



MARKETING FEATURE



Action Strategies of an Effective Marketing Manager

[By Surajit Sen Sharma]

Hallmarks of an Effective Marketing Manager

Norton Paley, in *The Manager's Guide to Competitive Marketing Strategies*, presents some principal factors that define the effectiveness of a marketing manager. They are relevant to anyone in a marketing job and include:

- the plane of customer relationships the marketer has cultured
- the success with which the marketer's new products and services meet the needs of targeted market segments
- the marketer's commitment to competitive intelligence, which is the base of successful competitive strategy
- the marketer's awareness of demographic changes and shifts in consumer buying patterns
- the position of the marketer's company or product line in the product life cycle
- the marketer's responsiveness to emerging, neglected, and poorly served markets
- the marketer's responsiveness to supply-chain logistics and issues
- the marketer's responsiveness to the Internet, new technological changes, and globalization

According to Paley, the ability to take into account these issues consciously is the hallmark of a skilled manager.

What is Marketing Strategy?

Paley defines marketing strategy as "the art of coordinating the means (money, human resources, and materials) to achieve the ends (profit, customer satisfaction, and company growth) as defined by company policy and objectives." Marketing strategy is divided into three levels as follows:

- **Higher-level STRATEGY:** At this level, the marketing manager's aim is to organize and commit company resources to fulfilling the company's vision for the future, along with its long-term objectives. This level focuses on the objectives of:
 1. understanding changing market conditions
 2. future development
 3. profitable growth
- **Mid-level STRATEGY:** At this level, the marketer focuses within the business organization or the product line with the aim of achieving quantitative and non-quantitative objectives. This level concerns itself with the objectives of:
 1. breaking into existing markets with existing products

2. going into new markets with existing products
3. developing new products for existing markets
4. developing new products for new markets to achieve continued growth

- **Lower-level STRATEGY:** At this level, the marketer deals with objectives for shorter periods of time and tries to correlate marketing with the company's business plan and budgets. At this level, the marketer focuses on immediate issues like:
 1. pricing and discounts
 2. advertising media and copy themes
 3. sales-force deployment
 4. selling aids
 5. distributor selection and training
 6. product packaging
 7. pre- and post-sale services
 8. selection of market segments to target



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Action Strategies for Successful Marketing

The action strategies followed by an effective manager to develop a successful marketing plan include the following:

1. **STRATEGY:** Choose a competitive edge that superior competitors cannot execute efficiently.
ACTION: Utilize market research, formal and informal, to spot potential for segregation.
2. **STRATEGY:** Commit to quality and service as an organizational priority.
ACTION: Encourage workers to strive for quality at all levels. Do not limit yourself to one-time motivational talks, but train with the goal of sustaining complete dedication.
3. **STRATEGY:** Focus on specialty products that command first-rate prices; leave the commodity price segment to others—unless you are the low-cost leader.
ACTION: Practice segmenting your market(s) for precise product and service applications. Get nearer to your consumers and their problems.
4. **STRATEGY:** Create long-term associations with clientele to grow with them and to build product relationships.
ACTION: Promote confidence in

customers and suppliers so that sensitive information can be shared to serve mutual interests.

5. **STRATEGY:** Maintain a market-driven track within your immediate group and throughout your organization to maintain a competitive edge.
ACTION: Organize a strategy team made up of personnel who perform various functions. Then, have the team build a strategic marketing plan to respond rapidly to market opportunities.
6. **STRATEGY:** Seek global opportunities that complement long-term objectives.
ACTION: Make active use of the Internet. Investigate joint ventures, licensing, or exporting opportunities to develop a worldwide presence.
7. **STRATEGY:** Partner salespeople with consumers to provide product solutions to demand problems.
ACTION: Go beyond traditional forms of sales training. Instead, teach salespeople how to think like strategists so they can help their clientele achieve a competitive advantage.
8. **STRATEGY:** Identify market niches that are budding, ignored, or poorly served.

ACTION: Reassess how you segment your markets. Search for additional approaches beyond the usual criteria of customer size, regularity of purchase, and geographic setting. Look for potential niches related to just-in-time delivery, product performance and reliability, applications, quality, or technical assistance.

Simply sticking to these principles can make you one of the best marketers. If you are already on the right track, you can always use this list as a reference.

Reference

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