

# Chapter 1

## The Art of Marketing

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### *In This Chapter*

- ▶ Creating successful marketing programmes
  - ▶ Using advertising effectively
  - ▶ Exploiting all the available media
  - ▶ Discovering your marketing imagination
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**M**arketing is all pervasive. The chances are that you already do quite a bit of marketing. You may not even realise that you're doing it, but if you have a product or service that's selling, know who your best customers are and what they want, and you have plans to develop new products for them or to find more customers, you're already addressing some of the fundamentals of marketing.

In this chapter, we introduce you to the basics of successful marketing and encourage you to expand your ideas of what marketing is. We show you that marketing consists of more than just advertising and doesn't have to be restricted to traditional media, and we also help you develop one vital ingredient: your own marketing imagination.

We walk you through the tools of the marketing trade so that you can begin to lay the foundations of a successful marketing career, including helping you to develop a marketing programme.

This chapter serves as an important foundation to topics that we cover in much more depth throughout this book.

## *Developing Great Marketing Programmes*

The most common mistake made by organisations is believing that marketing means advertising. Not so. Advertising, or promotion, is just one discipline within the broader church of marketing. Many other parts of the marketing programme may be things that you think of as everyday parts of doing your

business: setting the right price for your products and services; thinking about your distribution and how your customers find your products and services; offering the right kind of after-care; and even giving your customers the chance to complain if they're unhappy.

Great marketing programmes can make or break an organisation. Think about those brands that give you a good experience. Is this success down to one individual element or a combination of elements all working together to create the perfect customer environment? The chances are it's down to the overall marketing programme rather than any one aspect of the brand's operations.



The key to successful marketing is to bring all these elements together under a formal marketing framework. Without this framework, your separate efforts aren't nearly as efficient or effective as they can be.

Your marketing activity (by which we mean everything about your organisation that makes a difference to your customers) is crucial because it's what gets your business from where it is now to where you want it to be. In purchasing this book, you've taken the first step towards great marketing. We give you lots of simple, quick steps you can take to make progress with your marketing activities and back these up with practical exercises and examples on the accompanying CD-ROM.

Marketing, however, is more than just a group of formulas and processes. We do provide step-by-step guides, but the final ingredient, marketing magic, needs to come from you. We can give you a guide to the practical side of marketing, but you need to supply the imagination and experimentation that complements the know-how. Together all these elements work together, and we help you to develop your own programme for marketing success.

## *Understanding your customers and market*

The first step towards success is understanding who your customer is and the market you operate in. You need to find your own Marketing Zone: your individual blueprint for marketing. We tackle this subject for you in Chapter 2.

But before you can get down to the business of finding your Marketing Zone, we're going to go through some of the most important things you discover in this book and why they matter. Whether you're product or customer-orientated, you need to understand how customers think and what they like in order to market to them effectively. Only then can you develop products or services that meet those needs and come up with appropriate and appealing ways to communicate them.



This may sound simple, but like everything in life, it's a bit more complicated. You need to understand your customers on two levels: the rational, functional dimension of making a purchase decision; and the irrational, emotional dimension that people use to choose what they buy.

Every purchase – whether it's a fizzy drink, a software program, a consulting service, a book or a manufacturing part – has both rational and emotional elements. So to truly know your customer, you must explore two primary questions:

- ✔ **What do customers think about your product?** Do they understand it? Do they think its features and benefits are superior to the competition and can meet their needs? Do they think that your product is good value, given its benefits and costs? In other words, how do your customers respond rationally to your product?
- ✔ **How do customers feel about your product?** Does it make them feel good? Do they like its personality? Do they like how your product makes them feel about themselves? In other words, how do your customers respond emotionally to your product?

If you decide that one of these dimensions dominates the other, you have uncovered some important information, which can inform your marketing programme. If rationality is the most important area, you may need to think more about the rational promises you make in any marketing; if emotion has more relevance to your buyers, you may need to appeal more to their hearts than their heads.

In most cases, depending on your customers, you need to take one of the three following approaches in your marketing programme:

- ✔ **Informational approach.** You use this approach when your customers buy in a rational manner. This approach involves showing off the product and talking about its benefits. Demonstrating how your products or services are better than any alternatives is important when using an informational approach. Use this approach when you think buyers are going to make a careful, thoughtful, informed purchase decision led by their heads, not just their hearts.
- ✔ **Emotional approach.** This approach pushes emotional rather than rational buttons. For example, a marketer of virus-scanning software may try to scare computer users by asking them in a headline: 'What would it cost you if a virus destroyed everything on your computer right now?' That emotional appeal can be much more powerful than a pile of statistics about the frequency and type of viruses on the Internet, which may just bore people. Use an emotional approach when your customers have strong feelings that you can tap into and relate to your product or service.

✔ **Balanced mix.** This approach uses a combination of both informational and emotional appeals. For example, after a scare-tactic (emotional) headline asking: ‘How much would it cost you if a virus destroyed everything on your computer?’, we would follow it up with a few statistics such as: ‘One out of every ten computer users suffers a catastrophic virus attack each year.’ The use of facts helps reinforce the nervous feelings the initial headline evoked.

You need to decide which of these three approaches to use and use it consistently in all your communications. When in doubt, use the balanced mix to hedge your bets.

## *Creating a marketing plan*

You’re not going to believe all the great tools on the CD for this book to help you create a winning marketing plan! We can hardly believe them ourselves. The CD contains dozens of pages of templates, audit forms, interactive forecasting, planning and budgeting tools for you to use. Many readers wrestle with how to write a marketing plan and prepare a good budget. How to improve a marketing programme isn’t always obvious. These tasks are difficult. The only way to make it relatively easy is to have someone walk you through the process, which is what we do through this book.

You don’t have to write a marketing plan to use this book or even to benefit from it, but you may want to, because doing so isn’t as hard as you may think and, most importantly, a good plan increases your odds of success. In fact, most of the really successful businesses we know – small or large, new or old – write a careful marketing plan at least once a year.

Marketing combines lots of activities and expenditures in the hope of generating or increasing sales and maintaining or increasing market share. You don’t see those sales numbers rise without a coherent plan that finds a way of using the strengths of your position to create marketing and sales activities that can convince the right customers to buy.

A single plan is fine if all your marketing activities are consistent and clearly of one kind. If you operate a more complex business – offering both services and products, for example – you may find that you need to work up one plan for selling products and another plan for convincing product buyers to use your services. We give you help with both these tasks in Chapter 3, but the general rule is that if the plan seems too complicated – divide and conquer! Then add everything up to get the big picture with its overall projections and budgets.

## Getting to Grips with Advertising Management and Design

Advertising can be a potent weapon in the armoury of a marketer. It can bring great rewards, but use it badly and it can backfire. Although the creation of a great programme and careful planning are vital to the success of your marketing, if the resulting advertising isn't up to scratch, you can kiss goodbye to any benefits that you may hope to gain.

Ads need to look good, read well, sound great, catch the eye, make a lasting impression and be the stuff of dinner conversation – and that's what we show you how to achieve in Chapter 6. However, before you start designing specific ads, you need to create an advertising plan, as we show you in Chapter 5.



The importance of advertising management can be very simply put: with advertising, you can easily spend more money than you ever imagined in your wildest dreams! Even in the midst of a global economic downturn in 2008, a company such as Procter & Gamble, which owns Ariel washing powder and Olay skincare, reportedly spent nearly £7 billion worldwide on advertising its products. However, because most of us don't have billions to work with, you're sensible to put practical limits on your advertising, which still allow you to gain all the benefits you need within a workable budget.

### Planning and budgeting

When you're reading about planning and budgeting for advertising, bear in mind that most of the conventional wisdom applied to this particular discipline is derived from what the world's biggest brands do. People look at what is done at big companies such as Procter & Gamble and then try to apply it to their own businesses.

But large organisations are working with huge budgets, which if you're a small or medium-sized business, may not apply to you. The most important rule for practical small-business advertising is *use cheap ads so that you can run them frequently without going broke!*

For example, imagine that you're the owner of a local restaurant. Before you consider setting down an advertising plan to start spending your hard-earned cash on promoting your food, atmosphere and style to potential customers, you need to make sure that you've considered your plan in the context of the overall budget available. You need to take into account elements such as rent, payroll and other costs before you start thinking about whether you

want to appear on TV or in a local newspaper. We cover the vital topic of planning advertising thoroughly in Chapter 5.



Advertising is a fantastic thing that can bring you great success if carried out properly. But it can also be a millstone around your neck if you don't plan it carefully.



If you're going to spend money on marketing, make sure that you're spending it in the right places and on the right elements. The last thing we want you to do is launch an unbudgeted advertising campaign that does your business more harm than good!

## *Creating advertising campaigns*

With the warning about keeping your advertising within budget still ringing in your ears, we move on to the fun part of advertising: coming up with fantastic, widely-admired ideas and creating memorable ads.

For most small and mid-sized businesses, most advertising isn't a 30-second ad in the middle of *Coronation Street*. Simple, inexpensive approaches to ad design are best for most marketing plans, because the goal is to keep your design or creation costs low in order to ensure that most of your advertising budget is spent on actually getting those ads out in front of potential buyers.

Most adverts from small businesses don't have to be award-winners. Creating an ad with awards in mind is a luxury most businesses can't afford; but a healthy dose of imagination can be very, very useful. For those of us who can't come up with million-pound ideas at the flick of a switch, just make sure that your ads are professional and simple enough that the message gets through loud and clear. And make them visually appealing because that's usually the secret to noticeable, memorable ads.

Chapter 6 gives you some information about different styles of ad design, including using imagery and different concepts, as well as some very useful ad templates on the CD-ROM.

## *Exploring Alternatives to Advertising*

Advertising is only one piece of the marketing puzzle, and you can do lots of other things to drive sales that aren't classified as traditional advertising. Your brand should speak to its potential customers no matter what environment it is seen or heard in – radio, TV, packaging, in shops, in a newsletter, in a newspaper article, on a business card and so on.

In Part III of this book, we show you how you can take advantage of every opportunity to promote your brand. These opportunities start with the basics of business cards, letterheads, emails and faxes all the way through to the importance of presenting your brand on the Internet. We even give some practical advice on the stalwarts of small business promotion – brochures, blogs and press releases.

## *Using business cards, brochures and PR*

Chapter 7 covers the basics of branding, which includes areas such as clarifying your brand identity – including designing your business name and logo – all the way through to creating successful marketing collateral such as business cards, letterheads, envelopes and emails.

You'd be surprised how little attention people pay to these areas, even if they have great advertising. When your business is running eye-catching ads on the TV or radio, forgetting the more basic areas is all too easy.

For small businesses, these elements are possibly even more important. As a small firm, you rely more on customer recommendations to build business and make first impressions count. A good-looking business card, brochure or letterhead can set you up in someone's mind as a well-run, professional organisation while a bad one can create the impression of a shoddy firm that doesn't really pay attention to detail.



Would you trust a dentist who has bad teeth? Probably not. That same snap judgement is what people make when assessing your business through any of its marketing elements. Throughout Chapter 7, we show you how to take a close look at how your business looks to the outside world, starting with an examination of the brand identity and then making sure that your business cards, stationery, labels, envelopes or boxes, faxes and emails convey your identity clearly and well.

## *Exploiting the power of the Internet*

The Internet is the single greatest marketing invention of the last century. Why? Well, the TV is a fantastic medium for large firms to reach mass audiences with their big brand messages, but it isn't very accessible for most small and medium-sized businesses.

Online, however, the playing field is level. Good web marketers use the Internet to their advantage by ensuring that their businesses are seen in the relevant places. And do you know what's even better about the Internet? If

you make sure that your brand is in the right place, that place can be filled with *pre-qualified eyeballs* – people who already want to know about your firm or product.

Imagine that you run a small restaurant. If you're based in Camden, London, you can advertise on websites for your local area, ensuring that most people who see your restaurant on that site on a regular basis may often pass it on the street too and become potential customers.

You can also make sure that you get listed on a restaurant review website for Camden restaurants. Most people looking at that website are looking very specifically for a restaurant to eat in within Camden. You can't say the same for advertising on TV or radio, because the broadcasting areas for local TV and radio stations are much wider than the targeted offerings online.

If you think targeted Internet marketing may become the most important part of your business promotion activities, pick up a copy of *Digital Marketing For Dummies* by Ben Carter, Gregory Brooks, Frank Catalano and Bud E. Smith (Wiley) to find out more about the available opportunities.

Another great development offered by digital technology (Internet, mobile phone and email) is the ability to communicate with your customers very cost efficiently, very quickly and on a tightly targeted basis. Chapter 10 takes you through the opportunities presented by email and online newsletters, which are great tools for the small business and can be powerful when used as part of a word-of-mouth marketing programme.



Don't fall into the trap of thinking that websites aren't for your business. The Internet offers huge opportunities for imaginative marketers. No successful marketers can afford to ignore the Internet!

## *Writing Effectively for Marketing*

No matter what channels you decide to use in your marketing, you have to develop the skill of effective copywriting. This skill – the ability to write short, snappy and to-the-point text that gets your message across – is a lot harder to hone than you may first imagine.

We can't recall an ad in any medium that doesn't have some writing in it, and many ads are dominated by writing.

This fact is especially relevant in business advertising and when trying to explain the benefits of a complicated product or service. Other types of marketing, such as coupons (covered in Chapter 9), also need clear writing to communicate their benefits and rules to customers.



Businesses ask a lot of their marketing communications, whether they're ads, flyers, web pages, catalogues, brochures or other forms of communication with customers and potential buyers. So you need to do quite a bit of thinking in order to come up with ideas that really work.

Due to the number of marketing messages that we all see every day, you need to stay away from clichés, find ways to persuade your audience to part with their money and ensure that your messages get *cut-through* (a marketing term that means that people actually pay attention to your efforts). Chapter 14 helps you to hone these skills.

## Enjoying Successful Sales and Service

Part V of this book covers the biggest puzzle faced by the marketer: how to sell, sell, sell on the back of your efforts. We can't stress enough how important it is to take advantage of all the work you've done to get to this point. Many people don't think about selling as being part of the marketing plan, but it's an absolutely vital element. In many respects, your whole marketing programme has been all about getting to the eventual sale.



Sales skills are important, whatever business you're in and whatever job you're doing, even if you're not in a formal sales role.

Just think about this issue for a moment. If you're a member of shop staff, for example, you interact with customers to help them find what they want and make them feel good about spending their money there. Construction contractors discuss a project with a prospective customer and then prepare and present (in other words – sell) the proposal they think is going to win them the job. Marketers selling services from one business to another contact their prospects in person, by email and telephone to generate business.

Even businesses that don't use people to sell have the occasional need for this skill. For example, the owner of a web-based business may need to make a pitch to a bank loan officer or investor in order to fund an expansion plan. Personal selling is an incredibly important part of marketing. In the final section of this book, we look at how the sales process works and how to maximise its effectiveness in your business.

### *Selling effectively*

Every expert has a different model of the sales process. Some models are simple; many are highly elaborate. And, to be honest, few of them really give you much help in improving your sales success because they're rarely realistic or tailored

to your exact circumstances. We favour a model that reflects reality: you need to do some work to figure out what the prospect needs, and then you present your offerings to meet that need. We also favour a model that suggests what to do and how and when to do it to optimise your sales efficiency.

In Chapter 18, we cover topics including understanding the importance of great sales leads, discovering how to be flexible in your sales approach and – the most important element of all – staying positive in the face of failure.

When we talk about failure we mean the time when you've seemingly done everything right, but are still rejected and the sale doesn't happen. How you respond to this setback is just as important as the fact that you got the sales opportunity in the first place. Responding with the right attitude and tools can make all the difference to making sure that your next sale ends in success.



Good selling is about having quality leads, making a good impression, having a flexible approach and the all-important positive attitude towards both success and failure. We cover all these aspects in more detail in Chapters 16 to 19.

## *Closing the deal*

Within the sales process itself, the vital point is the *close*. That's when the sale is agreed, the contracts are signed and you're assured of getting your hands on the cash. In Chapter 17, you can investigate the many different ways of sealing the deal, how to use sales in all your marketing materials and methods, and passing the prospect's smell test.

The *smell test* is the crucial need for you to be professional in all your sales dealings. The rest of your marketing communications may be fantastic, but if the customer has a few questions at the moment of purchase and the salesperson can't answer them, the customer may get nervous, smell that something isn't quite right and back out of the deal.

Some salespeople say not to accept a 'No' until you've tried to close the deal at least three times, whereas others never accept a 'No' when they sense an opportunity for a 'Yes'. We believe that the truth lies somewhere in between and that if you study and understand closing techniques, you'll be accepting far fewer rejections



*How* you ask for the business often determines if you get the business and how much of it you get.

In Chapter 17, we take you through this process so that by taking on what we have to say throughout this book, you can become not only a seasoned marketer, but also an expert salesperson. We also challenge one of the longest-held myths in marketing: that top-performing salespeople are born, not made. Anyone can sell if they have the right tools, techniques and enthusiasm.

The truth is that training and motivation are more important than talent. Big companies get good results when they train and support their sales forces. If you train and support yourself, you too can be a high-performing salesperson. And discovering and practising closing techniques is, in our opinion, the most important thing you can do to boost your sales performance.

## *Becoming a Marketing Expert*

You're likely to be carrying out some form of marketing already, perhaps without even realising it. In this book we bring you the processes and formulas that help you to create great marketing, but you have to bring the imagination yourself to make it all work.

By working through this book and paying attention to the advice we offer, the lessons we explain and the practical tools we give you on the CD-ROM, we guarantee that you have all the elements required to plan, create and execute a successful marketing programme.

Imagination is something that is much harder for us to help you with. In Chapter 13, we try to help you with this area by giving you tools and techniques for generating creative concepts. But this is somewhere that your ideas, enthusiasm and commitment make all the difference to the end result.



We use the term *marketing imagination* throughout this book, and this concept is probably the most important factor in marketing success or failure.

Your ability to imagine new approaches is vital to your success as a marketer. The salesperson who invents a really convincing opener or comes up with a new strategy for generating leads is the one who sells the most products. The distributor who finds creative ways to serve customers through the Internet is the one who beats the competition with ease. Advertisers who come up with intriguing and beguiling ideas that capture consumer attention interest more people in their businesses. And the small firm that seeks new ways to promote its products and services makes a bigger impact than its rivals at a lower cost.

Using this book and the tools on the CD helps you unlock your creative potential, find success and become an expert marketer. No single simple secret exists to conjure up marketing success, but use this book carefully and you've started using the kind of techniques and ideas that can lead to that elusive marketing magic.