

THE MARKETING OPERATIONS MANAGER - SETTING THINGS RIGHT!

In a situation where so much is at stake with marketing, jeopardizing a single marketing initiative can result in serious repercussions on the profitability of a business. Marketing operations management is the new tool that most marketing-focused businesses are adopting to improve the performance and efficiency of their marketing departments and marketing initiatives. A marketing operations manager treats the marketing department like a business and works towards leveraging the department's systems and processes to consistently deliver excellent performance. He or she strives to create a marketing culture that streamlines existing marketing processes and creates new processes to reduce wastage and drive higher revenues. Below are six steps that a marketing operations manager should take to create marketing efficiencies and raise his or her own career to the next level: **1. Align Objectives with Execution** It is important to change your marketing communications as soon as your marketing objectives change. The potential reasons for a change in your objectives are numerous and could include a change in the competitive environment, new market trends, your company's market share objectives, and many other possibilities. A marketing operations manager should review the business objectives and fine-tune the marketing objectives accordingly in order to generate business efficiencies. **2. Create a Marketing Information Repository** Marketing success has a lot to do with the past successes and failures of a marketing program. Loss of any such information through employee turnover, destruction of data stored in hard drives, etc. can be very frustrating and result in a major loss of previous marketing investments made by the enterprise. A marketing operations manager should establish tools and forums to encourage knowledge-sharing between the team members that would enable the creation of an information repository. With such information kept readily available, more decisions will be based on real facts rather than on gut feelings, keeping the business on the right path and helping it to achieve its objectives. **3. Organize Marketing Assets** A business's marketing assets are scattered across geographies, agencies, and media as multiple teams, within and outside the organization, create and use them. As such, marketing departments often have a hard time getting their hands on these assets when they actually need to employ them in their marketing initiatives. They often expend significant amounts of money and effort just to get duplicate copies from external agencies, which often leads to ballooning budgets and costly delays. An efficient marketing operations manager should put together a repository that houses all the marketing assets of a business in one commonly accessible place. He or she should also ensure easy access to these assets for the relevant users so that they can be reused effortlessly and without losing time. **4. Experiment to Find the Right Marketing Program** With innumerable marketing channel options now available, restricting a company's marketing to only a few programs like advertising, trade shows, blogging, or direct mail campaigns could result in lost opportunities. A business's over-reliance on any one strategy may prove costly if that strategy doesn't click with the customer. Marketers need to constantly experiment with different media and programs in order to find the ones that attract customer interest most effectively. **5. Protect the Freedom to Experiment** Working with small budgets is never fun and takes away the freedom to experiment with new marketing programs. This may discourage the marketing team from thinking outside the box, and the marketing initiatives of the business may suffer as a result. A marketing operations manager should budget appropriately, define roles clearly, allocate work efficiently, etc., so that the team members are satisfied with their jobs. A comfortable budget and a good working environment provide leeway to try out new ideas and also keep the atmosphere in the department fresh and energetic. **6. Manage the Brand** It is important to understand that all marketing programs and their preparations cannot happen entirely in-house — the help of outside vendors and agencies is inevitably necessary at some point. Irrespective of its size, any business will find it difficult to manage printing jobs, put up stalls at trade shows, and make multimedia films all on its own. That said, when the business hires outside agencies, it is important to communicate the brand essence and brand strategy articulately to those external agencies to ensure consistent and accurate deployment of the brand. A marketing operations manager should ensure that the brand is treated in the same way by both marketing managers and external agencies so that a single, unified message is communicated by the business to its end customers.

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