

Welcome to Top Mark Marketing Professional

This course is intended for those who have little or no experience of the subject matter, either starting up a business, or having worked for a while without having to deal with Marketing.

To help you to understand the reasons for marketing techniques, as well as their practical applications, you will come across a number of challenging questions, and unit assessments. By the time you have completed the course, you'll also have drafted a plan on how to successfully market one of your products or services.

The principles have been illustrated with as many examples as possible. You'll find them highlighted. In the Assessments you have the opportunity to test how the principles work in practice, to apply what you've learnt in a down-to-earth way.

Objectives

In the sequence of six units you are going to cover the following topics:

- What marketing is, and what it isn't
- Why planning pays
- Why you always need new business ideas
- How to win business from your competition
- How to add value without adding cost
- What makes marketing to the general public different
- How you can measure effectiveness
- How to ring up more profits
- Why some customers are more profitable than others
- When you need to love your customers

Experience has shown that the workbook will take about 14 hours to complete. Don't be concerned if it takes you longer than this average time.



Unit 1 What is Marketing?

Question 1

Time guide: 5 min.

Please write down the most appropriate definition of marketing you have heard so far.

The Chartered Institute of Marketing defines it as “the management process of anticipating, identifying, and satisfying customer requirements profitably”.

Like all management functions, marketing includes a number of specific skills.

You can make this course more practical if you think of a real business or organisation, and use that as the context of your exercise.

Management process

Planning

Planning is one of the most important skills.

Question 2

Time guide: 3 min.

What effect do you think planning has on your attitude towards changes?

Your answer probably is that it helps you to adapt to changes because you know clearly where you are going. Besides adapting to the changes, planning also means anticipating the changes. If you plan your marketing you are pro-active, rather than reactive. Planning also means that you can make it work together so that the total equals the sum of the parts.



If you write down what you plan to do for a year, you can develop an Action Plan, month by month, so that you can set objectives according to priority. You will be able to prepare an outline-marketing plan by the end of this course.

Newspapers and magazines frequently phone companies asking for support advertising. Depending on the call, many companies agree. The amount which they allocate to preparing an advertisement, booking the space, and considering the medium as part of its marketing approach, is often wasted, because it is not part of the regular marketing plan.

It is also worthwhile setting aside resources for contingencies which arise during the year.

Budgeting

If you budget your marketing, you can make sure that it all works together, that the target audience is carefully defined and you know how much it is going to cost to reach them. Budgeting should include time, finance, people and equipment (if required).

Directing

This includes liaising with people who are working with you, depending on the organisation. By briefing the specialists, clearly and consistently (designers, copywriters, researchers, advertising agencies, PR agencies, as well as peers and staff), better results can be achieved first time.

This is a typical marketing brief for a brochure. It can also be adapted for other work.

Marketing Brief for a brochure

Title

Objective: (What is it meant to do?)

Target audience: (Who is it aimed at?)

Outcome: (What do you expect to see as a result of this brief?)

Method of distribution: (How will it be given out?)

Main message: (What is the main benefit you want to say?)

Subsidiary messages: (What other benefits do you want to emphasise?)

Tone/Style: (Is it technical, consumer, professional, friendly, serious, fashionable, complex, simple?)

Budget: (What budget have you allocated?)

Timescale: (What deadlines will you meet?)

Further information: (e.g. brochures, web-sites, competitor material)

Enquiries to: (Name and phone number/e-mail of authorised contact).



Controlling

In addition to directing the work which is required, it is necessary to control it, by stating and ensuring compliance with budgets, timescales, and creative direction.

Reviewing

This is an important part of marketing management too, because you have to establish what has worked and what hasn't, what has cost more and what has cost less, was it all co-ordinated, and how can we do it better another time.

Who are your markets? What are they going to want next?

Anticipate customer requirements

- **Research**

Time spent in reconnaissance is never wasted. Companies that take marketing seriously carry out regular research, to find out who their customers are, and what they want. They also research their position in the market place, understand how new technology can help them, check customer satisfaction levels, and run product development and test-marketing programmes.

What is Market Research and why is it important?

- Market Research can be defined as:

“the systematic collection, analysis and interpretation of information relevant to marketing decisions”

- In almost all walks of life, you can only make the right decisions if you have sufficient information on which to base your decision. For example before crossing a road I will look left and right to make sure there are no cars coming - I then have enough information to know I will cross safely. In business you will want to know that when you are investing money, you will be making the right decision, so it is likely that you will investigate the likely effects of your decision; you will gather information.

