

Marketing Organization and Process Design

Client Profile: A large Midwest-based technology company

Situation:

- 1) Client was highly decentralized within its corporate marketing group and among the independently managed field marketing groups in 170 U.S. markets.
- 2) The Client determined the relationship between its corporate marketing organization and its primary external marketing partner was not working well.
 - significant disagreements developed on product positioning strategies and creative direction for advertising
 - major strains over the cost and productions schedules for completion of programs.

Contribution:

- Conducted comprehensive relationship assessment of the 13 most senior marketing people within each company to determine the core issues involved.
 - Identified substantial issues in the partner relationship, organizational malfunctions, project development/management processes, and internal communications issues
 - Recognized Client issues were leading to inefficiencies and conflict both internally and with the marketing partner.
- Structured a matrix organization, tying the product management function (marketing program strategies) and the brand and advertising function (design and production of programs).
 - Organization allowed branding and advertising function to have management authority over all aspects of marketing program development
 - Linked independent product marketing efforts.
 - Enabled more effective product bundling and messaging focused on end-user needs.

Recommendations:

Short-term solution:

- Engage the Client's marketing partner in highly personalized behavior training and coaching programs, designed by The Bedford Group.
- Client to enact a series of actions to change the fundamental culture, organization and processes used to develop and implement marketing strategies:
 - A new project development and process flow, eliminating several redundant steps
 - A marketing counsel to represent the views of a very large constituency that had been here-to-for required to weigh-in on each project
 - Fewer people who must "approve" a project and a "negative response option" rule that put the burden on the advisor/approver to respond within a set period of time or lose rights to give input.

Longer-term solution:

- Eliminate individual product marketing functions in favor of a product-neutral/end-user segment organization.
 - More effectively bundle products and services to meet the needs of identified customer segments
 - Package marketing messages more appropriately.

Client Impact:

Enabled Client to eliminate redundancy, improve marketing efficiency, and reduce conflict between Client management and marketing partner.