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White Paper

5½ Reasons To Outsource Your Marketing Communications



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5 1/2 Reasons To Outsource Your Marketing Communications

"A good marketing communications firm is able to develop and put forth the quintessential difference between the client's product or service and the competition's. "

Granted, you're hearing this from a biased source, but you still might want to consider the following 5 1/2 reasons to outsource when examining how you approach your marketing communications department staffing. If you disagree with this point-of-view, let us know. Here are our 5 1/2 reasons:

1. Ideas

To a great degree, in-house personnel are weaker at the idea generation process. It's easy to learn how to use a desktop publishing system and produce all sorts of ads, brochures, catalogs, and other graphic projects, but making those ads work is another matter. Marketing communications firms specialize in looking at a situation and coming up with ideas that make the ad or brochure work better. It's rare to find a client-driven in-house marketing department that can do this consistently.

2. Planning

Even though many in-house departments claim to do planning, they show a noticeable lack of expertise in the process. Many marketing communications firms are better at doing this – often performing the kind of intensive but timely market research needed to make a determination on industries, competitors, markets, and products. The issue for in-house teams is that they are unable to be totally objective about what they are hearing, which brings us to the next point.

3. Offer Objective Opinion

Probably the most important factor a marketing communications firm can contribute to a client is their objectivity. It's difficult for clients to look at their own marketing situations from an objective third party viewpoint. Marketing communications firms can. The good ones are able to see beyond the internal issues concerning products, markets, and budgets and get to the core of the issue. As is said in the legal business, "any man who defends himself has a fool for a lawyer." The same should be said about any company that feels objective enough to provide their own counsel on marketing.

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4. Hiring / Benefits Issues

In this era of corporate downsizing, the issue of going or remaining in-house for a service that can clearly be done better, more effectively, and less expensively outside is not a hard decision. The hourly rate paid to most marketing communications firms will come very close to what most companies pay in-house personnel when you consider the full payroll costs (i.e., benefits, profit-sharing, expenses, vacation, sick days, etc.). That doesn't even cover the corporate cost of equipment, lost hours and false starts, all of which the marketing communications firm bears in most relationships.

5. Agency Responsibility

Another very important factor is the agency's ability to take full responsibility on any outside purchase until the client accepts delivery. Clients who buy for themselves take their chances in the marketplace. Advertising and design are highly technical disciplines today. One false move, one typo, one wrong color choice could cost thousands of dollars. If an agency is involved, one of their functions is to take on those responsibilities, enabling their client to expect delivery of commercially acceptable work, or not to pay.

5½. Differentiate the Client's Product

Most important, a good marketing communications firm is able to develop and put forth the quintessential difference between the client's product or service and the competition's. Without sharing this unique difference, almost no advertising or marketing effort is effective. This has historically been the marketing communication firm's role in the relationship. Clients who feel they can do without this quintessential product uniqueness do so at their own risk. Which is exactly the point. Clients should have marketing communications firm partnerships to bring this to fruition. ■

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