion." My passion was marketing, so I opened a marketing agency and I now love my work so much that I would do it for free. Seriously.

I was lucky, though, because passion is not the only factor you need to consider. There are two more very important factors:

- * Skills: are you great at what you do?
- * Demand: do people want what you have to offer?

If you love what you do, are great at it and people want what you have, then you have a winning formula.
Zeke Camusio

Learn How to Use Online Marketing to Skyrocket Your Sales with this FREE Report:
<http://www.theoutsourcingcompany.com/search-engine-optimisation.html>

The Hype Cycle

A Hype Cycle is a graphic representation of the maturity, adoption and business application of specific technologies. Since 1995, Gartner has used Hype Cycles to characterise the over-enthusiasm or "hype" and subsequent disappointment that typically happens with the introduction of new technologies. Hype Cycles also show how and when technologies move beyond the hype, offer practical benefits and become widely accepted.

The 5 phases of a Hype Cycle?

1. "Technology Trigger"

The first phase of a Hype Cycle is the "technology trigger" or breakthrough, product launch or other event that generates significant press and interest.

2. "Peak of Inflated Expectations"

In the next phase, a frenzy of publicity typically generates over-enthusiasm and unrealistic expectations. There may be some successful applications of a technology, but there are typically more failures.

3. "Trough of Disillusionment"

Technologies enter the "trough of disillusionment" because they fail to meet expectations and quickly become unfashionable. Consequently, the press usually abandons the topic and the technology.

4. "Slope of Enlightenment"

Although the press may have stopped covering the technology, some businesses continue through the "slope of enlightenment" and experiment to understand the benefits and practical application of the technology.

5. "Plateau of Productivity"

A technology reaches the "plateau of productivity" as the benefits of it become widely demonstrated and accepted. The technology becomes increasingly stable and evolves in second and third generations. The final height of the plateau varies according to whether the technology is broadly applicable or benefits only a niche market.

The Priority Matrix

The Priority Matrix is a tool for prioritising emerging technologies by forcing technology planners to look beyond the hype and assess technology opportunities in terms of their relative impact on the enterprise.

The Priority Matrix supplements the vertical visibility or "hype" axis of the Hype Cycle with a focus on the potential benefit of the technology, rated as transformational, high, moderate or low.

The pairing of each Hype Cycle with a Priority Matrix will help you better determine the importance and timing of potential investments based on benefit rather than hype.

SEO "Used to be King"

Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) is a method businesses use to attempt to rise to the top of the results listings in Search Engines (SERPs).

This has been a practice since search engines were invented for the Internet.

Search engines encourage website owners to make their pages easier to understand by their robot spiders.

When Search Engines send out their robot spider across the internet, it tries to "read" the page. Optimised pages are easier to read, and subsequently rank properly in the SERPs.

For almost a Decade SEO was the way sharp business owners dominated their industries and crushed their competition.

During this time up to 85% of websites were found for the first time due to a search in an engine like Google or Yahoo!

Since 2/3rds of all searchers rarely clicked on links beyond the first page, it only made sense to try to get your site ranked within the top 10 search results.

How SEO died

SEO began to get abused in 1997 when 3rd party software and companies began to spring up with the sole purpose of "gaming" the engines.

One popular way was to “stuff” or repeat the same phrase over and over in the web pages HTML code called Meta Tags.

A famous upgrade to the code in Google was the “Britney Spears” update. Pornographic Websites began stuffing the keyword “Britney Spears”, who was the most searched term at the time, into their Keyword Meta Tags. Even though their site was totally unrelated to the pop singer, their sites showed up first in SERPs.

This is why by 1999 Search engines had stopped factoring the meta tag “description” and “keywords” in their ranking algorithms.

Such abuses caused the engines to get smarter faster and start to penalise and even ban websites that used unapproved methods to “optimise” their sites.

These methods are called “black hat” because they were condemned by the engines themselves. Approved methods were called “white hat” and are encouraged by search engines.

Black hat methods are notorious for taking advantage of loopholes, bugs, holes and weaknesses in the search engines.

Black hat methods actually work really fast and really well. However, as soon as an engine discovers a site using black hat methods (or even associating with a site or company that does,) they penalise or permanently ban that website.

Currently only spammers (who do not care about long term results) use black hat methods. Legitimate businesses realize there is no point being number 1, only to later never ever show up anywhere at all in that same engine again after getting caught for cheating.

What is the Point of SEO anyway?

Somehow, the people who (still) sell traditional SEO manage to convince people the purpose of SEO is to get your site ranked higher for specific search terms (keywords.)

Many of today’s contemporary agencies used to sell it too. The better ones have realized they would rather produce long term results for their customers than short term bragging rights.

If you SELL SEO, gloating about being in the top 10 of Google may be the point of YOUR business, but ONLY if SEO is your only service line!

Often such top 10 rankings by outdated SEO firms are for search terms no “customer” actually types into the search engines anyway. Such companies do not realize business owners are not in it for bragging rights. As if you as an owner would be proud to say “HA! I am in first position for ‘Cantonese basket weaving jokes!’”

Yes, they guarantee you will be in the “top positions”, but not necessarily for a good search term. They also rarely mention how much traffic you will (or will not) get.

Is your goal simply to be above your competition in the engines for some obscure word? OR is it to get more visitors to your website?

Most old-method SEO companies do not understand this end goal, but are happy to take your money anyway. Later they tell you “congratulations, you are now number 4 in the engines for (useless rarely-searched phrase.)” Search Engine Ranking is not an award certificate. It is designed to drive traffic naturally, without you having to pay for it.

The stupid cycle of SEO

SEO uses a lot of fancy programming and techniques to “optimise” a web page and promote it on the web to try to get it to climb the ranks in the search engines.

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Whoever spends the most time (spelled M-O-N-E-Y) on SEO wins. At least for a time, just so long as no one else spends a little more than they do. So even if you get to the top, you can bet, you won't stay there for long.

Enter the age of social media

In the year 2009, less than 47% of web surfers found websites through a search engine. And that number is shrinking daily.

Social Referral Sites like Digg and Del.icio.us allow site members to post the link of their favourite web address for other members to visit. Other visitors get to vote on whether or not they like it.

Social News Sites like Redit, Slashdot and Fark aggregate news articles recommended by its site visitors.

Social Networking Sites like Twitter and Facebook allow people to share reviews and links of favourite sites.

Social Bookmarking Sites like Stumble, actually act as a publicly accessible “favourites” or “bookmark” for web pages.

Now, combine all the social media with News aggregators like Google News and Yahoo News plus corporate and industry web presence pages like CNN, CNBC, Entrepreneur, Wall Street Journal, Christianity Today, Family Circle, FORBES etc. and you have a ton of press, publicity, bookmarking, networking and overall word of mouth happening on the internet.

The secret key

In addition to the Millions of Social Media Sites out there, there are BLOGS and FORUM sites aggregating social media into blog networks like TweetMeme.

Oh yes, Blogs. There are Millions upon Millions of Blogs on the internet. Today, Blogs look at search engines and laugh at their inaccuracy and failure to stay up-to-the-second with information.

Old School Search Engine Optimisation has had its time at the top. As many pioneers of the internet, their day is over. Add Search engines to the list with Compuserve, AOL, and Myspace.

Yes, we know sadly, that eventually even the currently popular phenoms like Twitter and Facebook will be replaced by what will be a newer, slicker, faster and just plain old better application.

Search Engines like Google became so huge and popular, because that was how people generally figured out how to find information on the internet.

Those days are long over. People find sites every which way these days. Every way it seems, except through search engines the majority of the time. The search engines feel social media's information is much more current and relevant than their own. Which is why they all have added social elements.

Google, (Who owns Youtube,) will often put News, Twitter, YouTube and other site results in the middle of what they would normally post as results to a search.

This just proves the relevance of social media and the search engines inability to keep up. The best they can do is repost and quote after the fact whatever social media already has moved past.

Sharp business owners have discovered that each of the social media sites results are often what the search engines use to list as results.

Optimisation vs saturation

Think about this. Imagine if you were the owner of a business that put on real estate seminars.

Your direct (and indirect) competition in the search engines for real estate would come from: any individual who has a house for sale; people looking for houses on craigslist; the guy selling books on real estate on eBay; the Wall Street Journal's latest article about real estate; RE agents; the Realtor organisation; and even the latest twitter results containing the "word "Real Estate.

That's not to mention all the mortgage brokers, appraisers, contractors, investors, title companies, tax sale auctions and even developers that would all also want their website at the top of those same results.

When you search Google you will often see it say something like "Results 1-10 of 2,232,280 results"!

Hundreds of thousands to millions of possible results, and you want to spend your money to try to be number 1-10?

Well, I am sorry to report, the odds are against you. However, there is good news.

New focus better results

What if instead of focusing on traditional SEO, you focused on Saturation?

In other words, what if instead of "optimising" your site/page for one search engine, you took a different approach and decided to saturate the ENTIRE INTERNET itself with your web page?

Think about it. If people are book marking, tweeting and sharing your site all over the internet. Plus all the news sites are running articles on you, and your site is all over the net. Then wouldn't your TRUE GOAL, of getting website visitors (to turn into customers), be getting accomplished?

People who read about you on CNBC's website will come visit your page.

People who see their friends tweet about you will come visit your page.

People who read a blog article about you will also come visit your page.

Maurice Evans

Maurice Evans, a Guerrilla & Viral Marketing Expert, is CEO of GuaranteedViral.com, a buzz marketing advertising agency. He has taught SEO since 1999 and currently specialises in viral advertising campaigns with guaranteed results. Call him at 1-800-691-2WIN to have him create a viral marketing campaign for you with guaranteed results.

Marketing automation vs. CRM: What is the difference between marketing automation and CRM?

An open letter to all Australian & New Zealand marketers from Datarati Managing Director Will Scully-Power,

After many years selling both Marketing Automation databases and CRM databases, services and solutions in the Australian / New Zealand marketplace, I have decided to clearly explain the difference between a Marketing Automation database and a Customer Relationship Management or CRM database.

It seems that there is still some confusion in the local market as to how these two databases differ, how they work together and the value of integrating these two databases together. The objective of this post is to simplify the jargon, clearly explain the key differences and empower you as a marketer to make smart data-driven decisions.

What is a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) Database:

Simply, this is a database designed to allow an organisation to do three core things:

- 1.) Sales teams to input, manage and track their leads that are generated by their marketing team
- 2.) Customer service teams to input, manage and track customer service and support queries
- 3.) Marketing teams to segment customer/sales data e.g. which customers bought an iPhone in the last 6 months.

Examples of CRM databases which are stored (on-premise) i.e. database physically stored inside an organisation on their own servers are: Siebel, Oracle, Microsoft etc.

Example of a CRM database which is stored (off-premise) i.e. database physically stored outside an organisation on the vendor's servers is: Salesforce <http://www.salesforce.com>

In today's environment, most organisations across Australia & New Zealand and globally have or are in the process of moving to (off-premise) CRM databases like Salesforce.com for the costs savings and ease of use.

To access the database all a user needs is a username, password and a web-browser, as the data from the database is delivered within a user's web-browser.

These types of CRM databases are referred to as any of the following: Software as a Service, SaaS, On-Demand, Cloud-based and Cloud Computing.

Ok, so as a marketer if you have a CRM database in your organisation, Fantastic!

It's a start, but it only allows you to segment customer/sales data.

Today's marketers are using multi-channels for both inbound and outbound marketing.

These channels include:

- Email (Inbound, Outbound)
- SMS (Inbound, Outbound)
- Paid Search (Inbound e.g. Google Adwords)
- Paid Display (Inbound e.g. Banner Ads)
- Landing Pages (Inbound e.g. Email, Google Adwords, and Banner Ads)
- Telemarketing (Inbound, Outbound)
- Social Media (Inbound, Outbound e.g. Twitter, Facebook, Widgeits)

So does your CRM database allow you to set-up, build, manage, track and optimise all of the data that is generated from the above channels?

The answer is NO! Regardless of which CRM database you are using, it does not allow you to do this, nor were they designed to.

Now, the problem that you as a marketer face is simple. When you look to execute any inbound or outbound campaigns, your data is siloed, often stored in multiple databases in multiple locations, often managed by multiple rostered agencies and/or vendors – leaving you as a marketer with little to no visibility of four of the most important things within marketing:

- 1.) A 360 degree view of how marketing have touched the customer or prospect i.e. which campaigns were they sent
- 2.) The behaviour of the customer or prospect i.e. how did they or didn't they respond to those campaigns (conversions)
- 3.) What variables performed better within those campaigns i.e. creative, call to action etc?
- 4.) Where the customer or prospect is within the customer lifecycle or buying lifecycle

Q. So how does a marketer solve this problem?

A. A Marketing Automation Database

The objective of implementing a marketing automation database is to get all the information marketing needs to acquire leads in one place. Marketers implement a marketing automation database to see all of marketing's interactions with each prospect and customer. They also use it to keep data clean by automating the de-duplication of records within the database.

A marketing automation database is a separate database, designed to allow an organisation to do 7 core things:

1.) Lead Generation

- Objective: Make sales happy with more qualified leads.
- How: Convert website traffic into leads, automate lead development, identify when prospects are 'sales ready', automate sales tasks and track follow up.

2.) Lead Nurturing

- Objective: Drive revenue by nurturing raw inquiries into 'sales ready' leads.
- How: Nurture relationships with qualified prospects, educate leads before passing them to sales, trigger relevant responses to prospect behaviours and automate repetitive marketing tasks.

3.) Lead Scoring

- Objective: Improve sales effectiveness by passing only qualified leads to sales.
- How: Automate lead qualification processes, measure prospect interest and engagement, score leads using demographic data and behavioural data and focus sales resources on the best opportunities.

4.) Website Tracking

- Objective: Know exactly who is visiting your website and where they go.
- How: Track all prospect interactions online, identify which companies are visiting your website, monitor known and anonymous visitors and automatically alert sales reps of new prospect activity on the website

5.) Email Marketing

- Objective: Don't just email prospects, engage them in a dialogue.
- How: Deepen relationships with triggered, multi-step campaigns, get to the inbox using the latest deliverability technology, raise and open click rates by targeting segments and track and score who opens and clicks on each email.

6.) Landing Page Optimisation

- Objective: Create, publish and test targeted landing pages.
- How: Launch new landing pages in minutes, use your own branding and sub domain, maximise conversion rates through A/B testing and capture leads with smart forms that recognise know customers and prospects.

7.) Marketing Asset Management

- Objective: Store, distribute and track content and other marketing assets.

- How: Upload and manage documents and image files, publish customised URLs for each asset, track which piece gets viewed by prospects and notify sales reps whenever key marketing assets are viewed by a customer or prospect.

Now, to get the true value out of all of the above – organisations should integrate their CRM database (which holds sales data) with their Marketing Automation database (which holds marketing data).

Why? Three simple reasons.

- 1.) Instead of manually exporting 'sales ready' leads from a marketing automation database in excel and then having your sales team manually upload the list into their CRM database, this integration automates the transfer of the marketing data from the marketing automation database into the CRM database.
- 2.) Sales teams are now empowered as they now have all the marketing history of how a prospect or customer has been communicated to by marketing, how they have or haven't responded and most importantly the prospect or customers behaviour. So what that means is that the sales or telemarketing team have all of this rich actionable insight about what they prospect or customer is interested in before they make an outbound call.
- 3.) Closed Loop Return on Investment (ROI) reporting – by integrating your marketing automation database (marketing data) with your CRM database (sales data), you can now attribute which campaign(s) drove not only conversions but repeat purchases.

An example of a Marketing Automation database which is stored (off-premise) i.e. database physically stored outside an organisation on the vendors own servers is: [Marketohhttp://pages2.marketo.com/demoFull.html](http://pages2.marketo.com/demoFull.html)

In today's environment, most organisations across Australia & New Zealand and globally have or are in the process of moving from basic email engines like Traction, Exact Target, Strategy Mix, eServices, Epsilon, Returnity, Chimp Mail, Cheetah Mail, Dream Mail, Vertical Response, Vision 6, Campaign Monitor, Campaign Master, Constant Contact etc. to (off-premise) Marketing Automation databases like Marketo for the costs savings, ease of use, rich functionality and a far superior time to value.

To access the database all a user needs is a username, password and a web-browser, as the data from the database is delivered within a user's web-browser.

These types of Marketing Automation databases are referred to as any of the following:

Software as a Service, SaaS, On-Demand, Cloud-based and Cloud Computing.

Hope this post helps to explain to all marketers across Australia & New Zealand the difference between a Marketing Automation database and a CRM database, and the power of integrating the two for full closed loop ROI analysis.

Will Scully-Power

Will Scully-Power is the Managing Director of Datarati, a marketing analytics and optimisation company, providing digital advertising agencies, media agencies and their clients with actionable data driven insights which improve campaign performance and ROI. This article features on <http://willscullypower.wordpress.com> and has been used with his permission.

Conversational capital

Conversational Capital: How to create stuff people love to talk about is a book about engineering word-of-mouth into brand experiences. Contrary to the conventional theories of mass marketing literature, which teach that one must scream something ten times to be heard once, the authors teach that because we are all social storytellers, a product

experience that is worthy of telling as one's own authentic story creates enormous brand capital in the form of meaningful and influential conversations.

Developed by a trio of international brand architects, they share the insights behind their creative and strategic leadership for word-of-mouth success stories including Adidas, Cirque du Soleil, Red Bull & MGM Grand.

Based on their experiences with some of the world's recognised generators of word-of-mouth, the authors behind Conversational Capital began to realize that experiences had residual value—value that extended further than mere memories but instead resided in the realm of identity-shaping and storytelling. That is to say, when an experience was sufficiently powerful or transformative for an individual, they felt compelled to make the experience part of their own life story, and thereby propagate the story of the experience as part of their own (and now more exciting) identity. With this in mind, Bertrand Cesvet, Tony Babinski and Eric Alper began to deconstruct the antecedents to word-of-mouth. Invariably, they found that the elements that gave rise to the conversations of consumers consisted of eight possible drivers. Critically, these elements fed into doing two things for the experience in question: 1) making it meaningful and 2) making it intense.

The Eight Engines

1. Myths are the narratives that become part of the very fabric of consumption because they provide important clues as to fundamental meaning of that act.
2. Rituals are an essential part of how human beings create and formalise meaning. The presence of ritual marks out an experience as deeper in meaning - a phenomenon that is true for consumer experiences, as well.
3. Exclusive Product Offering (E.P.O.) is about allowing consumers to create an experience that asserts and actualises their individuality; to, in a world of six billion people, feel and be unique.
4. Relevant Sensorial Oddity (R.S.O.) is about challenging our senses with something extraordinary, marking an experience as unique.
5. Icons are signs and symbols that clearly demarcate a consumption experience from any other.
6. Tribalism is about the power of a brand experience to inspire the association of like-minded people.
7. Endorsement is not about celebrity — it's about how the meaning and intensity of a brand experience naturally lead to credible people organically endorsing it.
8. Continuity is a strong harbinger of reputation, a fact that rests on the unity between what you promise, what people expect and what you deliver.

Reference Bertrand Cesvet, Tony Babinski and Eric Alper Conversational Capital at Financial Times Press — A Pearson Imprint

Push–pull strategy

The business terms push and pull originated in the logistic and supply chain management but are also widely used in marketing. A push-pull-system in business describes the movement of a product or information between two subjects. On markets the consumers usually "pulls" the goods or information they demand for their needs, while the offerers or suppliers "pushes" them toward the consumers. In logistic chains or supply chains the stages are

operating normally both in push- and pull-manner. The interface between push-based stages and pull-based stages are called push-pull boundary or decoupling point.

Push strategy

Another meaning of the push strategy in marketing can be found in the communication between seller and buyer. In dependence of the used medium, the communication can be either interactive or non-interactive. For example, if the seller makes his promotion by television or radio, it's not possible for the buyer to interact with. On the other hand, if the communication is made by phone or internet, the buyer has possibilities to interact with the seller. In the first case information is just "pushed" toward the buyer, while in the second case it is possible for the buyer to demand the needed information according to his requirements.

- * Applied to that portion of the supply chain where demand uncertainty is relatively small
- * Production & distribution decisions are based on long term forecasts
- * Based on past orders received from retailer's warehouse (may lead to Bullwhip effect)
- * Inability to meet changing demand patterns
- * Large and variable production batches
- * Unacceptable service levels
- * Excessive inventories due to the need for large safety stocks
- * less expenditure on advertising than pull strategy

Pull strategy

In a "pull" system the consumer requests the product and "pulls" it through the delivery channel.

- * Applied to that portion of the supply chain where demand uncertainty is high
- * Production and distribution are demand driven
- * No inventory, response to specific orders
- * Point of sale (POS) data comes in handy when shared with supply chain partners
- * Decrease in lead time
- * Difficult to implement

Supply chains

With a push-based supply chain, products are pushed through the channel, from the production side up to the retailer. The manufacturer sets production at a level in accord with historical ordering patterns from retailers. It takes longer for a push-based supply chain to respond to changes in demand, which can result in overstocking or bottlenecks and delays (the bullwhip effect), unacceptable service levels and product obsolescence.

In a pull-based supply chain, procurement, production and distribution are demand-driven so that they are coordinated with actual customer orders, rather than forecast demand.

A supply chain is almost always a combination of both push and pull, where the interface between the push-based stages and the pull-based stages is known as the push-pull boundary. An example of this would be Dell's build to order supply chain. Inventory levels of individual components are determined by forecasting general demand, but final assembly is in response to a specific customer request. The push-pull boundary would then be at the beginning of the assembly line.

The importance of good website taglines

How do you make sure your web searching audience remembers you? How do you keep them coming back for more? One way of assuring recall in your audience is with a good network marketing tagline.

Thinking up a catchy tagline can be the most challenging task you will encounter in promoting your page. But think of it as a necessary evil in getting your message across your potential leads.

What you do is dig down deep inside yourself and look for the message you want to convey. Now think of a catchy phrase that says it all. Not easy as it sounds? Don't worry; it happens to the rest of us.

Taglines convey your message in as few words as possible. Do not waste your readers' time. Your tagline should contain your brief but direct message. In crafting your tagline, branding is the name of the game.

Ask yourself, who are your target readers?

Craft your taglines around your prospect audience. Hit them with a tagline that tickles their fancy, and you have them hooked. You can tell them in a nutshell what you offer and work it from there. Most importantly, effective phrasing of your tagline can do wonders for your web traffic.

A problem with picking your tagline is the tendency to stick to clichés and overused phrases. You might end up annoying your audience rather than making them stick.

One more thing. Although you want to be noticed with a catchy tagline, call attention to your page without being too loud. You do not want to scare away your audience with your arrogance. You want to endear yourself to them by appealing to their sensibilities.

Make your tagline give what the readers are looking for. Show them what you believe in, and they will follow.

Social media is the brand experience

Not a week goes by that I don't hear a client ask, "Should we have a Facebook page?" My answer is always instantly the same: "You are asking the wrong question!"

It's not whether a brand should have a Facebook page that is the dilemma facing marketers. It's WHY should a brand have a Facebook page that has so many marketers, digitally savvy or not, scratching their heads.

Of course depending on the category and the consumer dynamics, almost every brand should have a Facebook page, or some sort of presence in social media. That's not the issue. The bewilderment is HOW to use Facebook and other forms of social media to drive business results.

So the answer for me always starts with the fundamentals of the brand:

- What does your brand offer its consumers?
- Who is your target audience and how are they living their lives?
- How does your brand add value to them, above and beyond just the product itself?

Ultimately, what kind of brand experience are you delivering to you consumers and do you want to interact with them on a deeper level?

Now you can start to answer the question of how to use social media as part of your overall marketing mix.

- Given your brand equity, how does social media fit with it?
- Given your consumer target, how are they using social media in the context of their lives?

- Given the brand experience that you've created, how can you use social media to add to that experience?

Before we even start to formulate a Facebook page or a Twitter account or a Foursquare program, we must first take a look at our consumers' behaviour in these spaces to see if it makes sense for us to join in, and how we should jump in. Our brands need to join the social media space with authenticity. We are not welcome unless we are adding value and unless we are invited in. We can't just go in to sell.

Will we use social media for customer service because that's what will add to the brand experience? Can our social media outlets provide deeper educational information with links to articles and videos to broaden the learning? Can social media help consumers find other like-minded people to connect around the brand?

Best Buy is a great example. The brand decided very early on, as an early adopter, that they were going to use Facebook and Twitter as customer service vehicles, and their consumers quickly followed. The interactions are continual and meaningful, among consumers and customer service staff. Every question gets answered, publicly. Brilliant.

But all too often brands don't strategically think about these outlets before engaging. They simply construct a Facebook page, hoping to get fans (or what we are now calling "likes"). They track it for a while but don't put the emphasis on it and end up just using it as a posting board. They don't update enough and they don't update with the kinds of interactions that will really add value to the brand experience. So as a result, their presence is static – not the kind of interactive, rewarding experience with their consumers that everyone is looking for.

We need to think about using social media the same way that we think about using all other forms of media in our marketing plan. We don't just jump into advertising, for example without first thoroughly thinking through its role in generating sales. Same is true of a website, we generally examine thoroughly the content of a website and how to navigate it before we put it up on the internet.

Same is true of social media. If you need a Facebook page, then determine what kind of Facebook page that makes the most sense for the brand and for the consumer.

Because the truth is, these social media outlets are quickly becoming THE brand experience. They are the places where consumers are really interacting with the brand. Most other marketing vehicles are one-way, one-dimensional, and somewhat impersonal. Social media outlets are 3-D in that the brand is interacting with consumers who are interacting with each other. And it's those interactions that are forming impressions around what a brand really stands for. It's where the brand walks the walk, so to speak. So if it's not aligned with the rest of the marketing plan, then the brand experience can become confusing and unproductive.

The really savvy marketers are using social media to make their other marketing elements interactive too, in a very integrated way linking their websites to their Facebook page to their television advertising. Putting the power of social media to work.

Now that's why you should have a Facebook page!

Jim Joseph:

Jim Joseph is the author of the new marketing book "The Experience Effect: Engage Your Customers with a Consistent and Memorable Brand Experience (AMACOM)". He is an award-winning consumer marketing professional who has helped build blockbuster brands for clients including Clean & Clear, Tylenol, Kraft, Kellogg's, and Wal-Mart. He is currently President and Partner of Lippe Taylor Brand Communications.

Things to know if you plan to sell on Facebook

Facebook has never been the type of social networking site where companies felt comfortable setting up e-storefronts and selling directly to consumers. They will offer coupons and discounts. They will even sell limited supplies of a new product. But a steady stream of sales? No.

That may change if Disney's new app to sell tickets to its upcoming Toy Story 3 movie is a success. The company rolled out the app, called Disney Tickets Together, on its Facebook page together with Fandango. Not only does it let people purchase tickets but it has incorporated social marketing elements to it. It will ask you which friends from your network you want to invite as well as let you post the purchase on your wall so others can join you.

As more companies move into this next phase of Facebook's evolution – Facebook as an e-retailer - brands might want to keep the following in mind.

Its still Facebook - be prepared for conversation. "Moms are spending an overwhelming amount of time on Facebook, so it makes sense that Disney would want to move their e-commerce platform to Facebook," says Sienna Farris, Head of Social Media at Strawberry Frog. These users, though, will expect the same level of engagement when they buy on Facebook. Companies "need to be prepared to answer the questions, comments and concerns that come with selling products online and should staff appropriately to handle the volume."

If you fail, you will fail big. One reason why not many companies have set up e-commerce operations on Facebook is because it could go easily sour. Users are not going to like being blatantly pitched with products or services that are not relevant. The implications of not landing a Facebook commerce presence the right way are huge, as if the consumer finds the experience intrusive or inappropriate, not only will it not be profitable, but it will have a lasting negative effect on the brand

Keep in mind your limitations with Facebook.

There are drawbacks inherent in Facebook's model that will hinder sales as well. Companies that have loyalty programs, memberships, etc, aren't able to properly capture that information effectively, so that they can remarket to them more effectively. Also, these store fronts are treated like applications, so people have to add them or grant access to private information - and with the bad press from Facebook and privacy lately, it's harder for people to trust 3rd party applications, especially those that require transaction related details/information or share your shopping habits with friends."

Are telephone surveys extinct?

Marketers and researchers have long battled the merits of telephone vs online surveys, both claiming to provide a more accurate sampling of the general population. With changing technology however, both sides are seeming to lose their argument for the most thorough sampling:

- Landlines. In 2010, one in four American households has no traditional landline, opting for cell-only. It's a trend led by the young and the poor, but it means that 25% of the adult population can't be reached by telephone.
- Internet Access. Although 81% of American homes have a PC, only 57% have internet access. Again, that's about 40% of households excluded for the simple fact that they don't likely have an email address or don't access email on a regular basis.

Certainly, any primary research survey that requires an exact representation of the American population will likely fall somewhere short of the ideal without a combination of methods. For example, it's possible to qualify participants for a phone survey by sending a mass email.

For most surveys, (e.g. customer feedback, employee satisfaction, client retention, event satisfaction, voter opinion) however, there are a number of factors that point towards a shift to online research.

- Cost. Costs are usually less than telephone interviews, especially in the fielding stage.

Looking for targeted individuals just means adding more emails to the batch, rather than making individual telephone calls to find the needles in the haystack.

- Speed. Data collection can be shortened as thousands of email invitations can be delivered at one time.
- Receptiveness. Email surveys have become more socially acceptable than telephone surveys.
- Anonymity. Depending on the nature of the questionnaire, many Americans feel more anonymous online than by telephone and may give more candid responses.
- More sophisticated questionnaires. 3D images or videos can be shown online and complex rotations can be programmed to ensure random ordering of questions.

Adding fuel to the fire (that is the decline of telephone research) are two sociographic factors:

- "Do Not Call" Registry. Although the legislation deals with telemarketers, researchers are also experiencing a general backlash against unsolicited contacts.
- Declining participation rates. For each contact that declines to participate, another one must be called, which increases the time it takes to field the survey, as well as the cost.

In spite of the clear benefits of online surveys, there are still occasions where a telephone survey rules the roost. For example, telephone interviews can be more productive and yield a better response rate for hard-to-reach respondents (like doctors or executives). And if a survey is more qualitative in nature, a live interviewer can thoroughly probe the respondent and gain a better understanding behind why the respondent answered the way they did.

So, depending on the purpose of your research, there are several instances where online research is a clear winner:

- when all target respondents have an email address (such as employees)
- where the target respondents are younger than 35 years old
- where there are no open-ended questions that require interpretation
- where many of the questions are repetitive, such as a battery of Likert scale questions
- where low cost is a factor (and high quality online survey tools become more accessible)
- where speed is a factor

There will always be a place for telephone research in a marketer's arsenal. But for the moment, the scales are tipped heavily to online studies. Telephone surveys are the analogue tool in a digital toolbox. And with the advent of social media such as Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, MySpace etc., it may not be long before email surveys become an analogue tool too. Time will tell!

Guarding your name online

Reputation management online is like sticking your head up in a fire fight. The more time your brand is online, the more likely it is that you'll find yourself in reputation management trouble.

However, you can prepare for your next reputation crisis ahead of time. Here's how:

Stake out your territory

If a nasty review gets enough coverage, they'll show up in the rankings for your brand name.

Best way to avoid that?

Own page 1 for your brand.

1. Set up a sub domain. Since search engines consider sub domains separate web sites, you can actually get pages from a sub domain ranking in a branded search results alongside your main site. Take a chunk of content that isn't central to your site and put it at archive.yoursite.com. Or set up a page that shows all reviews from around the web at review.yoursite.com Between that and your home page, that's two page 1 spots under control.
2. Set up a Squidoo page. Build a page on Squidoo.com and optimise it for your brand. Point some directory links at it, too, and do a little basic link building for it. It'll rank, too. That's three page 1 spots under control.
3. Set up a Twitter account and update it more than once a month. Make sure your brand name actually shows up in your bio. Hopefully you're already pointing links at it from your main site. Point a few from sites like Squidoo, too. That's four page 1 spots down.
4. Now do the same thing on Facebook. Create a good fan page and keep it updated. Link to it. Five page 1 spots are now under control.
5. If you rate a Wikipedia entry, make sure it's accurate, and that it's optimised for your brand. That should be the natural outcome of a good entry, but it pays to check. Wikipedia is so dominant it will definitely end up on page 1. Six spots under control.
6. You can also set up satellite sites, if you have the time and energy: Make sure you own domains that are close to your own. Also reserve the .infos and other permutations on your brand. Then write original content and get those pages ranking. I know - writing's a pain. But it does work. Play your cards right and you can control all of page 1 this way.

Build alliances

If your reputation comes under attack, having a few friends around can really help. They can shout down someone who's full of crap, or lend credibility when you need it. So build alliances.

7. Help other folks out. Re-tweet interesting blog posts - the bloggers appreciate the shot in the arm. Answer questions and give recommendations when someone asks. And yes, stick up for others if they're getting bullied.
8. Team up. Work with others on stuff like blogging back-and-forth between your sites, or co-marketing, or something else. By working together with others, you find out who you'd want by your side in a tussle.
9. Keep in touch. Don't expect someone to leap to your aid if they can't remember your name.

Listen & take measured action

Of course, if you're sitting on your hands as a crisis develops, it'll be way out of hand by the time you respond. Best to listen and act:

10. Use Google Reader as a basic social media monitoring tool - that way, you'll know when a crisis hits.

11. Take measured action. If one chagrined customer says 'meh', don't write a 3-page flame-o-gram and post it to your corporate blog - contact them directly. If a competitor starts lying about you, though, take a walk around the block, ask some of your friends and allies for advice, and then craft your response.

An ounce of prevention...

In the case of reputation management, almost every cliché applies. The more you do now, the less you have to worry about later. Best case? You never have a crisis, because you're a great company, and because you've got tight control over your online brand.

Read more: 11 steps to handle your next reputation management crisis

<http://www.conversationmarketing.com/2010/06/11-steps-reputation-management.htm#ixzz0pqDu0L5J>

Marketers and consumer expectations can align

A recent study Epsilon revealed that a large majority of recent purchasers reported that they would not purchase the same brand again. Less than 60% of consumers indicated a strong likelihood of repurchase. Auto insurance purchasers reported the highest likelihood of repurchase of the brand; Credit cards had the lowest reported likelihood of re-selection.

The study gathered data across seven product categories including televisions, computers, hotels, auto insurance, mobile devices, communication services and credit cards. How consumers perceive and interact with marketing communications is driving specific behaviours and attitudes, says the report.

In the key findings from Epsilon's survey:

- Net promoter scores were also low, reflecting that consumers are not likely to recommend brands or products; Communication services and credit cards had the lowest net promoter scores
- Friends and families were the number one source of information to support decisions
- Many consumers relied on product review websites to aid in their purchase decisions
- Relatively few cited unstructured user generated content as a valuable source for marketing information (i.e. blogs, social media networks);
- Where permission exists, consumers state the preferred channel to receive information was email
- For acquisition marketing, postal mail was the channel preferred by the highest percentage of consumers for communications services and mobile phones, and the second most in many categories (e.g., computers, credit cards, insurance, consumer packaged goods)
-

In March 2010, Epsilon embarked on a listening exercise by conducting a quantitative and qualitative study to explore the concept of Customer Experience Marketing, to understand the consumer point-of-view.

The study found, across the board, that a large majority of recent purchasers were not satisfied with marketing communications and a shockingly high percentage of recent purchasers said they would not purchase the same brand again. This demonstrates a disparity between expectations and the reality of the way marketers are interacting with these consumers. There is clearly a huge opportunity for improvement.

Product Repurchaser Percentage(Top 2 boxes selected when asked how likely they'd be to repurchase or re-use the brand)

Product Category	Likely Repurchasers (% of Respondents)
TV	51%
Computers	49%
Hotel	56%
Auto insurance	58%
Mobile	42%
Communication service	39%
Credit cards	27%

Source: Epsilon, May 2010

If people won't repurchase, they won't recommend either, concludes the study. The study explored the factors that drove purchase decisions, the influence of marketing communications consumers received, and the influence of marketing information consumers collected from their own sources.

More than any other source people use friends and families to help them make decisions about what they should purchase. Additionally, many consumers are using product review websites (e.g., consumerreports.org, cnet.com). Somewhat surprisingly, relatively few (0-1.5%, depending on category) stated that information they got from Facebook or Blogs strongly influenced their decisions.

Sources of Dependable Information According to Respondents				
Product Category	Most Influential Sources			
	1	2	3	4
TV	Product Review Website	Friends & Family	Salesperson	Brand Website
Phone	Friends & Family	Retailer Website	Product Review	Website Salesperson
Computer	Friends & Family	Brand Website	Retailer Website	Product Review Website
Auto insurance	Brand Website	Insurance Agent	Friends & Family Search	
Credit cards	Friends & Family	Financial Advisor	Brand Website	Product Review Website
Communication service	Product Review Website	Friends & Family	Brand Website	Salesperson
Hotel	Product Review Website	Friends & Family	Brand Website	Search
CPG	Product Review Website	Friends & Family	Search	Retailer Website

Source: Epsilon, May 2010

In most cases where a permission-based relationship already existed, the preferred channel to receive information about each product category was email. A high percentage of consumers said that communications that they receive in the mail are influential, too.

Influential Marketing Channels				
Product Category	Most Influential Marketing Channels			
	1	2	3	4
TV	Email	Print ad	TV	Display
Phone	Postal	Print ad	TV	Email
Computer	Email	Postal	Print	TV
Auto insurance	Email	Postal	Display	Print Ad
Credit cards	Email	Postal	Display	TV
Communication service	Postal	Print Ad	TV	Email
Hotel	Email	Print Ad	Display	TV
CPG	Print Ad	Postal	Email	In- store

Source: *Epsilon, May 2010*

The report summarises by noting that:

- Consumers appreciate a sense of control and trust from email today, which has become the key to consumer experience marketing that consumers accept and value
- Consumers are seeking validation from multiple sources. Marketers are featuring product testimonials or links to objective third-party reviews
- Search marketing and optimisation are important topics today, but the best marketers realise they only want a consumer to search for their products once, since each search needs to result in an engaged consumer

Visit Epsilon here [for more information](#), or here for additional [in-depth information and analysis](#) from this study are available in a special report from Epsilon that can be found here.

How many Ps in a marketing mix?

4Ps, 7Ps, 11Ps or More?

One of the most famous concepts in marketing is the marketing mix or the 4P's of marketing.

The Marketing Mix or 4 P's of Marketing

The concept of the "marketing mix" became popular after Neil H. Borden published his 1964 article, The Concept of the Marketing Mix. Borden began using the term in his teaching in the late 1940's after James Culliton had described the marketing manager as a "mixer of ingredients". The ingredients in Borden's marketing mix included product planning, pricing, branding, distribution channels, personal selling, advertising, promotions, packaging, display, servicing, physical handling, and fact finding and analysis. Eugene McCarthy later grouped these ingredients into the four categories that today are known as the 4 P's of marketing. The marketing mix decision variables

1. **Product,**
2. **Place (distribution),**
3. **Promotion, and**
4. **Price**

are variable factors over which an organisation has control in developing a strategy to achieve its objectives.

The marketing mix was **designed as a simple model to focus on the main elements of marketing** for a business and to create a marketing strategy either at business, product or campaign level. **It provides a basis to remember the main components of a marketing strategy.**

Marketing strategies need to be specific to each target segment and thus are variable to suit that target. If an organisation has more than one target segment, it should have more than one strategy

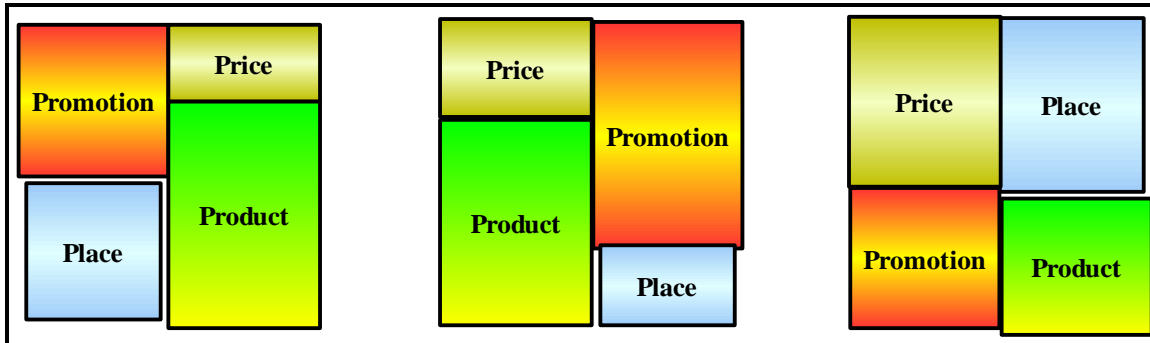


Figure 1 Three different marketing mixes (one for each target segment)

The Classic 4 P Marketing Mix Strategy

Basic Variables of developing a marketing strategy and plan

Product - what you are offering? What do they want

The Product is the central element of an organisation's Value Offer to its target segment. **The term "product"** is a broad one and **refers to both goods and services**. (Products are both goods and services) A product (or Value offer) is actually a bundle of elements – both tangible (the goods part) and intangible (the service or benefits part). The key part of a value offer is understanding that buyers/consumers value – that is - what it will do for them. People don't buy things, they buy benefits.

A product is **anything offered and acquired** considered having value by:

1. A Buyer
2. The Seller

From the perspective of the supplier a product is part of the **value offer or value proposition** made to a buyer.

From the perspective of the buyer/consumer it can also be seen as a solution to their needs (wants/desires). If they buy it (or rent it, hire it etc.) it then becomes a **value acquisition**. Before it is acquired it has little if any value to either the buyer or the supplier.

Price – The amount that the seller asks for a product

The **Price** variable is about deciding on a pricing strategy. A more useful and modern concept is to focus on the markets (customers) views of **Value and Payment** (the perceived total cost to the buyer/user.)

Promotion - how you tell people about your Value Offer

The Promotion variable of the marketing mix is composed of a **Promotional Mix**. This includes **Advertising, Personal Selling, Sales Promotion and Publicity (Marketing Public Relations)**. The modern approach is to see this as **Communicating Value** and incorporating it in the concept of **Integrated Marketing Communications**. The promotion variable relates to activities used to inform one or more groups of people about an organisation and its offers.

Place - how people can buy your product

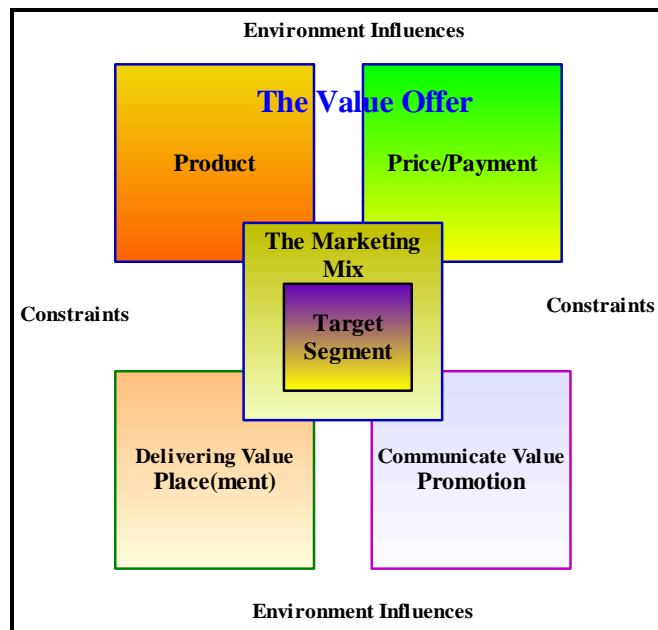
Place or Placement – This is about **Delivering Value** and focuses on the distribution variable. It looks primarily at logistics, and channels of distribution and achieving **convenience or accessibility value** for the customer.

“Place/Placement (which includes both Time and Location)

So for any marketer, the aim is simple.

Identify the best market (target segment) and develop an offer specific to that market. That offer will use a marketing mix. To offer the right product (that the target wants) at the right price (a total payment which customers are willing to pay) at a convenient place and time using the most effective promotion mix.

Each element of the marketing mix should be consistent, fit together and reinforce the other elements.



The marketing mix has been a mainstay of teaching marketing to students and professionals for fifty years although, like any well established idea, it is also criticised.

Other Approaches to the Marketing Mix

Mark Gabbott and others have been at the fore front of looking at the Marketing Mix from a new perspective - that of the **Value Model**. In their book Introduction to Marketing - A Value Exchange Approach (Pearson 2005) they create a marketing mix type model based on

1. Understanding Value
2. Creating and Configuring Value
3. Communicating Value and 4
4. Delivering Value

And - The 4 Cs

Not a singing group from the 60's

Place becomes Convenience
Price becomes Cost to the user
Promotion becomes Communication
Product becomes Customer motivation

Neither are not nearly as memorable as the P-words.

A Services based Marketing Mix? – The 7 P's

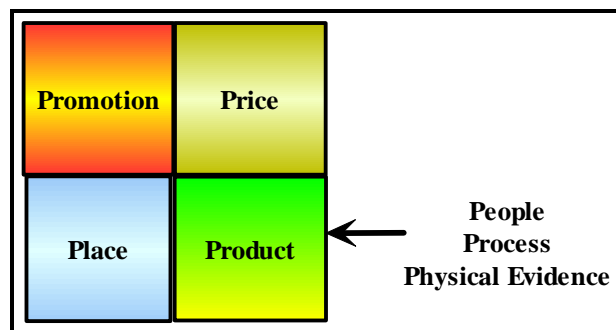
One thought is that it is too product focused and doesn't translate well into the growing service based economy we live in - see the Service Marketing Mix below).

1. Product
2. Price
3. Promotion
4. Place

Plus

5. **People**
6. **Process**
7. Physical Evidence

While these are probably useful concepts to consider in thinking about a strategy (but not especially a service strategy), in fact the additional elements **fit neatly into the definition of Product**



How Many More Ps Can we Squeeze into a Marketing Mix?

Perhaps only limited by our ability to find yet another P

So far we have the original 4Ps of marketing, the extra 3 Ps added in the Service Marketing Mix

But wait!! Some folks want to add even more

Rather than want an elegant 4 P's that are useful enough, agreed to by most people and easy to remember they think bigger is better.

So...

Should we be adding another **P - for Purchaser** to keep the focus on the target customer, what they want, need and what motivates them? (Well no actually. Customers are the target of the marketing mix – not part of it)

Anyway –

Purpose (normally profit)

Purchaser

Push/Pull

Personal relationships

That takes us up to the possible 11 Ps of marketing.

Fraser Hay published a list of what he saw as the 5 fundamental principles of marketing:

Positioning

Packaging

Promotion

Persuasion

Performance

Since **promotion is already covered** in the traditional marketing mix, this adds another 4P's to the marketing list - positioning, packaging, persuasion and performance.

So now the 15 P's??

Do the 15 Ps identified so far summarise what marketing has to offer and the important characteristics of marketing?

In a book called "Offensive Marketing" by Hugh Davison used an acronym of POISE.

Profitable - even in loss leading campaigns and image advertising to build brands, there has to be a clear path to profit.

Offensive - perhaps **Proactive** would be more suitable in this situation.

Integrated - your marketing has to **Pull together** and not consist of a scatter gun approach of different campaigns which send out conflicting messages.

Strategic - We mentioned **Purposeful** earlier

Effective - it has to work. Marketing that creates results is an investment, marketing that produces nothing is a waste of time, effort and money so the best P we may come up with is **Perform** - this is different to Fraser's performance which I believe relates to the product you provide.

The Marketing Ps Don't End There

We are bombarded with marketing messages and spam coming into our email inboxes so Seth Goden's concept of Permission Marketing is becoming increasingly relevant - and **Permission** is another P.

And isn't marketing about helping a customer finding a solution to a **Problem**?

Aren't customers motivated by the thoughts of moving away from **Pain or towards Pleasure**?

We have the need to be intentional - to decide what you want and to work out how you will achieve it - i.e. to **Plan** your marketing.

Further thinking brings in two extra Ps - you need to have **Periodic communications** since one message won't do the job and you need to be **Persistent**.

The most successful marketing strategies are to work through **Partners** who are trusted.

And what is the most important thing that determines whether a customer buys - what is going on inside their heads - logically and emotionally which brings in the twin forces of **Psychology and Perceptions**.

The New (Even Bigger) Marketing Mix

So some folk are convinced that seeing marketing in terms of the traditional marketing mix of the 4Ps or the service marketing mix of 7Ps is too simplistic?

The 27P's of Marketing

(and counting)

1. Product
2. Price
3. Promotion
4. Place
5. People
6. Process
7. Physical evidence
8. Purpose
9. Purchaser
10. Push/pull
11. Personal relationships
12. Positioning
13. Packaging
14. Persuasion
15. Performance
16. Profitable
17. Proactive
18. Pull together
19. Perform
20. Permission
21. Pain
22. Pleasure
23. Periodic
24. Persistent
25. Partners
26. Psychology
27. Perceptions

Compacting the rubbish

So let us try and put this pile of “concepts” into four easily handled containers – and one more that is outside any marketing mix strategy

Product

Physical evidence

Packaging

People – those that are part of the product (e.g. service)

Partners (people and organisations outside the firm who are needed to finance; install etc (add value and allow the product to function as a benefit)

and

Process

Performance (will it work?)

Price

Profitable

Periodic (price changes – discounts etc)

Performance (will it work?)

(“Payment” would be another? And it is a useful, customer focused concept – but certainly part of price

Process

Performance (will it work?)

Place

(Placement is a useful term not in the current extended list)

Personal relationships

Partners

People – (see previous) those that are part of “delivering value”

Pull together

Periodic (temporal aspects of purchasing. Also (temporal aspects of logistics)

Process

Performance (will it work?)

Promotion

Persuasion

Push/pull (promotional strategies)

Personal relationships

Permission

Periodic (communications)

Psychology

Perceptions

Proactive;

Pull together

Persistent
Performance (will it work?)
Process

Objectives and methods of the marketing mix strategy:

People (also = Purchaser)
Positioning (the strategy – value offer to a specific market)
Psychology
Perceptions
Pain and/or Pleasure relates to the target (customers/people)

Purpose = goals objectives of the organisation (e.g. – profit/survival/growth etc)
Performance; Proactive; Pull together; general concepts/methods

Not enough P's yet?

Perhaps (is that another) try adding the following:

Potential
Prior Planning and Preparation
Preventing
Production
Package deal
Package sale
Personal Selling
Pact (positioning advertising copy testing)
Party selling
Pioneer
Pipeline
Plan
Principled (social marketing?)

And if that's still not enough – look at the new MAANZ Glossary (www.marketing.org.au) over 21000 terms – AND over 2000 P's related to marketing.

One P That Marketing Isn't

There is one thing that marketing can never be.
Perfect.

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The strategic need for good implementation

Good opportunities, a well conceived competitive strategy and a killer marketing plan are not in themselves enough. What is required is action.

Results require action

What counts are results. Results do not occur until something happens, until implementation takes place. Plans don't bring results by themselves and won't work without commitment to success.

Marketing Implementation

Strategy formulation, marketing planning, programming, allocating, and budgeting all lead to marketing implementation. This is the execution phase which produces the actual results. Poor implementation can ruin even the best strategies, plans, and programs. The total purpose of all that goes before implementation is to ensure excellent execution.

Implementation means different things to different people in the organisation. To the salesperson, it means going through all of the steps of the selling process, while to the national sales manager, it might mean reorganising the whole sales force.

Implementation is very people oriented. The results of implementation are manifested in people doing things-buying, selling, training, reorganising, etc. Marketing implementation is different from implementation in most other functional areas because the primary focus of marketing is outside the company. Thus, marketing implementation focuses on prospects, customers, distributors, retailers, centres of influence, advertising agencies, etc. But marketing implementation also includes dealing with other functional areas to gain support and to develop coordination. Product managers, for example, must implement their plans and programs through product development, production, service, and logistics personnel in other functional areas.

It is wise to start considering ways to implement aspects of the plan during the planning process. This has the double advantage of speeding up the eventual implementation stage but is also ensuring that the plan is able to be implemented.

Marketing implementation is the aspect of organisational structure and behaviour that determine how a given strategy or plan is carried out; specifically, it is the actions of marketing managers, sales and customer service personnel, distributors, and other personnel. The success of any strategy is limited by the effectiveness with which it is implemented.

Brian Monger

Sites you may like to look at

- [AdAges](#)
- [AdRants](#)
- [BrandFreak](#)
- [BrandRepublic](#)
- [Brand New](#)
- [Brand New Day \(BW\)](#)
- [Brand Autopsy](#)
- [BrandTags](#)
- [Brandhackers](#)
- [Brand Identity Guru](#)

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MXtra an **electronic newsletter** (50 pages average) providing regular news on current issues and trends, news and information (, marketing articles and papers, feature departments and marketing tools, and more)

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