



MARKETING STAR



Kevin Clancy: Author and Chairman of Copernicus Marketing Consulting

[By Anique Gonzalez]

“A lot of people go into marketing thinking that marketing is some kind of art form, that developing a great marketing program is like writing a play or creating a painting. And just as most paintings aren’t any good, and most plays that are written aren’t any good, and most movies that are produced aren’t any good, most marketing programs aren’t any good. So we need to do something different,” Kevin Clancy proclaimed. That something different can be directly tied to research-based marketing.

Clancy, co-founder, CEO, and Chairman of Copernicus Marketing Consulting and co-author of *Your Gut is Still Not Smarter Than Your Head: How Disciplined, Fact-Based Marketing Can Drive Extraordinary Growth and Profits*, believes that one of the biggest issues facing corporations today is their persistence to rely on intuition alone when making vital marketing decisions. Decisions that are the lifeline to a company’s success but that are often made with little or no scientific background.

Clancy explained that the goal of his book is not to dismiss intuition entirely, but to address the benefits that can be gained by utilizing research as well. “We [Clancy and co-author Peter Krieg] don’t reject the use of intuition, of judgment, of creativity, of experience, but we argue that they need to be balanced with rigorous analysis of unimpeachable data.” Using data to make marketing decisions, Clancy argued, will increase the profitability of companies and lead to true growth. As an example of the current ineffectiveness of marketing he offered this statistic, “The largest study ever published on the ROI [Return on Investment] of today’s advertising was in the *Harvard Business Review* two summers ago and the study revealed that the average ROI of

consumer product advertising is negative 45%. For every \$100,000 you invest, you get \$55,000 back.”

When considering this fact, it is astonishing that companies continue to make critical decisions, including choosing target markets and positioning brands, without employing

Q: What was the last thing you ate?

A: A Danish for breakfast this morning with a cup of coffee. I didn’t have time for a real breakfast because my commute to my office from Gloucester, MA, where I live is now more than two hours per day in the morning and I had a 9:00 am meeting.

Q: What is the movie that you have watched the most?

A: Going back over the years I would say that the two movies I have watched the most are *The Wizard of Oz* and the first *Indiana Jones* movie. My kids have forced me into watching those movies over and over again. And I loved them the first time I saw them, and I love them every time I watch them.

Q: What was the last book you read?

A: I just finished Anita Shreve’s book *Body Surfing*.

Q: What is your favorite flavor of ice cream?

A: Vanilla, with strawberry a close second.

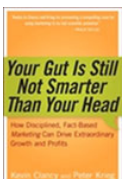
Q: If you had an extra hour in the day, what would you spend it doing?

A: Reading. I love to read.

some type of sound research to support them. Clancy elaborated on why this is dangerous, “Gut decisions don’t pan out well for variety of reasons, one of them is that at any given time with any marketing decision there are hundreds, there are thousands, there are tens of thousands of alternative choices that can be made. And picking those decisions out of a hat based on your intuition is, from a probabilistic standpoint alone, highly unlikely to lead to success.”

It is no wonder that Clancy is a proponent of research based marketing. He received his Ph.D. from New York University in Social Psychology with a specialization in Survey Research Methods and Statistics. For Clancy, employing research is not only the cornerstone of his educational background, from his viewpoint it is the only way companies will be able to successfully develop and implement transformational marketing programs. By transformational strategies, Clancy refers to strategies that change brand trajectories, and in certain instances may even change career paths, entire companies, and industries.

And this is a belief that Clancy applies to every aspect of his work. In addition to preaching the gospel of research marketing through his books, he also co-founded a marketing consulting firm based on it as well. The name of the firm itself, Copernicus, underlies the importance of science. The name comes from the 16th





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century astronomer and mathematician Nicholas Copernicus who fired the first shot in the scientific revolution by publishing his magnum opus in which he was able to prove that Earth is not the center of our universe. "Some people say, 'Oh my god Copernicus was a genius, what wonderful intuition.' And he was a genius, and he had great intuition, but at the same time he took 1,000 years of astronomical data and analyzed it with mathematical methods in order to advance this paradigm shifting perspective. And that's what I would like to see more people do in marketing," Clancy said.

If companies finally decide to use research to make crucial decisions they will be the ones who benefit, reaping the advantages of high returns and growth. If, on the other hand, they choose to continue down their current path they will have difficulty making a significant impact on the market. Clancy concluded, "If you're not practicing scientific marketing, the only way you're going to be successful is with luck or prayers; a combination of the two might be a really good thing."

ON THE NET

Copernicus Marketing Consulting
www.copernicusmarketing.com

Your Gut is Still Not Smarter Than Your Head: How Disciplined, Fact-Based Marketing Can Drive Extraordinary Growth and Profits
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