

What Is Marketing? The Fundamentals Every Marketer Needs To Know

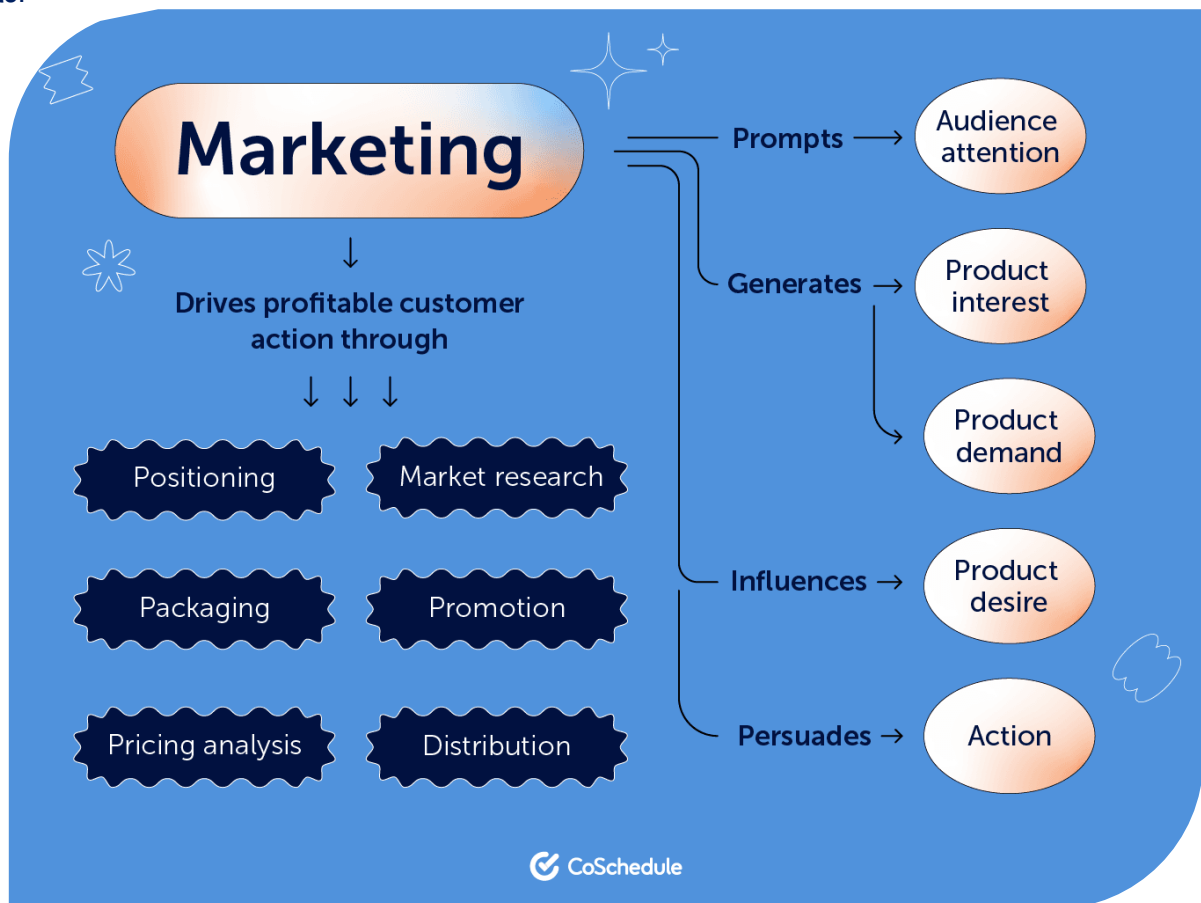
The case can be made that a business will only ever be as successful as its marketing strategy. A business may provide the best service in town, *but if nobody knows about it*, the company will never be able to turn a profit and sustain itself.

Marketing raises awareness among consumers of a business's goods and services, and this involves much more than aimlessly displaying advertisements. Marketing has taken on new meaning as it continues to be innovated to keep up with our fast-paced society.

Figuring out the right marketing approach is often the sole difference between a successful and a failing business.

What Is Marketing?

To put it simply, marketing is a series of strategies and different actions that can produce profits for a business or company. With the help of marketing, businesses draw prospective customers' attention to the product or services. Marketing also motivates prospective customers to take action and purchase these services and products.



Marketing encompasses a multitude of activities that create, communicate, deliver, and exchange different offers for clients in the hopes of increasing sales and other profitable actions on behalf of customers.

Marketing Definition

Marketing exists to drive profitable customer action through product and market research, pricing analysis, distribution, promotion, packaging, and positioning. Marketing prompts target audience attention, generates product interest and demand, influences product desire, and persuades action.

These concepts are commonly known as the marketing mix (the Ps of marketing) and the AIDA model (attention, interest, desire, action).

In practice, marketing often primarily focuses on creating relevant, valuable content and experiences to promote a business's products to its ideal target audience. Marketing is responsible for attracting, converting, and retaining long-term, successful customers. This means marketing influences all areas of the sales funnel. Marketing not only creates awareness of the brand but also influences consumers to take action and make a purchase.

To easily analyze the fundamentals of marketing, we can break it down into the 4 Ps of marketing.

4 Ps Of Marketing

1. **Product:** Either a physical commodity or beneficial service that a company sells. Marketers determine how a product will satisfy the customer's needs, the variations of the product needed to satisfy those needs, and how it will be branded.
2. **Price:** Successful products aren't simply assigned a price that sounds right. The marketer determines what price will earn the company the highest profit margin while also maintaining the most value for the consumer. They analyze price points that may have been established by competition and modulate when discounts will be beneficial.
3. **Place:** Where does the product need to be distributed to get in front of the ideal buyer? Marketers need to discover the right distribution channels and know how to access them.
4. **Promotion:** Creating the message the company wants to be delivered for the product and deciding where and when that message should be advertised to capture the most eyes in the target market.

At a high level, marketing includes:

1. **Targeting:** Researching the target market, ideal buyer, their buying processes and behaviors, competition, and promotional methods to stand out and reach their niche audiences.
2. **Branding:** Differentiating the business and its products or services from competitors with unique marketing design and voice to connect deeply with the ideal buyer.
3. **Conversion:** Optimizing the entire sales and marketing funnel from unknown target audience members to actual buyers.
4. **Retention:** Retaining existing customers to provide long-term value to your buyers and the business.

Understanding The Real Meaning Of Marketing

To further understand this complex promotional process, let's take a few steps back and break down how marketing is defined.

Marketing (noun): The sum of all activities including advertising, shipping, storing, and selling that initiates the transfer of goods and services from the producer to the consumer.

To market (verb): To execute activities that encourage a consumer to purchase a product.

Mercari (Latin origin): "To deal in; to buy; to trade."

Let's break this down even further.

Marketing seeks to 1) drive profitable customer action by 2) reaching a defined target audience with 3) information they find important and valuable. Engaging these audiences with stimulating content allows them to 4) discover brands, products, and solutions. Promoting this "aha" moment allows the customer to recognize how their lives can be improved by investing in the brand's product.

1. **Drive profitable customer action:** The goal of every marketing campaign is to drive customers to make a purchase or perform an action that the company desires. These acts by consumers obviously benefit the company, but it's the marketing team's job to convince the consumers that they are the ones that will benefit most from the transaction.
2. **Define the target audience:** The marketing process starts with establishing the target audience. This process aims to single out which demographics will be most likely to purchase the product being advertised. Failure to successfully determine who the marketing message is best suited for will result in the business wasting both time and money on people who are not interested in their product.

3. Provide valuable information: Once the target audience is defined, the next step is engaging these potential customers to interact and associate with the brand. Creating content that the consumer finds useful or that they can relate to will establish trust between them and the seller. People like to buy from those they know, like, and trust.
4. Customers discovering your brand and product: After drawing the customer in, it's imperative to help them understand why they need the product. Compelling marketing campaigns will accurately define their target audience's problem and demonstrate how their product provides an effective solution and improves the consumer's life.

What Are 4 Definitions Of Marketing From Experts?

Definition #1

Marketing is the performance of business activities that direct the flow of goods and services from producer to consumer or user in order to best satisfy consumers and accomplish the firm's objectives.

– E. JEROME MCCARTHY – CREATOR OF THE 4 PS OF MARKETING AND AUTHOR OF BASIC MARKETING: A MANAGERIAL APPROACH

Definition #2

Marketing is the messages and/or actions that cause messages and/or actions.

– JAY BAER – PRESIDENT, CONVINCE & CONVERT. AUTHOR WITH AMBER NASLUND OF THE NOW REVOLUTION

The meaning of marketing is to pique the interest of potential customers and get them excited about a product. This excitement will initiate a purchase and may also result in the customer spreading the word about the product.

If a campaign can capture the attention of one customer in the target audience, chances are they will have friends or colleagues within the same demographic and will share their excitement with these other ideal customers. This can cause a ripple effect, and the business is essentially rewarded with free marketing for their product through word-of-mouth advertising.

Referrals are a powerful form of advertising as potential customers are able to count on real-life experiences from people they trust. When a company is able to build brand loyalty, they are able to grow exponentially by letting their existing customers provide powerful secondary marketing.

Definition #3

Marketing is the generous act of helping someone solve a problem. Their problem. Marketing helps others become who they seek to become.

– SETH GODIN – FOUNDER, AKIMBO. AUTHOR OF THIS IS MARKETING. [2]

Marketers are essentially salespeople, and this may bring about a slew of negative connotations. Harsh words such as slimy, greedy, or scam-artist are often used to describe those in sales. The general public often believes that people in this line of work are only interested in benefiting themselves.

However, Seth Godin argues that marketing requires empathy and a deep understanding of the audience's problems.

Marketing that only serves to create hype around a product will come off as inauthentic, and many of today's consumers are skeptical when introduced to new products, to begin with.

In order to get past these apprehensions and earn a customer's trust, the marketing team must have a legitimate interest in their customers' struggles. Consumers want to believe that a brand is genuinely vested in them and will be on their side to help them achieve their dreams.

Definition #4

Marketing is about values. It's a complicated and noisy world, and we're not going to get a chance to get people to remember much about us. No company is. So we have to be really clear about what we want them to know about us.

– STEVE JOBS, CO-FOUNDER, APPLE. [SPEECH TO APPLE EMPLOYEES](#), 1997. [3]

People in today's society are bombarded with marketing in all different forms. Sometimes it's obvious, like when passing dozens of billboards on a highway, but other times it's more discrete and strategic. Whether it's a Facebook ad for a new grill that pops up after leaving Home Depot, or companies offering a free product just for subscribing to their email list, innovations in technology have practically made our lives one continuous commercial.

A consumer's brain can only retain so much information, and with advertisements flooding our minds from all directions, businesses need to be sure they convey a message that they want to be remembered by.

The opportunity to capture the attention of a potential customer is rare and will be short-lived, so it's important to make an impression that lasts beyond the advertisement.

8 Marketing Core Concepts

As defined by the famous author marketing expert and author Philip Kotler, marketing is “the social and managerial process by which individuals and groups obtain what they need and want through creating and exchanging product and value with others.”

The following are the eight fundamental marketing concepts that emerge from closely examining this definition.

1. Target Market Research

Target market research assesses where your product or service will be most successful and how it fits into a particular market. The demographics of customers most likely to purchase a company's goods or services make up its target market. Analyses of the target market assist companies in developing strategies for efficient sales and marketing tactics.

Target market research gives a broad view of the industry and often identifies possibilities and barriers for businesses wishing to join that market.

2. Demand

Market demand is the precise amount of a good or service that customers can afford and desire to purchase at the stated cost of that good or service. Market demand impacts firms and consumers since it influences production and shapes market competitiveness. Businesses must be aware of the market demand to develop, produce, and promote goods and services.

3. Pain Points

A pain point is an issue that may prevent a potential client from buying from you. Simply said, pain points are issues that need to be addressed.

Customer pain points, like any problem, come in as many shapes and sizes as there are potential consumers. However, not all potential customers will be aware of their problems, which can make marketing to these people challenging. You will have to effectively help your prospects understand their issues and convince them that your product or service would help solve them.

4. Benefits

The term “product benefit” refers to a product's beneficial effect on the user. Some customers may see results immediately, while others will improve over time. Every perk you offer is an additional incentive for clients to buy your goods. For example, a video game console maker can highlight their product's superior visuals, low pricing, and extensive game library compared to the competition.

5. Product Market Fit

When a product is well suited to the needs of its target market, it is said to have “product-market fit.” The term “product-market fit” refers to the point at which an entrepreneur meets market demand by creating a product or service that buyers are eager to purchase.

The existence of customers is crucial to the success of any business. Although it may seem obvious, it's essential to describe your value proposition in a way that ensures a sizable customer base for your business. It is crucial to consider product-market fit while developing the product since it might be more critical to your firm's success than brilliant ideas, expert teams, or any other component.

6. Perceived Value

Perceived value is a marketing concept that refers to how consumers rate a product or service on its merits and how well it meets the consumer's requirements and expectations, especially in contrast to similar offerings. Marketers highlight the product's advantages over similar offerings to increase its perceived worth. The best indicator of its perceived value is what the market is prepared to pay for a product or service. Even in the heat of the moment, shoppers weigh the merits of many brands and models to choose which best meets their needs.

The marketer's job is to raise the profile of the product or service they sell so that more people would want to buy it. Products are valued in terms of how much people think they're paying for them. An item's price tag could have less to do with its objective value than with the significance of its symbolic meaning to the buyer.

7. Unique Value Proposition

Understanding the customer experience requires a clear and compelling value proposition, regardless of the product or service sold.

Your product or service has its own set of advantages over the competition. You may highlight those advantages in a statement called a unique value proposition (UVP) or unique selling proposition (USP). The information conveyed by a UVP statement exceeds that of a tagline or slogan. It describes the distinctive advantages of your product over similar ones and the problems it answers for your target audience.

Incorporate the company's unique selling proposition (USP) into your homepage's design and marketing materials.

8. Value Exchanges

A value exchange occurs when a company offers a potential customer something of value in return for the customer's personal details (i.e., email address).

Consider a major hotel chain's loyalty program. You'll have access to perks like discounted room rates, the chance to earn points redeemable for free stays, and discounts on things like car rentals and vacation packages. In exchange for these perks, you agree to use that hotel chain whenever you travel exclusively. There will be more consumers exposed to the brand.

When there's something in it for them, people tend to be more enthusiastic about participating. Companies and marketers must provide evidence of a tangible benefit to them to gain customers' trust and cooperation in sharing their data.

5 Marketing Misconceptions

Since marketing covers a wide range of perspectives, it is easy for misconceptions to be mistaken for facts. We've listed five of the most common marketing misconceptions below.

1. "Marketing Is Advertising."

Marketing and advertising are highly distinct disciplines, even though they are intertwined. The continuing, comprehensive strategy known as marketing covers the entire procedure your company should use to offer goods or services to consumers. This includes figuring out how to design and price the product, where companies will sell it, and how to convince customers to buy it.

On the other hand, one component of your marketing strategy is advertising. It focuses on producing and delivering advertisements to promote your fantastic goods and services.

Starting modestly can let you determine whether advertising is effective for your company before ramping it up as your budget allows because it may be expensive and difficult to measure.

2. "Marketing Is Sales."

Selling is the core of sales. It is personal selling done one-on-one and in person.

On the other hand, marketing consists of several tasks, including:

- Identifying the buyer
- Determining what the buyer needs through market research
- Fuelling the production of goods or services
- Choosing the appropriate product price
- Locating the best paths to market through product marketing
- Targeting, positioning, segmenting, and messaging
- Reaching out to the audience through PR, advertising, and other forms of public relations
- Using SEO and inbound and outbound multi-channel marketing to pique a customer's interest in products
- Creating offerings and promotions that attract attention, draw crowds, and facilitate sales meetings
- Enabling the sales team to use smarketing techniques to negotiate, compete against, and win.

Simply put, the two roles are strongly related yet mutually incompatible.

3. “Marketing Tricks People Into Purchasing Things They Don’t Need.”

When it comes to advertising, which is simply a small subset of marketing, it's all about becoming as creative as possible to sell a product. However, ethical marketing never relies on deception. Getting your message through effectively requires targeting your audience and delivering your message at the appropriate moment. The journey from concept generation to actualization is an exciting one. Many campaigns fail and getting your point across might sometimes be challenging. Moreover, attributing marketing success to professionals four steps ahead of their target demographic is overly generous and naive.

4. “Marketing Stops When You Land A Customer.”

Companies are frequently fixated on expanding their customer bases. It's natural to initially put most of your energy towards increasing your customer base. Still, once you've established momentum, it's time to focus on maintaining healthy connections with your current customers.

They already know your company since they have used your product or service.

In contrast, when dealing with new consumers, you must begin at square one, hoping they will give you a chance.

Spending money on effective customer retention strategies allows you to generate more profit from your current clientele. Consumers who are loyal to your brand are more likely to make more purchases, increase spending, and spread the word about your company to their friends and family.

Moreover, they might function as a focus group to help you better understand your customers.

5. “You Can’t Measure Marketing Influence On Purchases.”

Measuring the efficacy of marketing has always been difficult, and the proliferation of marketing platforms and the increasing importance consumers place on protecting their personal information can compound the challenge. So, how can the success of a campaign be measured?

To begin, marketers should not go after “vanity metrics” that make them feel good. It may seem like a good sign that you've reported an increase in site traffic of 20% or gained 100 new followers, but these metrics are notoriously difficult to connect to hard business metrics like sales and brand awareness. Measures focused on customers should come first, with performance metrics as a secondary consideration.

The rate at which consumers repurchase your products is one customer-centric measure that may be used to gauge customer loyalty and project future revenue.

Another case in point is customer lifetime value, which is determined by multiplying a customer's average annual purchase volume by the average number of years they stay a customer to get at a numerical figure that represents the worth of keeping that customer for the long haul. A customer who spends \$100 on each transaction and makes four purchases per year will likely be a client over the next five years. Their average consumer would be worth \$2,000 to them throughout their lifetime.

Establishing concrete and measurable outcomes allows you to evaluate your progress later on.

What Is B2B Marketing?

■ B2B Marketing

B2B is short for business to business. This form of marketing involves the promotion and selling of products or services that target businesses and organizations.

The valuables being delivered may either be items that are resold by the buying business, or services that can help the company run more efficiently.

The target audience in business-to-business marketing will often be the head decision-makers of the company. B2B marketing typically has a more difficult barrier to entry to reach the target audience than other forms of marketing.

For example, when cold calling a business to market services, the business owner will rarely be the person who picks up the phone. Leaving a message for the owner puts the fate of the marketing efforts in the hands of an employee who is not nearly as concerned about the campaign's goals. Even if the appropriate message does get delivered, business owners are extremely busy and get swarmed by marketing calls and emails daily. Therefore, it's imperative marketers put together innovative marketing strategies that grab the attention of decision-makers and separate their product or service from the rest of the pack.

What Makes A Good B2B Marketing Plan?

One of the primary focuses of B2B marketing involves another acronym known as *ROI*, which stands for return on investment. For a majority of businesses, their main objective is making money.

An effective B2B marketing strategy will be able to convince decision-makers in the business that investment into their goods or services will generate more income and improve the business' bottom line.

Pain Points In Marketing Meaning

Aside from promising to improve finances, a successful B2B marketing plan will be able to uncover the pain points that a business owner or stakeholder has.

For example, let's pretend a company that answers calls and schedules appointments for small businesses is marketing to a local fence contractor.

1. **Pain Point:** They discover that the owner is emotional about not having enough time to spend with her family, and her dream is to generate enough revenue to be able to hire more workers and have more time away from her business.
2. **Problem-Causing Pain Point:** The marketer explains that the business owner misses out on several potential customers per day because she is too busy installing fences to answer the phone, and this is resulting in the owner leaving thousands of potential dollars on the table.
3. **Solution To The Problem:** By having a service that can answer the phone and capture these leads, the owner could land ten more jobs per month, leading to a monthly increase of \$30,000 in revenue. This would allow for the contractor to hire more workers and spend more time with her family.

This pitch identifies the pain point and paints the picture of a brighter future. The marketer not only promises to generate more revenue but explains how their service will be able to provide that, and gives specific numbers to trigger the imagination of the business owner.

It demonstrates how unanswered phone calls directly correlate to the owner's pain point of being unable to spend more time with their family and then further exhibits how their service is the solution to resolving this issue.

Focus On Profits

One can certainly make the argument that B2B marketing is the hardest form of marketing as business owners are typically aware of the usual sales tactics that marketers attempt.

After all, business owners have to apply those same strategies to make sales to their own customers.

This is why it's best to avoid the fluff and get straight to the bottom line of how the products offered will provide value.

Decision-makers of a business care less about the complex features of a product and more about whether or not it will make them money.

What Is B2C Marketing?

B2C Marketing

B2C marketing refers to *business-to-consumer* advertising. In this case, the business is promoting its product or services for use in the everyday lives of the general population.

Clearly, the target market can vary significantly in B2C marketing, which is why market research to determine the ideal demographic is essential.

In contrast to B2B marketing, B2C purchases are often more impulsive. Typical consumers aren't analyzing how a product will affect their bottom line, nor are they having in-depth discussions with others over how the product will impact their life.

The Best B2C Marketing Strategy

All marketing strategies should revolve around solving a problem, and B2C marketing typically promises to provide immediate solutions.

Business owners need to be shown how a product can bring their company value, but they typically understand that their purchase is an investment and have their sights set on long-term outcomes and benefits. With B2C selling, buyers are typically searching for products that solve a problem as quickly as possible.

The Power Of Emotional Marketing

With less research and more spontaneous purchases, marketers have a much smaller opportunity to prove the effectiveness of their products. This is why B2C marketing aims to trigger an emotion that will elicit an immediate response from consumers.

Let's look at some possible real-life examples of how this is accomplished.

1. Happiness: A skincare line is selling face wash that promises to get rid of severe acne. The ad shows the transformations from blemished to clear skin, and users of the product describe how they no longer feel embarrassed of their acne, have more confidence, and are able to live more fulfilling lives.
2. Sadness: A pet adoption center explains their facility is being overrun with abandoned dogs. Sad music plays in the background as clips of famished and anxious dogs are displayed. The spokesperson states that if the dogs aren't adopted soon, they may have to be put down.
3. Fear: A pharmaceutical company features a man who had a blood clot that resulted in a heart attack. The man knew he was at risk but declined going to see his doctor and did not realize the severity of his problem until it was almost too late. Had he been taking the blood thinner advertised and recommended by his doctor, the heart attack would have likely never happened.

While business owners look at ROI from a financial perspective, the average consumer bases their ROI on the positive emotions that the purchase will give them, or perhaps the negative emotions if they don't make the purchase.

Advertisements that can trigger these emotional responses have a greater chance at influencing their target audience and converting the sale.

What Is The Best Definition Of Marketing?

Marketing provides value to your tribe so that they provide value to your business.

While there may be several different forms, all strategies have the same common goals in mind.

Identify the ideal customer, demonstrate how to solve their problems, and develop customer loyalty to keep them coming back for years and years to come.

What Does Marketing Do?

When marketing is strategic, its activities align with a cohesive vision. Marketers often create content and experiences with the goal of influencing lead indicators of profitable customer action.



1. **Types Of Marketing:** Marketers leverage many different methodologies to influence profitable customer action across the marketing funnel, including approaches for attracting, converting, and retaining customers. For example, marketers likely have several strategies to influence action across the marketing funnel, such as a search engine optimization marketing strategy to acquire website visitors, an email marketing strategy to nurture subscribers toward purchases, and a customer marketing strategy to onboard and retain customers.
2. **Marketing Tactics:** Marketers leverage tactics as the actual strategic actions that unify messaging and direct content creation. For example, marketers often publish case studies as part of a product marketing strategy that could take many content formats, such as videos, landing pages, or social media messages.
3. **Marketing Channels:** Marketers share messages and content to support their tactics and strategies via marketing channels. Channels include search engine results pages, social media networks, email inboxes, and more. Marketers must become experts in delivering the right message to the right audience at the right time via the marketing channels that have the greatest likelihood of influencing their goals.
4. **Marketing Content:** Marketers create and publish assets and materials that provide relevant, valuable information for their audiences. Content is often part of a tactic that is included in a specific marketing strategy and delivered through a strategically chosen channel. For example, a marketer may create an ad (content) that aligns with a product launch (tactic) that supports a product marketing strategy (strategy) and is published in a magazine (channel).
5. **Marketing Collateral:** Marketers also create sales collateral, which is a genre of content that closely aligns with deep-funnel messaging meant to enable sales teams to land and expand deals.