

Career Opportunities in Marketing

The objective of any firm is to market and sell its products or services profitably. In small firms, the owner or chief executive officer might assume all advertising, promotions, marketing, and sales responsibilities. In large firms, which may offer numerous products and services nationally or even worldwide, an executive vice president directs overall advertising, promotions, marketing, and sales policies. Advertising, marketing, promotions, and sales managers coordinate the market research, marketing strategy, sales, advertising, promotion, pricing, and product development. There are several ways to achieve these goals. Strategic marketing involves planning the way a firm will handle the marketing of its product or service by targeting their appropriate audience or clientele. Tactical marketing includes the tasks to achieve this strategy, such as making distributing fliers or making cold calls. Those distinctions depend upon whether a firm is marketing to another business, business to business marketing, or whether they are advertising a service, services marketing. It is important to remember the 3C's (customers, competitors, channels) and the 4P's (product, positioning, price, promotion), which are the basic foundations of what marketers do.

Marketing managers develop the firm's detailed marketing strategy. With the help of subordinates, including product development managers and market research managers, they determine the demand for products and services offered by the firm and its competitors. In addition, they identify potential markets—for example, business firms, wholesalers, retailers, government, or the general public. Marketing managers develop pricing strategy with an eye towards maximizing the firm's share of the market and its profits while ensuring that the firm's customers are satisfied. In collaboration with sales, product development, and other managers, they monitor trends that indicate the need for new products and services and oversee product development. Marketing managers work with advertising and promotion managers to promote the firm's products and services and to attract potential users.

Sales managers direct the firm's sales program. They assign sales territories, set goals, and establish training programs for the sales representatives. Managers advise the sales representatives on ways to improve their sales performance. In large, multiproduct firms, they oversee regional and local sales managers and their staffs. Sales managers maintain contact with dealers and distributors. They analyze sales statistics gathered by their staffs to determine sales potential and inventory requirements and monitor the preferences of customers. Such information is vital to develop products and maximize profits. (taken from the U.S. Department of Labor 2002-2003 Occupational Outlook Handbook)

Career Paths and Entry Salaries

A wide range of educational backgrounds are suitable for entry into advertising, marketing, promotions, and sales managerial jobs, but many employers prefer those with experience in related occupations plus a broad liberal arts background. A bachelor's degree in sociology, psychology, literature, journalism, or philosophy, among other subjects, is acceptable. However, requirements vary, depending upon the particular job.

Although experience, ability, and leadership are emphasized for promotion, advancement can be accelerated by participation in management training programs conducted by many large firms. Many firms also provide their employees with continuing education opportunities, either in-house or at local colleges and universities, and encourage employee participation in seminars and conferences, often provided by professional societies. In

collaboration with colleges and universities, numerous marketing and related associations sponsor national or local management training programs. Courses include brand and product management, international marketing, sales management evaluation, telemarketing and direct sales, interactive marketing, promotion, marketing communication, market research, organizational communication, and data processing systems procedures and management. Many firms pay all or part of the cost for those who successfully complete courses.

Median annual earnings in 2000 for advertising and promotions managers were \$53,360; marketing managers, \$71,240; and sales managers, \$68,520. Earnings ranged from less than \$27,840 for the lowest 10 percent of advertising and promotions managers, to more than \$137,780 for the highest 10 percent of sales managers (stats.bls.gov/oco/ocos020.htm). As a basis for comparison, a marketing manager in New York City earned an average salary of \$74,520 as of July 2003. Half of managers in this position would earn between \$50,539 and \$94,245 (www.wetfeet.com).

Qualifications Necessary/Application Procedures to Enter Field

For marketing, sales, and promotion management positions, some employers prefer a bachelor's or master's degree in business administration with an emphasis on marketing. Courses in business law, economics, accounting, finance, mathematics, and statistics are advantageous. In highly technical industries, such as computer and electronics manufacturing, a bachelor's degree in engineering or science, combined with a master's degree in business administration, is preferred.

Most advertising, marketing, promotions, and sales management positions are filled by promoting experienced staff or related professional or technical personnel. For example, many managers are former sales representatives, purchasing agents, buyers, product or brand specialists, advertising specialists, and promotion specialists. In small firms, where the number of positions is limited, advancement to a management position usually comes slowly. In large firms, promotion may occur more quickly.

Persons interested in becoming advertising, marketing, promotions, public relations, and sales managers should be mature, creative, highly motivated, resistant to stress, flexible, and decisive. The ability to communicate persuasively, both orally and in writing, with other managers, staff, and the public is vital. These managers also need tact, good judgment, and exceptional ability to establish and maintain effective personal relationships with supervisory and professional staff members and client firms.

Sample Employers

- Action Marketing Research, www.action-research.com/
- Eastman Kodak, www.kodak.com
- Gartner Group, Inc., www.gartner.com/init
- Hanover Direct, Inc., www.hanoverdirect.com/
- Media Networks, Inc., www.mni.com/
- Nielsen Media Research Company, www.nielsenmedia.com/
- True North Communications (formerly FCB Leber Katz Partners), www.truenorth.com/frame.html

*Remember that most major companies have their own marketing departments

Demand and Future Challenges of Profession

Advertising, marketing, promotions, and sales managers held about 633,000 jobs in the U.S. in 2000. The following tabulation shows the distribution of jobs by occupational specialty.

Sales managers 337,000
Marketing managers 188,000
Advertising and promotions managers 64,000

These managers were found in virtually every industry. Sales managers held almost half of the jobs; most were employed in wholesale and retail trade, manufacturing, and services industries. Marketing managers held more than one-fourth of the jobs; services and manufacturing industries employed about two-thirds of marketing managers. Half of advertising and promotions managers worked in services industries, including advertising, computer and data processing, and engineering and management services.
(stats.bls.gov/oco/ocos020.htm)

Advertising, marketing, promotions, and sales manager jobs are highly coveted and will be sought by other managers or highly experienced professional and technical personnel, resulting in keen competition. College graduates with related experience, a high level of creativity, and strong communication skills should have the best job opportunities. Those who have new media and interactive marketing skills will be particularly sought after. Employment of advertising, marketing, promotions, public relations, and sales managers is expected to increase faster than the average for all occupations through 2010. Increasingly intense domestic and global competition in products and services offered to consumers should require greater marketing and promotional efforts by managers.

Resources For More Information

Associations/Websites

- American Marketing Association (AMA) provides professional development services for marketing professionals such as special interest groups, seminars and publications. It also has a reference center focusing on marketing issues. marketingpower.com
- Direct Marketing Association (DMA) has been the leading source of news and information for direct marketers since 1917. www.the-dma.org/
- Association for Women in Communications (AWC) recognizes the complex relationships that exist across the communications disciplines. www.WOMCOM.org/
- Business Marketing Association. <http://www.marketing.org/>

Publications

AMA Publishing Group publishes some of the top marketing books as well as eight business magazines and scholarly journals for professional development purposes and for following the latest research and trends in the marketing industry.