
Build a Positive Brand Experience from the Bottom Up

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Build a Positive Brand Experience from the Bottom Up

RETHINK HOW YOU BUILD YOUR MARKETING STRATEGY TO
ENGAGE AND EXCITE CUSTOMERS AND SALES CHANNELS.

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Executive Summary

Manufacturing companies that rely on sales channels to promote and sell their products and services have a unique advantage in creating an authentic, compelling consumer experience: those on-the-ground sales teams.

This white paper addresses three key opportunities that can help manufacturing companies, and marketers, build a brand experience from the bottom up that empowers sales channels and inspires consumers.

About the Author

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As Vya's Marketing Director, Martha France is responsible for our marketing communications strategy including content marketing, digital marketing, traditional marketing and social media. She relies heavily on Vya's systems, solutions and print products to execute her marketing initiatives. A marketing professional for over 10 years, her prior experience as an engineer has served her well as marketing has become more technology-oriented.

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“ A BRAND IS
WHATEVER A
CONSUMER
THINKS IT IS. ”

INTRODUCTION: Manufacturing

Today, marketing is all about the consumers. It's about creating a consistent, compelling brand experience across every channel a consumer touches – in-store, online and in-person. A brand is no longer a cumulative effect of its products, services, features, benefits or offerings. A brand is whatever a consumer thinks it is.

In an article for the American Marketing Association, Gordon Wyner writes, “...Daily interactions are less about moving the market closer to the single ideal brand and more about constructing, and holding together, a portfolio of customers with different relationships to the brand.”

That means marketers have to work smarter, not necessarily harder, to connect with consumers. They need to understand what consumers want, what their interests are, where they go – online and off, and know the products and features most important to them.

It starts with a bottom up approach to marketing strategy. Engaging sales channels and partners early in the process, providing opportunities for them to share insight, and listen closely to the input of their customers, goes a long way to creating a compelling brand experience for your consumers.

Here are three ways to make this bottom up branding approach a reality in your organization (without adding to an already long to-do list).

1. Build a brand experience for third party sales channels.
2. Deliver consistent and compelling brand drivers for consumers.
3. Streamline internal marketing tasks and processes where possible.

OUTSIDE SALES:

Throughout this white paper, we use the terms sales channels, partners and third party interchangeably to refer to the relationship organizations have with the outside sales teams and distributors who sell products and services to customers.

BUILD A BRAND EXPERIENCE for outside sales channels

One of the first steps to building a better brand experience for consumers is to start with sales channels. These teams, on the ground in local stores and out in the community, have a unique perspective of consumers' interests and needs. They know what works well and what's failed in the past.

Start building a bottom up brand by engaging with sales channels and get their buy-in from the beginning to amplify your brand and message to customers visiting their stores. The easier you make it for them, the better job they'll do sharing it consistently. This doesn't need to be a complicated or time-consuming process, either. Here are three ways to help make that happen:

1

STAND FOR SOMETHING DISTINCT.

Bring your brand values and personality to life during everyday interactions with sales channels. If your company is dedicated to customer service, be sure they see and feel that. In short, practice what you preach for consumers in your interaction with sales channels. Your partners are an important part of your audience, so be sure to communicate consistently with them and be proactive about providing useful resources.

2

LISTEN.

Establish regular ways and avenues to listen to sales channels input. This could be as simple as a quarterly survey or regularly scheduled in-person meetings. Set realistic goals for reaching out to an appropriate sample, and be sure your team has the means to capture important insights and share them broadly with the brand.

BUILD A BRAND EXPERIENCE for outside sales channels

3

BE EASY TO WORK WITH.

Sales channels need easy access to marketing materials and resources to customize for their local audiences. They also need a simple way to share ads, banners and other marketing materials with corporate teams for approval. More than just marketing templates, these pieces represent locally created materials that stores and partners use to capture attention and increase local stores.

A marketing resource management (MRM) system can help. An MRM provides one portal for partners to log in, customize materials, route to corporate for approval and order appropriate quantities. MRM systems can also offer ad pre-approval capabilities, which empower local teams to load unique materials for approval.

Another compelling feature of MRM is the ability to easily manage local marketing budgets, including co-op and market development funds. This functionality enables corporate teams to assign, review, approve and track budget requests and usage. Corporate teams can identify best practices across regions and easily recognize contacts who have money left to spend.

DELIVER A CONSISTENT and compelling experience for consumers

How can your products stand out on the crowded floor of a local store? By providing an interesting brand experience – in store and out. Make sure customers know your name, your reputation and your beliefs before they walk into the store and back it up with an outstanding in-store experience. Here are a few ways that can happen:

1

STAND OUT IN STORE.

Take advantage of unique opportunities to share your message with consumers. Interactive digital signage is a great way to do this. Consumers can access deals, browse the product catalog and purchase options not available on the showroom floor. Look for other areas in the store with less distracting signage or information where you can share messages such as counter mats, kiosks or banners.

2

DO MORE THAN DIGITAL STATUS QUO.

Savvy brands know they can stand out by engaging consumers online. You need to offer content and package it in a meaningful way, which means you'll need to do more than post a few times a week. Empower local partners to post for the brand, and ensure it's a consistent, branded message with a social media management system. Take email marketing a step further by providing sales channels with branded templates to share specific store information, including sales, promotions, events and even weather-related news.

3

STAY FOCUSED AND STRATEGIC.

Consumers are everywhere: Facebook, Pinterest, Twitter, Instagram, SnapChat, the list goes on. Just because they are everywhere doesn't mean you need to be, too. Focus your best efforts on channels and outlets that make sense for your organization and consumer. Focus digital, traditional and media presence where the best fit is, and go from there.

STREAMLINE INTERNAL tasks where possible

We all spend more time than we'd like on certain tasks – checking email, reviewing materials, approving budget or marketing requests. It's an easy trap to fall into when we're supporting widespread sales networks – inside and outside the company.

Take a minute to review marketing processes and identify areas for efficiencies. It may not sound like the most exciting or glamorous task, but it can help improve your productivity so you're not stuck in the trenches executing tasks. Streamlined marketing operations can help you focus on bigger picture, strategic initiatives to help move your company forward.

Once you identify those areas, a marketing resource management system may be able to help streamline those processes to help your job be a little easier, a little more productive and a lot more impactful on the bottom line.

Here are a few common areas that can be optimized and improved:

1

APPROVALS.

MRM systems offer electronic approval capabilities. Individual users load marketing materials into the portal and route to the appropriate parties. For instance, a store manager can load art for a billboard into the MRM, send it to marketing, where the appropriate contact can review, approve or request edits. Even more importantly, marketing teams can tie local marketing budgets to specific marketing activities to expedite the payment and local marketing budget process. The system is electronic, and houses materials and workflow for an extended period of time, so approval is easy to store and find, and you don't have to fish around in your email inbox or lose items in the mail. No more printing out binders. Copies are stored digitally to save print cost and resources.

ARE YOUR MARKETING PROCESSES SIMPLE?

Use this checklist to help determine if you're spending more time than necessary on common marketing tasks.

- 1 **APPROVALS**
How long does it take to get marketing materials approved?
- 2 **BUDGETS**
How are local marketing budgets assigned and approved? Is it a cumbersome process for local partners to request and use funds?
- 3 **CONSISTENCY**
How do you ensure local partners are properly representing your brand?
- 4 **DIGITAL**
Is your brand represented consistently and compliantly on digital – in social, email, PPC and more?
- 5 **COMPLIANCE**
Do partners follow compliance regulations when marketing products?
- 6 **SALES SUPPORT**
How much of your time is spent supporting sales channels, fulfilling requests and providing materials?
- 7 **SPEED**
How long does it take to get a project from idea to implementation? Can streamlined processes help speed up that process?

STREAMLINE INTERNAL tasks where possible

2 BUDGETS.

Local marketing budgets are the backbone for making sure your message and brand get out to local communities. Make it as easy as possible for partners to request funds, and simple for corporate teams to review documents, approve requests and allocate appropriate funds. A local marketing budget system, part of a comprehensive MRM system, takes the headache out of managing local budgets. Easily assign, track and review spend, and even know who has what left to spend to encourage activities that share your message and brand with local consumers.

3 CUSTOMIZE.

Make it easy for local sales channels to customize messages relevant to local audiences. Load template materials into MRM systems, and empower local teams to update and customize specific sections of the materials to help push local messages further.

That's just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to simplifying local marketing initiatives. Spend a little time reviewing your processes, identify roadblocks that slow innovative campaigns and work to clear the way. Our checklist (left) can help get you started.

Your brand is more than the product and services you sell in-store. It's the experience that consumers and partners have working, purchasing and engaging with you. Make sure it's as simple, interesting and engaging as possible by working with your teams that matter most, and making sure the tools partners need are at their fingertips, and consumers get what they want.

LEARN MORE:

For additional information and insight specific to the manufacturing industry visit:

vyasystems.com/manufacturing

If you have a question not covered in this white paper or additional resources, or would like to talk with someone at Vya, please call us at **+1-800-426-7921** or email us at sales@vyasystems.com.

If you're interested in learning more about building a marketing experience from the bottom up, please consider reviewing the following resources, available at: vyasystems.com/resources

ROADMAP TO LOCAL MARKETING SUCCESS ▶

Gleanster, a third-party research firm, outlines the benefits and reasons top performing companies use MRM systems.

MRM: HOW IT WORKS ▶

An infographic detailing how MRM systems work.

**LOCAL MARKETING BUDGETS:
HOW IT WORKS ▶**

An infographic detailing how local marketing budget management systems work.

MAKE A POWERFUL IMPACT ON BUSINESS ▶

A presentation to share with team members and executives on the benefits and impact of MRM systems.

QUESTIONS TO ASK AN MRM VENDOR ▶

An overview of questions to consider when researching MRM providers.

MRM ROI ▶

Calculate the value and return on investment of a marketing resource management system.



Simplified Marketing Systems