



Strengthen Marketing Administration to Get More Bang for Your Buck
WHITE PAPER



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Like many business-to-business enterprises, you probably spend 1% to 3% of your revenue on marketing activities. That's a lot of dough, and, at some point, someone's going to ask: "Is this money well spent?" There is a pretty good chance the following answers won't cut it:

"Our new catalog shows every product we make in great detail!"

"We won an award at last month's advertising banquet!"

While measuring **effectiveness** of marketing activities can be a nebulous and sometimes costly task, there are simple ways to ensure maximum usefulness of some of the most basic marketing tools.

Literature – Improve Access and Get Control

Some B2B enterprises spend more than 50% of their marketing budget on printed literature. Most of the focus goes into ensuring the creative design and messaging are perfect. Why not put equal effort into making sure people can get it? After all, if literature doesn't end up in front of your prospects and customers, it's no good to anyone. If you have a large sales and distribution network, consider providing them a Web-based storefront where they can order and download literature 24/7. Don't inhibit the sales process by hiding literature stocks behind invisible barriers like out-of-date fax request forms.

And while you're at it, get control of this monster budget item. The best literature systems keep track of who uses literature and how much they use. Controlling usage keeps sales reps and distributors from ordering more than they need and makes sure usage is commensurate with performance. Usage control can result in huge reprint savings since wasteful habits of over-ordering and stockpiling can be mitigated.

You should also make sure your system gives you the ability to view inventory levels and forecast reprints so you never run out of a critical brochure. By analyzing usage data and inventory levels you'll be able to:

- Ensure there is enough time for revisions before printing; you'll never be out of critical brochures and they will always be up-to-date
- Eliminate the need for emergency reprints – a costly practice that runs up printing bills
- Determine economical print quantities and methods; choose commercial printing, digital offset or on-demand printing depending on what makes sense for your usage needs
- Stop printing low usage items; make low usage items available only via download and get rid of costly, low-run print jobs altogether

Many companies have saved more than 30% on their printing expenditures by paying attention to details like these.

Okay. Let's look at those answers to the question: "Is our marketing budget money well spent?"

"Over 200 different sales reps ordered literature last year. We limited usage with 15 of our distributors since their sales didn't align with their requests."

"We converted 20 items to download only since usage last year didn't warrant reprinting them. That saved us about \$35,000."

Now let's look at trade show materials, which are often abused, lost or underutilized... all significant costly problems.

Get Control

How many times have you lent trade show materials to a salesman or distributor only to lose them in a black hole? Do you struggle to keep display materials in a single location, so you know what you have? If so, try these two simple steps to get better control.

Centralize Your Warehousing

Whether you store materials in-house or off-site, your best bet is to keep display materials in one location. This will enable you to effectively compile the right combination of booths, graphics and audio-visual equipment most appropriate for each event. Moreover, consolidating in one location gives you the ability to continuously review materials for brand consistency.

Charge for Outgoing Freight

Many companies loan their materials to their sales channels for regional trade events and sales meetings. Meeting deadlines for events never seems to be a problem, but getting materials returned in a timely manner is often an administrative nightmare. Make an agreement with your sales channels that they pay outgoing freight while you pay return freight. To hit their event deadline, they'll be motivated to pay promptly. And since they don't have to pay to return the items, you've removed a barrier that often results in materials being returned late, shipped to another party or simply left in their warehouse.

Increase Access to Increase ROI

Getting mind share from your distributors and reps is often difficult. Providing the tools they need to succeed can lead them to focus more on your products and achieve better sales results. Put your exhibit marketing materials on-line and provide your sales channels with secure access to your inventory of exhibit materials. Let them see what you have, make it easy for them to requisition and let them promote your products at their own selling events. Cataloging your materials on-line may not be as difficult as you think. Web-based tools can be built in-house or you can take advantage of third-party systems that increase visibility while helping you manage these valuable assets. It's the best way to maximize ROI and control these assets.



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