

Effective organisational design for social marketing

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1. Background



Changing public sector landscape

Potential for social marketing to:

- Promote citizen focus
- Increase efficiency
- Enhance cost-savings



Marketing in the private and third sectors

“Marketing is a priority, not just a ‘nice to have’.”

Private sector

“Marketing is central. It is understanding our audiences, working out what they need from us and serving that need in as effective a way as possible. It meets all our organisational goals.”

Third sector



Objectives and overview of approach

Research objectives were to:

- Provide insights on how organisational structures within the private and third sectors are set up to promote effective marketing
- Explore how these practices may be applied to enhance marketing within the public sector

Approach involved:

- 20 depth interviews with private and third sector organisations to gain insights
- Interviews with 9 representatives from public sector, e.g. DH, PCTs, Public Health to ‘road test’ insights

Examples of organisations interviewed



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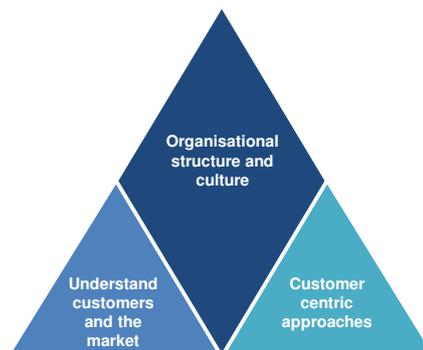


2. Research findings



Insights from private and third sector interviews

Organisations that successfully understand, meet the needs of and foster ongoing relationships with their customers display 8 characteristics, structured around 3 themes



Theme 1: Organisational structure and culture (3 associated characteristics)

Characteristic 1: Marketing is a valued, core function driven by the support of senior level champions and Board representation



“The Chair of the trustees is very supportive and our Chief Executive is a marketer, so there are many that are familiar with the specialism [marketing] and understand its significance. I’m pushing against an open door to a degree which is helpful.”

Third sector



Characteristic 2: The brand identity, expression and experience is carefully managed to sustain it as a vital organisational asset

Brand management:

- Key to delivering objectives and sustainable growth
- Is incorporated into organisation's structure to facilitate sufficient resources

Brand research and messaging:

- Integral part of customer and marketing insight activities
- Consistent approach to visual identity, corporate messages, customer communications, etc

"The marketing department is the lifeblood of the organisation to develop the brand – innovation is key... We have made a greater investment in marketing over the last few years, which has increased the strength of our brands – we saw this as a way of securing our future."

Private sector

Characteristic 3: People with a marketing expertise, although ideally centralised, routinely work collaboratively across teams...

- Marketing expertise tends to be centralised into a recognisable entity – often with a number of smaller sub-functions or specialist teams
- Productive inter-linkages between marketing function and other areas



Characteristic 3: ...marketing expertise supported by people, processes and structures to deliver strategic and operational objectives



**Example from private sector:
Technology organisation**

1. Customer-centred design process
2. Marketing Academy

Examples from third sector:

1. CRUK – Cross-organisational and cross-functional working groups
2. Maria Stopes – Marketing Co-ordinators in service settings

“The senior management team takes a holistic view across all of their work. Marketing doesn't operate on its own – the skill of the department is being able to work across the organisation.”

Third sector

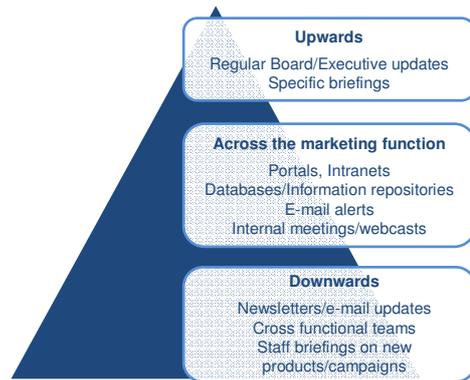
Theme 2: Understanding customers and the market
(2 associated characteristics)

Characteristic 4: Customer insight is generated, collected and interpreted using multiple, ongoing methods and routinely shared to inform strategic and operational plans



Gathering and using insight

- Established resources and number of processes and systems in place
- Data and customer information stored on information repositories
- Shared across organisations in numerous ways but recognised by all as a key challenge to do effectively
- Less evidence in third sector where insight is used to identify customer needs that they might not be currently serving



Characteristic 5: The activities of the competition and wider changes to the external environment are continually monitored and measured



Examples of activities undertaken across organisations:

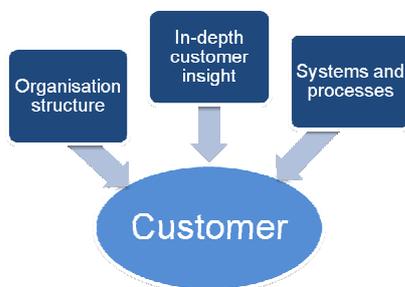
- Benchmarking
- Market studies
- Tracking studies
- Absolute measures (e.g. % market share)
- Key metrics (e.g. brand equity)
- Customer satisfaction
- Customer opinion

“There is industry data so we know where others’ prices are, we know what their line-ups are and we know what prices they charge...so we understand where we sit and then can decide whether we react to that information or not.”

Private sector

Theme 3: Customer-centric approaches (3 associated characteristics)

Characteristic 6: The organisation as a whole has put their customers at the centre of everything it does, developing products, services and processes to meet their needs



"We have a group of people with dementia to consult with and ask 'Are you comfortable with this?' We don't produce materials for people with dementia without talking to people with dementia and asking them to review it."

Third sector

"The organisation's intense focus is our purpose to improve consumers' lives in all parts of the world more completely. That's really what focuses and drives us. Our structure has been designed towards servicing the customer, putting the customer at the centre of it."

Private sector

Characteristic 7: The organisation has a commitment to creating long-term relationships with its customers

- Evident in increased focus and resource to measuring customer satisfaction and brand loyalty
- Using other means of engaging with customers, e.g. corporate social responsibility activities
- Shared vision amongst staff
- Recognition of different types of interaction between customers and an organisation, especially amongst third sector (service user / fundraiser)

“Our volunteers are trained as visitor orientated people who know how to ‘read’ a visitor and assess what sort of interaction with the brand they might want... It is increasingly seen as part of the brand, how we come across as an organisation is communicated not just through the quality of our marketing materials but the behaviours we exhibit.”

Third sector

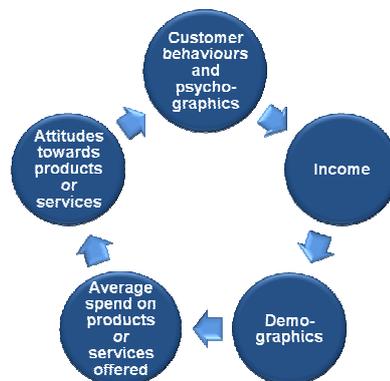
Characteristic 8: Customer groups are segmented in recognition of the fact that one size does not fit all...

Segmentation is key to marketing

- Recognised as important to both private and third sector organisations
- Tends to be conducted internally and is refreshed every few years

“It [segmentation] is done in three different areas of the business. In terms of the research it is done by the commercial insight team. In terms of the behavioural segmentation that is done within the product teams. And then there is a more strategic level (driven by the Board) where they attempt to put a value on different types of customers.”

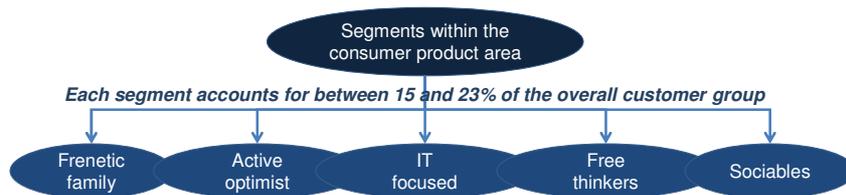
Private sector



Characteristic 8: ...segmentation is updated to reflect new insights and changes in the environment, and is shared and understood across the organisation



Example of segmentation: Private sector – technology organisation



3. Public sector road testing

Views on themes and associated characteristics

- Agreement across stakeholders with the identified themes and characteristics and their importance
- Certain characteristics felt to be better embedded in existing organisations than others, e.g. senior level buy-in
- Work still to be done on customers being at the centre of everything an organisation does

“All of the themes and characteristics are important, but the most important will vary dependent on each individual organisation – ultimately you need to be able to tick all the boxes, although those around customers are key, whilst organisational structure and culture provides you with the mechanism for reaching these customers.”

Director of Public Health Representative

Opportunities and key influencers for social marketing

Opportunities:

- Positioning with work to deliver the NHS Outcomes Framework, Public Health Outcomes Framework, wider Public Health Responsibility Deal
- Continuing need for centres of excellence

Key influencers:

- Public Health England, NHS Commissioning Board, HealthWatch, Health & Wellbeing Boards
- GP Commissioning Consortia, Directors of Public Health

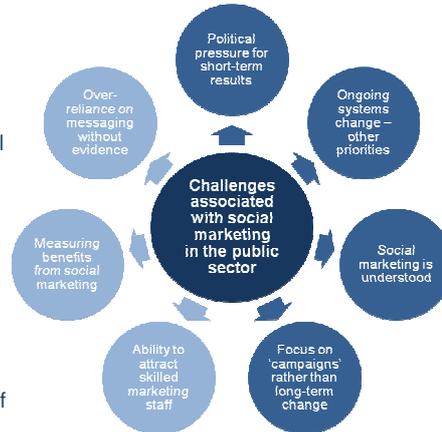
“There is a massive opportunity at the moment as people need to take a marketing approach to better understand problems, motivations and attitudes in order to really influence the public with less resources. We need to understand that we are on a journey...”

NHS Representative

Challenges and practical next steps needed

Examples of practical steps needed:

- Self assess against the identified characteristics
- Build the business case – Highlight to key audiences how effective and efficient social marketing can assist in behaviour change and achievement of outcomes
- Support with case study examples, focusing on the issue, actions taken and outcomes achieved
- Peer-to-peer organisational support
- Mini responsibility deals at a local level
- Talk with your staff – they have a wealth of 'free' customer insight information!



4. Discussion and questions

The NSMC products and services

The NSMC website

- One Stop Shop
- Value for Money tool
- ShowCase database
- Planning guide and toolbox
- E-learning



Other resources

- The Big Pocket Guide
- Guide to procuring social marketing services
- The National Occupational Standards for social marketing: a short guide
- Benchmark criteria
- The NSMC e-bulletin
- Quality improvement framework

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