



Marketing Network News

Marketing is the only function to connect a business from first idea to customer use and satisfaction.

Welcome to the MarketFrames™ Marketing Network News, providing quarterly insights on efficient and effective marketing and the marketing approach that makes it happen.

Outlook: Challenges and Opportunities for Firms

It has been over a year since the collapse of Lehman Brothers and the dramatic start of the worst financial and economic crisis in recent history. There are now hopeful indicators such as stabilized earnings and some signs of growth in certain sectors. However, most headlines continue to vacillate between positive data points and predictions of more uncertainty. What is the best thing that marketing organizations can do during this interim environment?

Suggestions by business and industry experts are often general – focus on long-term goals, keep investing in R&D, or prepare various scenarios. Others fine tune important hot topics. Some argue that firms' social media strategies are critical to compete. Others address current concerns around CRM optimization and implementation.

While all of these are important topics in marketing, in our view, last year's challenges made clear that the number one concern for marketing leaders remains to clarify and optimize Marketing Cost Envelope (MCE) management. Getting a firm grip on end-to-end marketing spend during this period is time well-spent. In fact, it may be the optimal time to do so. During times of deep crisis, marketing organizations may not be able to handle much more than keeping the plane flying. Conversely, during an up-market, the pressure to manage spending and streamline is reduced.

Beginning to address the persistent questions around marketing spend is critical and can offer unique advantages in securing a foundation for future growth. Underscoring the importance of this topic, the AMA's first session in 2010 deals with Marketing ROI Techniques. The first step to understanding Marketing ROI is to establish a solid process for MCE management. And a prerequisite for MCE management is a rigorous inventory of all spending throughout a firm's marketing network. This inventory exercise may well reveal funding that can be redirected to deliver better ROI and/or strategic impact. By getting their marketing house in order now, firms can be well-prepared for a growth market and several steps ahead of the competition.

Marketing Network News Top News: What is the Work of Marketing?

Mention the word marketing in some firms, and the conversation today often revolves around marketing communications, brand management, or social media. While these are all important elements of a marketing plan, they only address part of the vital role marketing must play. To understand and manage the complete scope of the marketing function, one has to consider the comprehensive set of processes and knowledge that connect an initial product concept or idea all the way through the value chain to customer delivery and satisfaction. With this end-to-end view in mind, what is a tangible way to think about the day-to-day work of marketing?

MarketFrames has developed a model that we simply call the "4-Box". This graphic illustrates at a very high level the scope of work and therefore, the potential impact of marketing. It reflects the four major areas of business value that marketing must lead in a world-class, customer-centric organization:

- 1) platform management - define and leverage core capabilities
- 2) product management - deliver winning products and services



- 3) customer management - develop and leverage marketing assets
- 4) market management - drive market velocity and demand

By identifying these key dimensions of marketing, the 4-Box helps marketing leaders and organizations coordinate and resource the essential work of marketing. When combined with a drill-down view of the roles, responsibilities and deliverables for each area (part of our Marketing Network Architecture), it provides a functional “blueprint” of design for marketing effectiveness and efficiency.

Other key concepts represented in the 4-Box include:

- Knowledge Bases - the information backbone that powers the marketing network
- Technologies and capabilities are transformed into winning products and services (left-to-right)
- Business strategies are transformed into actionable plans (top-to-bottom)

The 4-Box is our starting point for real discussion about the work of marketing. Future editions of The Marketing Network News will explore each of the 4-Boxes in further detail.

Learning Example: Developing a Go-to-Market Channel Platform

MarketFrames Group recently worked with a global technology firm to drive the development of a go-to-market platform for their channel business in a relatively new target market segment. Prior channel partner investments had been launched and communicated ad-hoc by various organizations within division, group, and region marketing teams. This was proving to be highly inefficient and ineffective for the channel account management and sales teams who were losing ground to their primary competitor.

A MarketFrames team began by interviewing stakeholders from across marketing and sales within each global region to understand and assess current programs, resources, and unmet needs. An exhaustive inventory of current channel programs was documented, revealing the breadth of investments that were being made, some with marginal field sales support and/or partner awareness or value. Based on insights gained through the interview process, a channel partner value proposition framework was developed, which defined the differentiating combination of channel partner benefits that the company would consistently deliver. With this framework in place, a messaging plan was developed, which was then turned over to the client channel marketing teams and their creative agency to develop into partner-ready launch and presentation materials.

MarketFrames wrapped up the client work by providing a set of actionable recommendations for both near-term tactical and longer term strategic optimization. These included changes to focus and improve the effectiveness and partner utilization of their programs and resources, improvement opportunities in their partner engagement processes, as well as the sustainable management and continuous improvement processes required to ensure ongoing effectiveness and ROI.

MarketFrames
helps clients
achieve profitable
growth through
efficient and
effective marketing.