



OUR MANIFESTO FOR MARKETING

A new and improved formula for the next decade

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INTRODUCTION

Marketing has contributed to making our society vibrant, democratic and innovative.

The ideas behind marketing have contributed to the wealth and diversity of society on a grand scale. Marketing is about seeing the world from the customer's perspective, not through the eyes of the producer. This recipient's-eye view is the source of the value marketing adds, and it has led to benefits of different kinds:

- Marketing means thinking about what we need and want as people with problems to solve, dreams to fulfil, personalities to express. For example Ariel and being clean, BMW and what I stand for, Burberry and how I look.
- It means finding better answers to these needs than the alternatives, sometimes in innovative ways that are new and unforeseen. For example Pret and reinventing the sandwich shop, ASOS and selling fashion you can't touch or try on, Apple and seeing beauty in technology.
- It means understanding and expressing the customer value at the heart of what's being offered to them, sometimes recognising that the same essential product or service has a different value to different groups of people. For example Dove and real beauty, John Lewis and making quality accessible and warm, O2 and being bold, cool and inclusive.
- It means bringing this value to life in ways that get noticed, remembered and talked about. For example Adidas and originality, Virgin Atlantic and the glamour of flying, and First Direct and service that customers really do recommend to their friends.

But we need to change if marketing is going continue to contribute so powerfully in future.

Business and the role of organisations in society need to change in ways that marketing can help resolve:

- Trust in organisations and the people leading them keeps on falling.
- The digital age means organisations are increasingly transparent, whether or not they want to be.

- The current approach to consumption and growth is not sustainable.
- There are doubts about who organisations, and business in particular, are really for as senior executive remuneration and the primacy of shareholder return are challenged as ideas, and customers become more questioning of what they see and hear.

Organisations need to go back to serving their customers well in ways that are clear for all to see. That is their purpose. That is what the idea of marketing is all about.

Marketing needs to get itself in shape to play the strongest possible role:

- The definition of marketing can confuse even within our own ranks. Do we build brands and manage communications, spending well, or do we help entire organisations respond to customers' needs and compete in the marketplace?
- We have reputational issues in the boardroom. We need to earn respect in order to seriously champion the cause of the customer around the organisation.
- We face questions about our values, and often face dilemmas between short and long term objectives, selling versus helping customers buy what they need, honesty and transparency against what people want to hear, becoming accountable in ways other disciplines treat as normal. We need to stand up for customers' long term interests more effectively.
- Marketing is often carried out very effectively by people in other disciplines – digital, technology, sales. Some brilliant marketing companies don't have marketing functions – Apple, Dyson, Amazon, even P&G. We need to embrace this, to celebrate great marketing whoever carries it out. As long as the idea of marketing is respected, marketing functions will be respected too.

The Marketing Society, as the leader of the marketing profession in the UK, and thereby a thought leader for marketing globally, needs to rise to these challenges:

- The role marketing should play in business and society.
- The way we play this role so that we earn the respect to contribute further from our colleagues in other disciplines.
- Providing useful and effective support to our members, to the wider marketing community and to interested parties whoever they may be, so that we make real change happen in the directions required.

Our new Manifesto for Marketing starts with our definition of marketing:

“TO CREATE SUSTAINABLE GROWTH BY UNDERSTANDING, ANTICIPATING AND SATISFYING CUSTOMER NEED”

- This applies to all organisations using marketing, whether it is in business, in the public sector or in the third sector.
- Sustainable growth is a powerful idea that – importantly – implies that the growth is profitable if it is in a business, and that it reflects the broader needs of society and other stakeholders so that it can be sustained for the long run wherever it applies.
- In non-commercial organisations, growth can be defined as increasing the extent to which that organisation achieves its stated purpose.
- Our definition of marketing also means being sustainable in its narrower modern sense, in balance with society and the environment. Sustainable, as we have used it, means that the marketing activity by the business is capable of being sustained over the long term because it is making a profit, in a way that is not harmful to society or the environment.
- Understanding, anticipating and satisfying customers is ultimately the work of the entire organisation.
- But marketing is the discipline that turns multiple sources of information on the market, from and about customers into a definition of what will be valued and competitive in the market...
- ...and then mobilises the organisation’s response in ways that create long term value for all involved, including customers, the business and society.

THE THREE CHALLENGES

We challenge marketers to do three things in order to become bolder leaders:

1 Pursue your purpose

- 1.1 Define your organisation's purpose
- 1.2 Make sustainable growth your central aim
- 1.3 Leave a positive legacy

2 Champion customers

- 2.1 Anticipate customer needs
- 2.2 Shape the customer experience
- 2.3 Find creative ways to engage

3 Mobilise the organisation

- 3.1 Collaborate with your peers
- 3.2 Bring the voice of the customer into the boardroom
- 3.3 Quantify the cost and value of your work

1

PURSUE YOUR PURPOSE

1.1 Define your organisation's purpose

The organisation's purpose should be central, and the brand a means to that end for the business. In many cases the organisation and the brand are the same thing, but in others the customer-facing brands are separated. This area needs to be owned by the whole management team, but in most multi-brand organisations there is an organisational purpose and then a brand mission, which relate.

1.2 Make sustainable growth your central aim

This area is central to the purpose of marketing, but it is not always seen as the starting point for what marketing has to achieve. It needs to be, and marketing of all roles in a business, is best placed to make a strong contribution to this cause. Sometimes the role of marketing people will be to support this indirectly rather than directly. For example in a portfolio business, managing cash cows means creating profit to fund innovation to fuel growth. In other situations a specific brand may sell little but drive image powerfully and have a halo impact on the rest of the business, so it grows more profitably and sustainably as a result.

1.3 Leave a positive legacy

Keep one foot in the future and one foot in the past. Be the guardian of this chapter of the brand and business with an eye on the future and cognisant of the brand's past, history, heritage and value. We need to be the Prince of Wales (a long term guardian) not a sitting MP (a short term concern only), no matter how long we work on a brand. The future view takes in thinking about trends including key long term trends such as consumers increasing interest in sustainability and the growth of digital media.

Studying the best current thinking on sustainability reminds us that resources are finite, increasingly scarce and so costs will rise. This is a business point rather than a 'being nice' point and is how Plan A has succeeded, and how Unilever is framing its plans too. Taking sustainability seriously is 'enlightened self-interest' not un-commercial idealism.

The marketer's job is translating society's need for sustainability into winning solutions for customers and the business.

2 CHAMPION CUSTOMERS

2.1 Anticipate customer needs

Understanding customers spoken and unspoken needs are central to strong, successful marketing, and it is also useful to bring a wider outside-in view of the world into the organisation. This means understanding who customers are, what they want and need, what competitors and alternatives offer in relation to these wants and needs, and seeing the opportunities and threats that emerge as a consequence. Championing the customer means reminding people across the organisation that the customer is the only source of revenue, and protecting and growing this requires the business to think about the customer in this context, not just about what the business supplies. Championing is active, so this means more than just being a voice – it means doing what it takes to understand fully what value means to customers, and making sure people don't forget this when the thinking gets too centred on a narrow view of financial targets.

2.2 Shape the customer experience

Marketing leadership needs to see the job of enhancing the customer experience as a constant concern. A great customer experience is at the heart of successful business like Amazon or Apple. The term is often used in the context of digital communications, but an increasing number of big businesses are creating customer experience strategies and teams, sometimes within marketing, sometimes positioned elsewhere. There are a number of benefits to embracing customer experience as a central part of marketing in the future. It ensures we think end-to-end not just about advertising, it requires creativity and innovation, and it provides guidance to marketing professionals about where there may be opportunities to satisfy customer needs better.

2.3 Find creative ways to engage

This challenge is about embracing new technology and the role it plays in changing customer and wider communications, bringing new sources of data and insight, and making organisations more transparent. It is also about the core creativity that marketers use to connect with customers, earning their attention and engagement in fresh ways. There are other 'connection' challenges for marketing too. With trust in organisations and in marketing falling, we have a challenge to build a reputation for telling the truth in ways that will be understood by anyone we deal with, inside or outside the company. At times this may be uncomfortable, but we need to support each other because in the long run, it's the way to protect the value of a big part of what we do.

3

MOBILISE THE ORGANISATION

3.1 Collaborate with your peers

This means, being motivated to do what it takes for the business as a whole to succeed, measured ultimately by its profitability or success against its wider purpose.

It means taking a company-wide not just marketing-centred view of priorities and decisions, so we need to be able to engage in trade-off discussions where it may be better to choose to do less in marketing and more in another part of the organisation.

It means having a broad sense of practicality and respect for getting things done in big complicated organisations.

Marketing can bring to life for colleagues what's going on in the marketplace, with customers, competitors and alternatives now and in the future, and this is useful in helping the whole team succeed. The responses to these external inputs at the highest level can best be arrived at together, across functions, before function-specific initiatives are devised. Marketers must demonstrate the skill of listening – not only to customers – but to their colleagues.

It also means giving credit to colleagues in other disciplines rather than claiming all the credit. As Ronald Reagan and many others have said, 'There is no limit to what can be achieved in politics if you are prepared to give the credit to someone else'.

3.2 Bring the voice of the customer into the boardroom

This means using everyday language that everyone understands. For example describing consumers as people (less exploitative and more personal), not talking about brand essence and brand architecture in an abstract sense or as ends in their own right. We need to talk about customers, reputation, products and services, keeping it real and tangible. Marketers with the greatest impact and effectiveness do not use marketing specialist language they communicate clearly in plain English. They also invest time in selling and marketing their ideas and insights to the wider business team.

3.3 Quantify the cost and value of your work

Create measures the whole management team can understand and use in everyday discussion. We need to show how marketing adds value clearly, and in ways that are broad-based not simplistic, for example through unrealistic sales increase expectations that ignore competitive activity.

Many measures that are viewed as marketing metrics are a product of the whole organisation's work, and we need to recognise this too. These include important measures of the customer's view of the business such as business reputation, customer satisfaction and willingness to recommend.

The senior team needs to agree how cause and effect works in this market and for this organisation, from high level awareness, image and reputation through more specific customer measures into long terms sales and profitability.

With a common view around cause and effect, it is much easier for the team to agree how to steer activity, including marketing, to achieve short and longer term goals.

THE MARKETING SOCIETY'S MANIFESTO FOR MARKETING

Our definition of marketing:

**"TO CREATE SUSTAINABLE GROWTH BY
UNDERSTANDING, ANTICIPATING AND
SATISFYING CUSTOMER NEED"**

We challenge marketers to:

**PURSUE YOUR
PURPOSE**

Define your
organisation's
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Make sustainable
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Leave a
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**CHAMPION
CUSTOMERS**

Anticipate
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Shape the
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**MOBILISE THE
ORGANISATION**

Collaborate
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Bring the voice of
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Quantify the
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BECOME A BOLDER MARKETING LEADER

SEE HOW YOU COMPARE

The Manifesto offers all marketers a new framework for achieving excellence and an opportunity to assess how you rate your marketing against other members of the Society.

Our friends at BrainJuicer, a leading independent market research agency, have devised an easy-to-answer questionnaire, which will only take a few minutes of your time, and at the end you will be able to see how your results compare with the views of other senior marketing professionals.

Please be assured that this survey is hosted and administered by BrainJuicer, with all of your answers collected anonymously and reported back at an aggregate level.

We would also be interested in collecting the ratings of other marketers, even if they are not currently members of the Society. Please do feel free to forward this link on to any of your marketing colleagues who you feel may be interested in taking part.

To participate please visit marsoc.co/Manifesto4Marketing



BrainJuicer turns human understanding into business advantage by applying the latest developments in psychology, behavioural economics, and the social sciences to help clients understand and predict consumer behaviour. The company provides consumer-driven insight and testing to many of the world's largest buyers of market research and other marquee clients in FMCG, food and beverage, retail, financial services, electronics, health and beauty, and entertainment. BrainJuicer specialises in helping clients with their innovation programmes, generating and evaluating ideas, insights, concepts, communications and behaviour design. BrainJuicer's innovative approach has led to many clients and commentators recognising them as a true thought leader and change agent.



The Marketing Society is a not for profit organisation owned by its members. It was founded over 50 years ago to provide a forum for senior marketers to exchange ideas and share best practice.

The Society challenges its members to be bolder marketing leaders by supporting the development of leading-edge thinking, and seeking out and promoting the evidence of effective marketing.

For more information please call **020 8973 1700** or visit **www.marketingsociety.co.uk**



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