The Marketing Disconnect

There are many companies puzzled by their inability to reach their revenue targets because they are unable to see that the systems of operations they have in place fail to fully support the marketing objectives they are seeking to obtain. The relationship the previous sentence places on revenue targets and marketing objectives was not accidental. The two are not only interchangeable, they are co-dependent. It is certain that there would be no revenue without marketing (and no need for marketing without the drive for revenue).

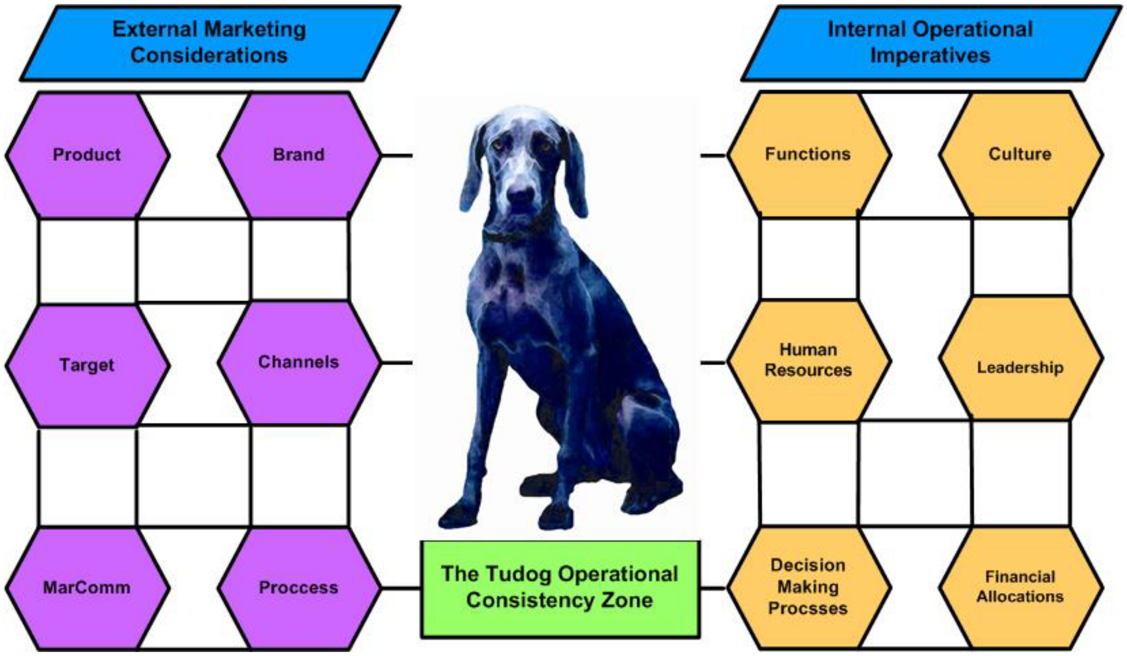
So what happens that prevents the revenue goals from being reached? Assuming that the goals were realistic and the failure to reach them was based solely on company performance, the reason is almost always what Tudog calls the Marketing Disconnect, the failure of every department in the organization to perform in a manner that most supports the marketing objectives.

The examples are numerous. The company's marketing department understands that the market is demanding faster product turnaround and seeks the support and cooperation of the logistics and shipping department to improve performance. Sometimes the improvements are impossible, which means the disconnect is not in logistics and shipping but in management or finance because they have not enabled the shipping and logistics to meet the market demand. Other times the logistics and shipping department is unresponsive because they do not see the marketing priorities as their own. This again, perhaps, is a fault of management for failing to emphasize that marketing priorities are the priorities of every department in the company, because it is through the activities of the marketing department that the company generates the revenues it uses to support all operations.

Yet this message gets lost. Companies become large and the "bigger" picture takes over. Departments become operations unto themselves, and their objectives and priorities reflect their narrow needs. The marketing objectives of the company become one more set of competing priorities, and not necessarily the one that takes priority over all others.

Another way of viewing the marketing disconnect is when the company fails to synchronize its external operations with its internal apparatus. This often manifests itself when the company fails to support a market claim or customer experience vow, leaving the marketing to appear inconsistent, inaccurate, or incompetent. An example might be the customer service pledge of a company, promising customer satisfaction. While this is a popular claim that works well with customers, the disconnect occurs when customers call and find that they are unable to get satisfaction. The reason for the disconnect might be that the company never set into place the mechanisms to fulfill its service pledge. Another reason might be a lack of clear policies for every scenario, or poor training. Whatever the excuse, from the customer's perspective the marketing vows were not honored and the credibility of the company is at risk.

Tudog often works with companies on bridging the marketing disconnect because it is one of the primary bottlenecks in the pursuit of increased revenues. The Tudog model for overcoming marketing disconnect is illustrated in the diagram below:



By coordinating the external activities of branding, targeting customers, the sale of product and others with the internal activities of financial allocations, decision making, functions, and others, a company can create the environment through which its marketing endeavors will be wholly supported by the company's operations. This will serve to create efficiencies, promote the company's reputation, earn customer respect and loyalty, and drive revenues.

The setting of company revenue objectives then becomes of function of what the market can deliver and not what the company can deliver. Without the disconnect, the only obstacles are natural barriers.