



Introduction

What is marketing? It's a broad, challenging and often misunderstood function. Ask several people to define it and you'll probably get very different answers:

- ▶ It's brochures and slogans and print ads in magazines
- ▶ It's websites and email campaigns
- ▶ It's communicating with customers
- ▶ It's an MBA crunching numbers on brand equity and market share

Yet marketing is much more than brochures and websites and numbers; it's an investment that generates revenue, profit and opportunity for growth.

Marketing is the process of developing and communicating value to your prospects and customers. Think about every step you take to sell, service and manage your customers:

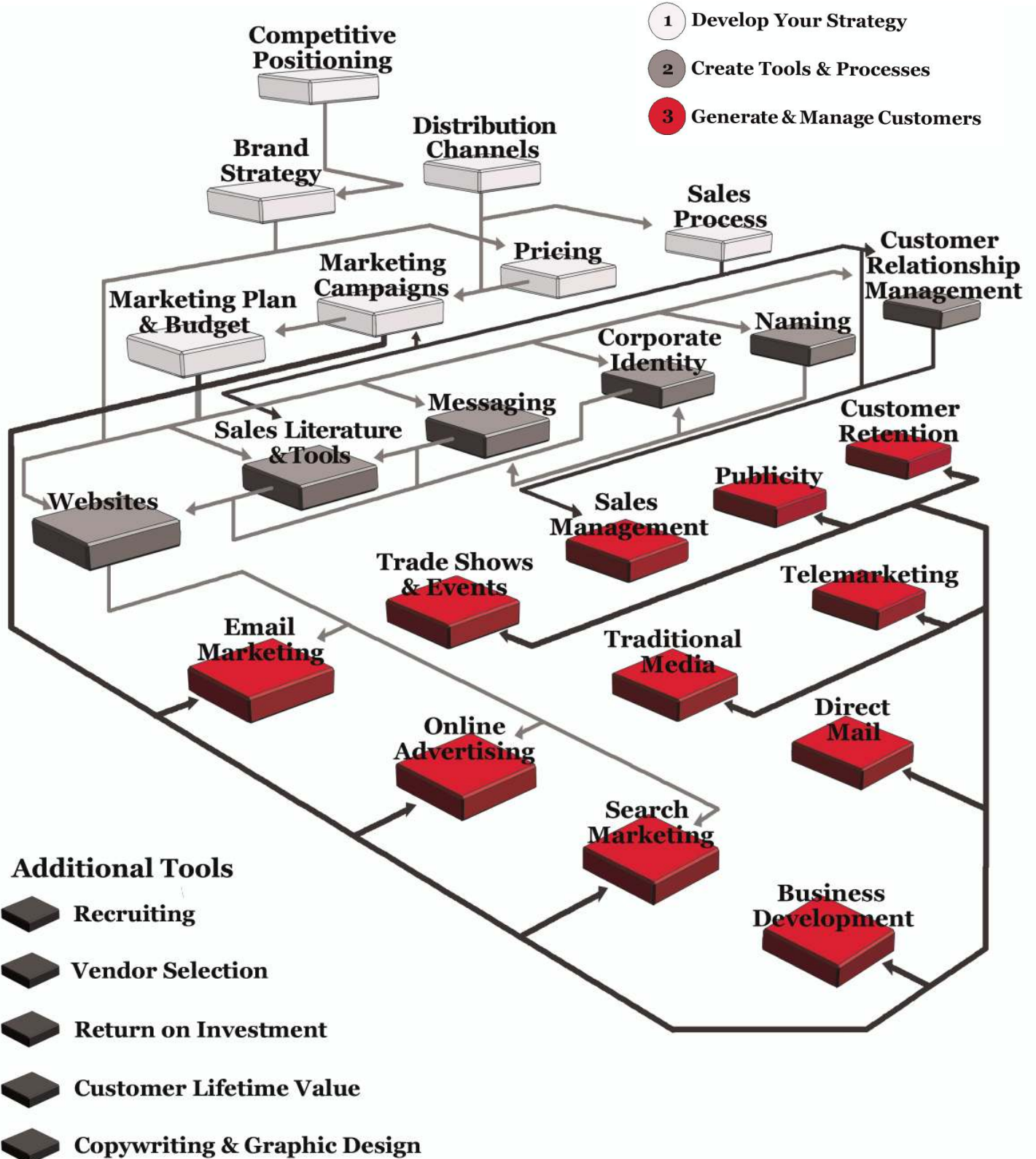
- ▶ Your knowledge of the market and your strategy to penetrate it
- ▶ The distribution channels you use to connect with your customers
- ▶ Your pricing strategy
- ▶ The messages you deliver to your market
- ▶ The look and feel of your marketing materials
- ▶ The experience you deliver to your market and customers
- ▶ The actions of your sales and service reps
- ▶ All of the planning, preparation, forecasting and measurement of your investments

Good marketing is essential for every company. It can make a company with a mediocre product successful, but poor marketing can send a good company out of business. Yet even business-to-business (B2B) marketing is often seen as a soft creative field instead of the engine that drives company revenue.

Key concepts & steps

The Strategic Marketing Process organizes 29 marketing subjects into three categories:

- 1 Develop Your Strategy
- 2 Create Tools & Processes
- 3 Generate & Manage Customers



This guidebook provides a short, essential introduction for each subject. The maps also show how one subject is linked to others.

In a perfect world, you would start with competitive positioning and build your entire marketing program following this process. Unless you're a startup company, you probably don't have time to do so; you need to focus on the task at hand. That's fine. Use your M.O. to tackle projects as they come up.

Marketing is complex, but don't shy away from subjects that could help you grow your business; repetition is the key to success. Embrace marketing, and most importantly, enjoy creating and communicating your value to your market.

Good luck!



NOTE

The Strategic Marketing Process is designed for business-to-business (B2B) marketers. Business-to-consumer marketers (B2C) follow a similar process, with a few additional subjects like product placement, market demographics and packaging.

In addition, all of the concepts and instructions in the process apply to both product marketing and service marketing. However, the phrase “product/service” is long and distracting, so we just use the term “product.”