

The “Before and After” Marketing Model

The setting up of a marketing campaign requires process so that the variety of players are all able to see the whole picture even while they play their respective parts. A little over a year ago Tudog introduced CIMS - Comprehensive Integrated Marketing System, which provides companies with the means of approaching their marketing efforts in an integrated manner, involving all aspects of the company's operations.

Recently Tudog has been busy cultivating the lessons we have learned through working with more than 55 companies over the past 24 months. These lessons have allowed us to formulate additional processes, which when combined with CIMS, allow companies to execute effective and penetrating marketing programs.

This month I'd like to present our "Before and After" model, saving our "Inside & Outside" model for next month's newsletter. Taken together, they provide an in-depth review of how companies can create the marketing apparatus they need to sell more products to more customers for more profits. And, after all, that's what it's all about.

The Model

The Before and After model breaks down the actions and activities that need to be implemented both prior to and after the implementation of the marketing campaign. It is important to remember that marketing plans, when executed, become living, breathing beasts that need attention even after they are launched on the targeted audiences they are meant to sweep of their collective feet. The Tudog model provides the processes needed to insure the plan is kept relevant, compelling and effective.

Before Implementation

The Tudog model has four steps in its pre-implementation phase:

- Setting Objectives
- Formulating Strategy & Message
- Defining Tactics
- Creating Tools

Let's look at each component on its own:

Setting Objectives

The setting of objectives needs to be drilled down and specific. "Increasing Sales" is not a marketing objective that provides direction and a strong foundation. "Penetrating the Fiber Optic Market" is a viable and constructive objective. In other words, the objectives need to be defined, based on market research, and supported by indications that the market is appropriate for the company and its products.

Formulating Strategy & Message

A viable strategy needs to be formulated, again drawing on research that indicates how the targeted industry operates and what avenues are available. The strategies should be well defined and specify clearly identified strategies such as direct sale, OEM, strategic partnership, distributors, and others. The tactics then support these strategies. It is at this stage that the company's unified message must also be developed. Also based on research, and allowing for what the industry is indicating it needs and wants, the company's message is uniformly implemented throughout the entire organization so that every customer interaction with the firm provides the same reinforcement of the company's image.

Defining Tactics

If the objectives are the "goals", and the strategy is the "what", the tactics are the "how to" of the marketing plan. The tactics provide the ways and means of the strategy, whether it is through exposure tactics, networking tactics or others. The tactics are the implementation blueprint for the marketing plan.

Creating Tools

A comprehensive marketing plan requires tools that reinforce the unified message, position the company and speak directly to the targeted market's needs and wants. These tools include classic branding elements like logo and tagline, market communications materials, all external communications, and equally as important (and all too often overlooked), all internal communications. You are not saving money using stationary with the old logo for internal use. You are breaking down the effectiveness of your overall branding campaign, and it is a silly thing to do. Create the new materials and throw the old ones away. Allow your tools to do their job, which is completely and totally support your new marketing campaign.

After Implementation

The Tudog model has four steps in its post-implementation phase:

- Monitoring Performance
- Evaluation of Results
- Analysis of Market
- Adjustment of the Plan

Let's look at each component on its own:

Monitoring Performance

The wisdom of your plan and the brilliance of your execution notwithstanding, you need to imbed measurement factors in your plan so you can monitor performance and make sure you are getting all you can out of your plan. Remember; while sales are the overall, broad goal, what you really want is to maximize your potential - that is, sell as much as you can. In order to create this subtle but powerful distinction (higher sales versus maximization of potential) you need to know how your plan is doing. So, once implementation is launched, begin monitoring. Immediately.

Evaluation of Results

We intentionally separate out the monitoring of the program with the evaluation of the results because we believe that in order for them to be done without any bias (intended or by default) the two functions need to be performed individually. The evaluation of results needs to be performed as a backdrop to the market, making an effort to determine target reactions, overall plan viability and specific weak spots in the program. This is a drill down analysis of the plan's performance, based on data provided by the monitoring mechanisms.

Analysis of Market

Once the plan performance is understood through a rigorous process of evaluation, the market needs to be re-evaluated as well, so that the company can understand which assumptions made during the initial planning period have proven to be erroneous. This is a critical phase in the process and needs to be supported by management so that those involved are free and comfortable in accepting error. All too often minor mistakes in marketing plans are overlooked due to internal corporate politics and other factors having little to do with supporting the pursuit of the maximization of results. This phase of the process means going back to the drawing board and seeing what needs to be tweaked and what needs to be changed.

Adjustment of the Plan

On the basis of the new analysis, and with the wisdom drawn from the evaluation of the current plan's performance, the plan needs adjusting. The adjustments might include elements of the company's message, some strategic foundations, the changing of tactics (adding new ones, eliminating or changing existing ones), and even the inclusion of new monitoring sensors.

The post-implementation ("after") portion of this process is constant. The pre-implementation ("before") segment can be exercised on will, although it should be noted that such dramatic change in a marketing plan more or less indicates a complete new direction and most likely should be treated as such.

This model, a Tudog developed business process, is designed to help companies systematically approach the challenges of developing, implementing and maintaining a penetrating marketing plan that delivers maximum results.

This article has been an introduction to the model. As with all its models, Tudog best serves its clients by escorting them through the process.