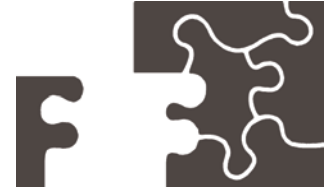

Marketing Notes

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Hallmarks of Great Marketing Companies

The great marketing companies in this world have much in common. They continue to succeed, to grow in revenues and profits, to adapt to change and opportunity, and to inordinately influence society and their industries. They have the highest rates of return on assets and equity in their industries. These are the hallmarks, the guiding marketing principles, of the great marketing companies.

1. Achieving and keeping dominant market share is their priority. These companies fully understand that #1 or strong #2 market share is the fundamental common denominator of profitability.
 2. They know that #1 market share leaders almost always have #1 profits, #1 awareness, strongest customer franchise and loyalty, and highest prices. This allows them to invest more in market research, more in R&D, and more in gaining share advantage over their competitors.
 3. They focus on market share as measured in units rather than sales dollars; and rather than excess profits.
 4. Understanding the importance of market share leadership requires a sharp awareness of what business the company is really in -- from a customer perspective -- and what that translates to for positioning and niches. That's why great marketing companies think about marketing strategy and execute that strategy relentlessly.
 5. Top managers are all customer-oriented.
 6. Consequently, they are constantly segmenting their markets and executing the segment plans meticulously.
 7. There is constant contact with customers. They always observe with clarity customer behavior, changes in behavior, and emerging customer needs. They do lots of listening.
 8. There is a total company marketing orientation. Everyone in the company understands that marketing is the only renewing activity. Every employee values the customer.
 9. All top managers regularly make calls on customers.
 10. The whole company serves the customer culture... not just the sales and marketing people, but production, financial, and research people as well.
 11. They plan with very clear, measurable specific goals... and not just short-term, one year goals, but those of strategic vision.
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12. Manufacturing and marketing people meet often, once a week ... to discuss costs, forecasts, production, new products, new processes, etc.
 13. R&D is rewarded for commercialized successes, not just technical ingenuity.
 14. There is a constant review of competitive activity. They realize that competitors are after their slice of the pie.
 15. Therefore, they invest more in marketing than their competitors.
 16. Application case histories and successful customer incidents are constantly communicated throughout the sales forces.
 17. The sales function is considered part of the marketing mix and is overseen by a marketing manager. These companies understand that selling or advertising is not marketing, rather a marketing function.
 18. They do not make decisions based on the short term shouts and pleas of the distributor or channel.
 19. They see trade channels as partners, not customers.
 20. They work hard to create customer franchises.
 21. They truly understand the importance of brand names, and constantly work to keep the brand names known and untarnished.
 22. They reduce uncertainty with homework and research.
 23. They seek lots of opinions, especially from current and lapsed customers, suppliers to their industry, and from their people.
 24. They do not get surprised by changes in the market. They usually influence the market.
 25. They sell benefits, not features. They sell benefits, not technology.
 26. They combine market data with intuitive marketing common sense.
 27. They provide good, customized and consistent sales training.
 28. They do not price products too low, rather they sell on price-to-value, not to cost.
 29. They reserve opportunity money to take advantage of unplanned opportunities.
 30. They are maniacal about product quality, as quality is defined by their customers, not by manufacturing or quality assurance.
 31. To reiterate, they have a clear market vision. They know what business they're in. They know what customers want. They give customers what they want.
 32. In great marketing companies, the customer is always right.