

RESEARCH PROVIDES ROADMAP TO MARKETING ACHIEVEMENT

~ best practice model helps marketing directors to maximise their chances of success during the first 100 days in a job ~

New research commissioned by Oxford Strategic Marketing and Hunter-Miller shows that 62 per cent of marketing directors find the realities of a new job are very different to their initial descriptions and over 40 per cent think marketers often fail because CEOs have unrealistic expectations of them.

Senior Marketers from Cadbury Schweppes, Nokia, Unilever and Unisys were among the respondents from blue-chip companies participating in the '**First 100 Days**' research.

The research has distilled the insights of the UK's leading marketers and provides the do's and don'ts of how to be successful in the first 100 days of a new job.

A new web site, www.first100days.co.uk, has been built to promote the research findings and to provide marketers with a forum for debating the challenges of making a success of their 'first 100 days' in a new job.

"At a time when Marketing is searching to enhance awareness of its value, this authoritative new report shows that team building is essential, ego a handicap and strong relationships with the CEO and other directors a basic requirement for success," says Hugh Davidson, co-founder of Oxford Strategic Marketing and author of 'Offensive Marketing' and 'Even More Offensive Marketing'.

Commenting on *The First 100 Days* research, Jonathan Turner, Managing Consultant at Oxford Strategic Marketing said: "The best marketers quickly focus on the key issues, key people and critical outcomes. What they don't do is talk marketing jargon or make snap decisions about people and partners."

Lindsay Leslie-Miller, Managing Director at Hunter-Miller said: "The first few months of any new job are pressurised. But for marketing directors, the pressure to perform can be acute. The seeds of future success or failure are sown early and visibly in the first 100 days of a new job. This report should be a real help to those wanting to learn from the best on how to succeed."

The First 100 Days research identified eight critical success factors:

1. Hit the ground running

62 per cent of respondents agreed the realities of a new job can be different from the initial job description.

"Be consistent from day one. Don't take a honeymoon period." Andrew Mullins, News International.

First 100 Days action: Develop a pre-plan. Do your own mystery shopping. Assimilate historic research. Meet colleagues. Learn everything possible about the brand and its customers.

2. Suppress the marketing psyche

70 per cent believe marketers with an FMCG background find it hard outside of an FMCG environment and fail to adapt quickly.

“Don’t try and be too clever, ramming marketing theory down other people’s throats.” Chris Harris, Nokia.

First 100 Days action: Recognise that marketers may be psychologically different from other board directors. Establish your personal fit for the role before you start.

3. Resist the ‘Quick Wins Itch’

60 percent of respondents said that too many marketers pursue immediate change, rather than listening and learning.

“Three months of your activism is not going to save the company” Ian Ryder, Unisys.

First 100 Days action: Recognise the need to build a sustainable vision as well as fix problems. Consciously plan the balance of your efforts.

4. Build the role of the whole marketing function

78 per cent of marketing directors agreed that marketers could communicate customer objectives in a way the business could understand.

“It should not be ‘marketing’ director it should be ‘competition’ director.” Nick Fell, Cadbury Schweppes.

First 100 Days action: Assess the health and role of the marketing function as an early priority. Build a marketing function that’s fit for customer purpose.

5. Recruit internal allies

74 per cent agreed that a collaborative approach with the sales director was the single most important relationship.

“Take control of how internal people understand what you are doing.” Chris Thomas, Impaq Group.

First 100 Days action: Talk the language of commercial success that is understood by your new company.

6. Adapt your personal experience to the corporate culture

“You can’t carry a model around. You must focus on what the problem is.” Tim Seager, Scottish Courage.

First 100 Days action: Conduct rigorous business analysis to determine marketing requirement. Don’t make assumptions.

7. Build your front bench rapidly

70 per cent of respondents agreed getting the team right was the first priority for a new marketing director.

48 per cent of respondents said that focusing on the immediate team and team members was more important than organisational structure.

"Find your front bench quickly and then build the support on your backbenches. The quickest route to failure is not having the right resource." Andrew Blazye, Shell.

First 100 Days action: Assess your own capabilities as a leader and teacher in plugging the skills gaps you have identified.

8. Treat your advisors as partners

"Don't itch to change the ad agency. It's rare that the only source of the fault is there." Senior marketer at a leading FMCG company.

First 100 Days action: Make sure you lead and 'own' the strategy development. But get whatever help you need to get the job done.

Copies of the research will be available from www.first100days.co.uk at the end of January 2006.

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Notes to Editors:

Oxford Strategic Marketing

Since 1987, Oxford Strategic Marketing has been at the forefront of strategic marketing consultancy. The company boasts one of the greatest concentrations of strategic marketing experience, and is now the largest customer focussed strategic consultancy in the UK. Oxford Strategic Marketing is unique in enabling CEOs and their boards to translate corporate strategy into customer focussed initiatives and campaigns, and in recognising that in successful companies – everyone needs to be a marketer to deliver effectively for the customer. The company works across a range of industries including FMCG/consumer products, retail, financial services, leisure, pharmaceuticals, consumer services and business to business. For information visit: www.oxfordsm.com

Hunter-Miller

Hunter-Miller specialises in Executive Search aimed at identifying and appointing the highest calibre individuals within consumer facing organisations. Hunter-Miller provides outstanding individuals to support its clients strategic commercial marketing challenges. The company's aim is to raise the bar in terms of both expectation and delivery of Executive Search. Hunter-Miller's expertise lies in building the best marketing, sales and buying functions within the FMCG, financial services, telecoms and retail sectors.

Research Methodology

Qualitative interviews were conducted by 'Model Reasoning' in November 2005 with 25 senior marketers (Marketing Directors and General Managers) of organisations including:

The Advertising Association, The Number 118118, Allied Domecq, Asda, Ashurst, Bacardi, BSkyB, Cadbury Schweppes, Ernst & Young, GSK, HSBC, Impaq Group, ITV, Mars, MDS, News International, Nokia, Philips, Royal Bank of Scotland, SAB Miller, Scottish Courage, Shell, The Link, Vodafone, Unilever, Unisys.

Quantitative research was conducted by ICM who a random sample of 50 marketing Directors in companies with 1000 plus employees by telephone between 24 November and 8 December 2005. ICM is a member of the British Polling Council and abides by its rules. Further information at www.icmresearch.co.uk