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How We Work: A 5-Step Process

The 5-Step Process includes:

- A Situation Analysis
- The Marketing Support Plan
- Media Planning & Execution
- Creative Planning, Development & Execution
- Performance Review

Situation Analysis

The Situation Analysis consists of *seven* elements:

- Product Review
- Secondary Research
- Competitive Review
- Market Determination
- Target Determination
- Plans/Programs Analysis
- Primary Research (if warranted)

Product

We will undertake a study to determine and define the Features-Advantages-Benefits of your "product" as they relate to competition; to determine their viability in relation to competition; as they relate to the needs and demands of targeted market(s).

Secondary Research

As a necessary part of the firm's learning curve, research will be conducted to develop and accumulate data and information that will add to the level of understanding required to provide a knowledge of the markets for product, trends in the "marketplace", competitive activity, and background for the other elements of the Situation Analysis.

Competition

Understanding Competition goes beyond the determination of "who" and "what", to encompass "how" and "why". As a normal course of action the firm develops competitive



profiles that include approach to market; advertising; media and expenditures; and a review and analysis of their effectiveness in generating results.

Markets

Consistent with the development of product knowledge is the need to define the respective markets the "product" has been intended for or may apply to. It is rarely sufficient to suggest that a product is designed for a broad range of potential "users". Rather, it is necessary to define the market segments by specific applications and use.

Targets

Targets within the market segments refers to the person and persons responsible for product selection or specification. Due to the numerous studies available which have delved into the layers of people who influence such a decision, it is important to look beyond the primary target and seek to define the secondary, and even tertiary, influences or specifiers. While demographic and psychographic information is helpful, more specific information is often needed to identify the critical target.

Plans Analysis

Knowing where you are and where you want to go is best reflected through a review and analysis of what planning you have undertaken to get to your present position in the marketplace. Understanding your existing position serves as a benchmark against which the strategic alternatives can be measured and monitored as they are implemented.

Plans/Programs Analysis (Previous)

Beyond knowing where you have been, are, and intend to go, it's important to know what communications efforts have been used, why, and with what effectiveness. It also provides us with an adequate overview of the "tone" a client's advertising has taken and whether there is a need or reason to develop a new approach.

Primary Research

Primary research is often a necessity in the marketing of product, especially where it is required to define target market desires and perceptions. As a general rule, we would consider focus group interviews followed by telephone and/or mail surveys if they are vital to providing the answers we need to complete the study.



The Marketing Support Plan

The Marketing Support Plan consists of *four* elements:

- Marketing Objectives
- Strategic Positioning
- Strategy Recommendations
- Budget & Cashflow Projections

Marketing Objectives

We believe in the establishment of specific goals for clients that are realistic, measurable and obtainable. Once the firm has been provided with, or developed, sufficient information of past goals, strategies and results, the analysis and review of the preliminary information required for the Situation Analysis will form the base from which the present and future objectives may be determined.

Strategic Positioning

The review and analysis of the information contained in the Situation Analysis, coupled with the objectives agreed upon with the Client, will allow for the development of a positioning statement that sets the Client apart from competition and preempts that position in the marketplace. Strategic positioning anticipates the changing nature of the marketplace and provides an equity base for the building and development of long-term penetration and growth.

Strategy Recommendations

An integral part of the Marketing Support Platform, Strategic Recommendations are generated on a "broadstroke" basis; i.e., once market segments and targets are identified, the objectives for each, ALL potential strategies are identified without regard to budget. This method provides the firm and client alike with alternatives from which to establish the most practical and cost-effective method for meeting objectives.

Budget & Cashflow Projections

We are experienced in budgeting Marketing Support Programs in *two* ways:

Task - Working within the constraints of a fixed budget.

Zero-Base - Developing a budget to meet objectives.



In reality, the two budgeting methods are often mixed. For example, in the Zero-Base approach a client may provide the objectives and we determine the adequate budget. If the budget is too high, then it is necessary to cut back to the bare essentials and, perhaps, jeopardizing the attainment of one or more objectives.

As important as the total budget is, the timing of when expenses are incurred may be equally or more important. That is why we prepare Cashflow projections by time period, by item, and total costs by column and line item.

Media

There are *three* elements in the Media Planning Phase:

- *Class Selection*
- *Frequency, Rate and Circulation Analysis*
 - *Schedule*

Class Selection

Determining the medium to implement that will meet client objectives is rarely a "given". As indicated previously, the strategies outlined in the Marketing Support Platform often define the media options available - with budget being the final determination of exactly which shall be used.

Frequency, Rate and Circulation Analysis

We employ a media evaluation system that encompasses quantitative, qualitative, judgement and historical tests to determine the most effective and efficient media to reach the targeted market(s).

This evaluation methodology is especially helpful when many alternatives exist but budget is limited.

Support

We subscribe to, or access, numerous media support systems which greatly enhance our capabilities. These systems allow us to evaluate media on a market-by-market basis to provide timely, efficient and effective media programs.



Creative

There are *three* elements in the Creative Process

- *Concept Development*
 - *Copy Platform*
- *Creative Research/Testing*

Creative Development

Our creative recommendation is a distillation of the data, information and marketing input derived from the Situation Analysis, dictated by the Marketing Support Platform, and designed to meet the specific objectives of the client organization.

To insure the creative product is targeted to the appropriate market the firm recommends the pre-testing of concepts when practical and feasible. We believe that creative research is an integral part of the creative process. Conducted properly, good research can enhance the productivity of the creative product and help to insure the attainment of objectives.

Copy Platform/Strategy

A central theme throughout the development of a Marketing Support Program is the need for concrete, definitive data and information leading to the development of objectives and strategies. In order to provide creative continuity, synergism and establish preemptiveness against competition it is necessary to distill the information into actionable lines and paragraphs that summarize the information available.

Performance Review

Performance Review consists of *four* elements:

- *Objective Attainment*
- *Media Performance*
- *Readership/Response*
 - *Budget Re-Cap*



Many agencies have taken the approach that once a campaign or support program has been implemented the responsibility for the effectiveness of the effort, and especially its measurement, lies with the client. We believe that advertising expenditures require constant evaluation and monitoring in order to insure optimal efficiency and effectiveness.

Performance is evaluated on a scheduled basis (quarterly, semi-annually, annually) and centers on, but is not limited to the four elements. It is this evaluation that tells us how much media is needed to do the communications job; or what creative approaches require adjustment; or what product features need to be restated in order to better impact the market for product.

The Performance Review also allows the client to gain a true measure of the value of the firm and its effectiveness.

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