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basics in
90 minutes

Quicklook at **Marketing**



About Quicklook at Marketing

It is impossible to escape marketing in the modern world. It takes many forms and involves a bewildering range of skills. Huge resources are devoted to it. The success or failure of businesses and many other organisations is dependent on marketing. It brings in the business which creates revenue and profit.

Marketing affects us all every day. It is important to know how it works. Patrick Forsyth brings his vast experience to bear in a way which brings this huge and fascinating subject to life in a very clear way. Even if you know nothing much about it at the start of the book, you will certainly have got to grips with it by the end.



This book covers all of the key areas. It looks at marketing at a strategic level. It also describes the various techniques involved, including market research, product development and launch. It lifts the lid on a mix of creative communication methods, such as advertising in its many forms, public relations, sales promotion, merchandising and display. Modern approaches include on line selling, backed by social networking and viral marketing. The vital importance of electronic sales methods and the information that they provide is explained.

Selling is part, but only part, of marketing. We look at the techniques involved and the many different types of selling, covering products ranging from chewing gum to aircraft. The importance of focus on the customer is made clear.

By the end of this short book you will be well qualified to understand how a skilful marketing director approaches a major marketing challenge, as we follow an example.

Quicklook at

Marketing

Patrick Forsyth



Quicklook
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The need for marketing



EVERY business has three primary functions. They are: finance, production and marketing. There are also two major resources: *capital* (money) and *labour* (human resources). Without capital and labour nothing can be done. Unless the three core functions are dealt with well, success is impossible.

Marketing is crucial. Nothing else: producing unique products, ensuring exemplary quality, having excellent people, matters if revenue cannot secure the organisation for the future.

Simplistically, marketing is the activity that “brings in the business”. Actually it does more than that, playing a part in deciding what the business should be, where it’s going and how to get and keep customers. Marketing activity is often ill defined (and regularly misunderstood). It constitutes much more than the visible promotional and sales activity (important though that is).

Marketing is not an operational option; it is a necessity. It is not simply a department, or a person, it is a whole way of operating the business. It may be as much an art as a science, but there is a good deal involved.

Marketing is not a routine. “Doing marketing”, however creatively, is not sufficient to guarantee success, especially early in a new millennium in which things really do change as you watch. The information technology revolution is just one example. Everyone is having to get to grips with new ways, and the technology is affecting all aspects of an organisation’s relationship with its customers: new forms of communication, for example. Only recently could you have bought this book in e-format using the internet and perhaps some sort of e-reader to read it.

The environment in which businesses operate is essentially hostile. Other people are not on the marketer’s side, and many, both customers and com-

petitors, will take advantage of any operational weakness. This is not a local situation, it is international. Large companies regard the world as their market, and competition is as likely to come from the other side of the world as from down the road. Competitiveness is increasing.

What is marketing?



As there is often so much confusion as to what the word marketing encompasses, let's start by making clear what it is *not*. Marketing is not just advertising or selling, although both are part of it. The word cannot be defined as solely one thing; it is a somewhat nebulous term. Marketing can be defined in the following ways.

It can be a business philosophy, that of seeing the business through the eyes of the customer and ensuring profitability by providing them with what they want.

Marketing can be viewed as a business function, i.e. the total management function that co-ordinates the above approach, anticipating the demands of customers and identifying and satisfying their needs by providing the right products or services at the right time, place and price.

Marketing is also a series of techniques, which make the process work. These include advertising, market research, sales, pricing and others. "Marketing" is the umbrella term.

Any activity with three somewhat differing descriptions runs the risk of degenerating into a nebulous "catch-all" term with no meaning at all. The official definition stated by the (U.K.) Chartered Institute of Marketing is:

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

Management guru Peter Drucker defined it simply as; "*Marketing is looking at the business through the customer's eyes.*" So the customer must be central to it.

Who deals with it?

In every organisation, someone has to be in charge of marketing. In larger firms such a person may be a Director heading up a whole marketing department. In smaller companies the responsibilities may lie with the General Manager, Sales Manager or someone else, or be shared amongst a number of people. Whoever is involved, sufficient time must be found to fulfil all the necessary marketing functions; the organisation's future depends on it.

They must deploy lots of techniques concerned with every aspect of marketing. These include market research, product development, pricing, and presentational and promotional techniques such as selling, merchandising, direct mail, public relations, sales promotions, advertising, telesales and more.

Customers can purchase services; in this book the word "product" is used for both.

A common feature of all marketing is that it aims to influence the decision making of those on the receiving end. There are several areas in which it operates:

- **Consumer marketing:** the marketing of consumer goods to the general public: a group involving fast moving consumer goods (soap, toothpaste and the like) and other categories such as white goods (cookers, refrigerators etc.).
- **Industrial marketing:** also called Business to Business marketing ("B2B"). This covers goods ranging from office supplies to machinery and airliners. Many subsections exist, for instance goods sold to Small Offices/ Home Offices.
- **Social marketing:** essentially marketing that is not commercial/for profit marketing but which uses marketing techniques. This includes government campaigns (for instance for road safety) and charities.

The Ongoing Process

The skill of those in marketing lies in precisely *how* they act. It is as much an art as a science. Everyone in an organisation is involved in selling it and

its product or service.

This starts with matters as straightforward as first contact. For instance, the people who answer the phone are involved in marketing. How long they take to do so and the impression they create affects marketing performance. A long wait at a hotel check in can seriously damage a guest's entire view of his stay. There is only one chance to make a first impression and many different people can be involved in giving it.

A customer's first contact with a business provides an indication of how professional it is. Much else enhances image: speed of delivery, advice, how problems are dealt with. Marketing exists in a permanently vulnerable state. One rude, ill-thought out comment can destroy years of hard work. A careful eye must be kept on a host of minor things to ensure they work and contribute positively bearing in mind that every detail can have significant effects.

How marketing fits in

Those dealing with finance, production and marketing each have their own priorities and there can be tension within an organisation as a result. They have different tasks and objectives. In the case of launching a new product, for example, those concerned with production may want to maximise the quality and functionality of the item, those concerned with finance seek to reduce production costs and those involved with marketing be keen to introduce it as soon as possible, ahead of rivals.

In a well run organisation the primary functions work closely together, from the top down. Decision makers should be aware of what other functions require. The marketing department can be involved in product development from a very early stage, helping to ensure that what is "on the drawing board" (usually a computer, nowadays!) is something that customers are going to want to buy.

There should be a strong sense of how the organisation presents itself to its customers, which should influence everything it does, including the design of its products, how they are priced and how they are sold. Some companies emphasise the quality aspect of what they do, albeit in different ways. In the car market for instance, BMW highlights engineering excellence, Volkswagen reliability. Other businesses focus on providing value

for money: “Never knowingly undersold”, in the case of John Lewis, the retailer, or “Pile it high and sell it cheap”, to quote Jack Cohen, the founder of Tesco.

Marketing efforts should fit in with and reinforce the policy of the organisation, thereby helping to build the right “image”. Thus we are perhaps unlikely to see a firm of accountants giving a free computer to win audit business or a restaurant offering a free tube of toothpaste to diners. A discount token for the next pizza on the other hand may be exactly the right approach. Any promotion must suit the style of the business and be seen as appropriate by its customers.

Intelligent marketing requires understanding of the customer’s point of view. Customers think in terms of benefits. A customer wants the “product” for a purpose, even if this is just to provide a feel good factor in the form of a perfume, new dress or bar of chocolate.

Customers look for assistance in solving problems. Whether this involves, say, buying a holiday to give them rest after a busy work period or selecting a destination that will impress the neighbours (or both), the choice made will be to achieve *their* ends. Customers assess many things to find which gives them all, or most of what they want. Each customer is different. Marketing activity must inform and differentiate to prompt a particular decision.

For example a Travel Agent needs to quickly discover and cater for each customer’s requirements. Some will be very price conscious, some seeking activity or adventure, others a relaxing and luxurious experience, regardless of cost. Similarly a retailer selling something like computers may win business through a willingness to spend time demonstrating.

Marketing can often require considerable expertise in the area that the customer is interested in. A customer is unlikely to trust the vendor if the sales person does not have a clear understanding of the product. A sale can easily be lost, even if the product is excellent.

Making marketing work

In a sense the marketing cycle is a continuous “black art”, but it is an essentially *creative* process which has some scientific basis, but no absolute guarantee of success. Effective marketing reduces the risk of failure, or rather – let us be positive – increases the chances of success. One constant is

About the author

PATRICK FORSYTH has for many years worked as a marketing consultant and trainer. He is the author of many books on marketing and business topics. He has held a number of positions in sales, sales management and marketing with different businesses. For some years he worked for what is now the Chartered Institute of Marketing. He was a Director of a major consultancy.

Now running his own consultancy business, Patrick has worked in many countries and different industries. He is a regular speaker, is often asked to provide training and is a prolific writer of books and articles. His work has been translated into more than twenty different languages. He has presented programmes on marketing and management matters on BBC TV. He has advised various government and official bodies in a number of countries.

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Marketing takes many forms and is aimed at all of us. Huge resources are devoted to it. The success of businesses depends on it.

Quicklook at Marketing covers all the key areas. There are strategic considerations and many other aspects – market research, advertising, public relations, sales promotion, merchandising and display.

Marketing is always on the move. Electronic sales methods are now important, backed up by social networking and viral methods.

Selling is part, but only part, of marketing. We look at the many different aspects.

● Follow a marketing director tackling the launch of a new product.

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