

the¹brandgym

May 2011

**BRANDGYM
RESEARCH PAPER 4**

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Turbo Marketing Plans



Turbo Marketing Plans



About the research

In this, our 4th global marketing leaders survey, we asked 'What makes a brilliant marketing plan?'. Over 150 senior marketing professionals across Europe, Africa, Asia, the USA and Latin America responded. They come from top companies in sectors as diverse as beer, breakfast cereals and banking.

We have brought to life the findings with examples of effective marketing plans from our work on brandgym projects, and through interesting case studies we have come across in our blogging and book writing.



The brandgym partners

Introduction

Increasingly companies we work with are looking to us to help them not only create a clear brand vision, but to turn it into action, in the form of a brilliant marketing plan. This is because, in many cases, their own processes for creating marketing plans seems to be too long, and too laborious.

That is why we decided to devote this paper to looking at ways to make marketing plans brilliant – every time.

In this paper we look at the following areas:

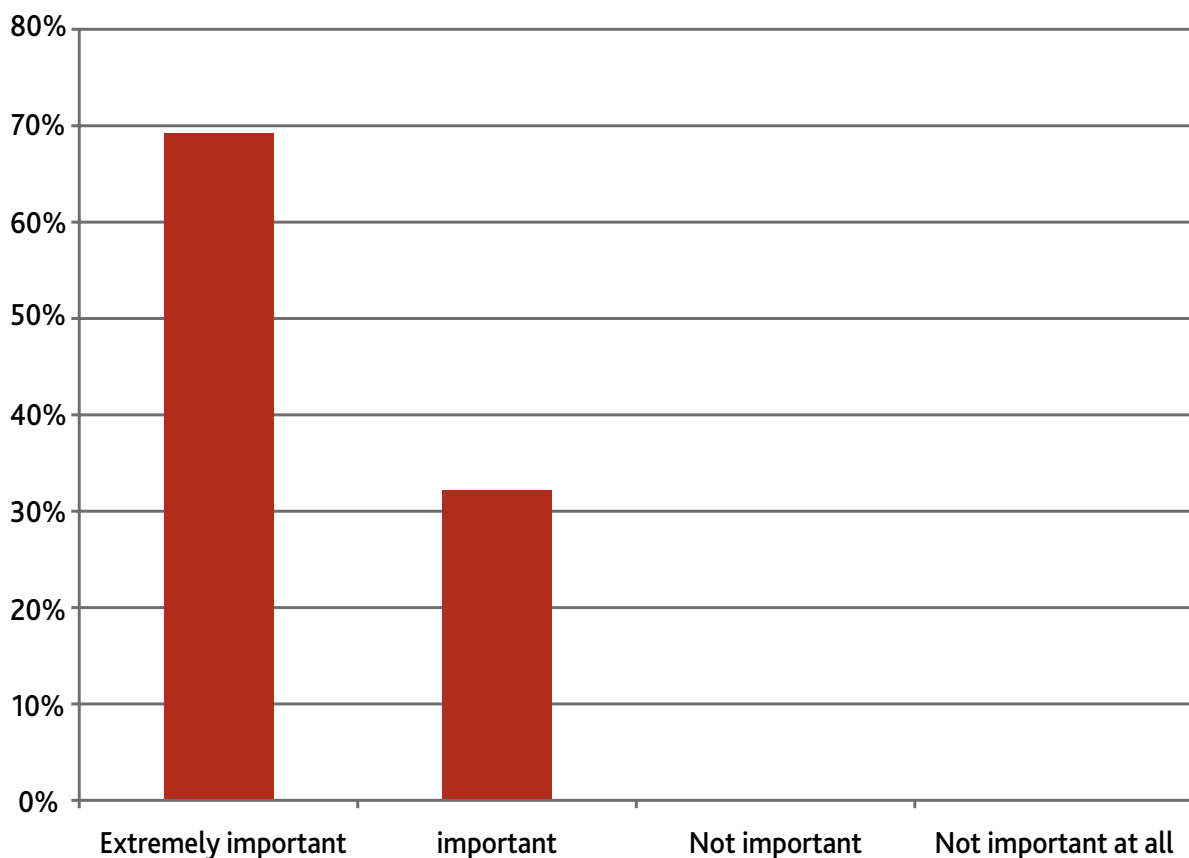
- **Marketing plans matter:** the importance of getting your plan right
- **Turbo charging marketing plans:** how to make plans more effective through insight, integration and inspiration
- **Fast and flexible:** making the planning process quicker and more responsive to your needs

Part 1: Marketing plans matter



Our research confirms that the annual marketing plan still plays a vital role in today's modern business world. Around 70% of the panel said the marketing plan was extremely important in driving brand and business growth, with the balance rating it as important.

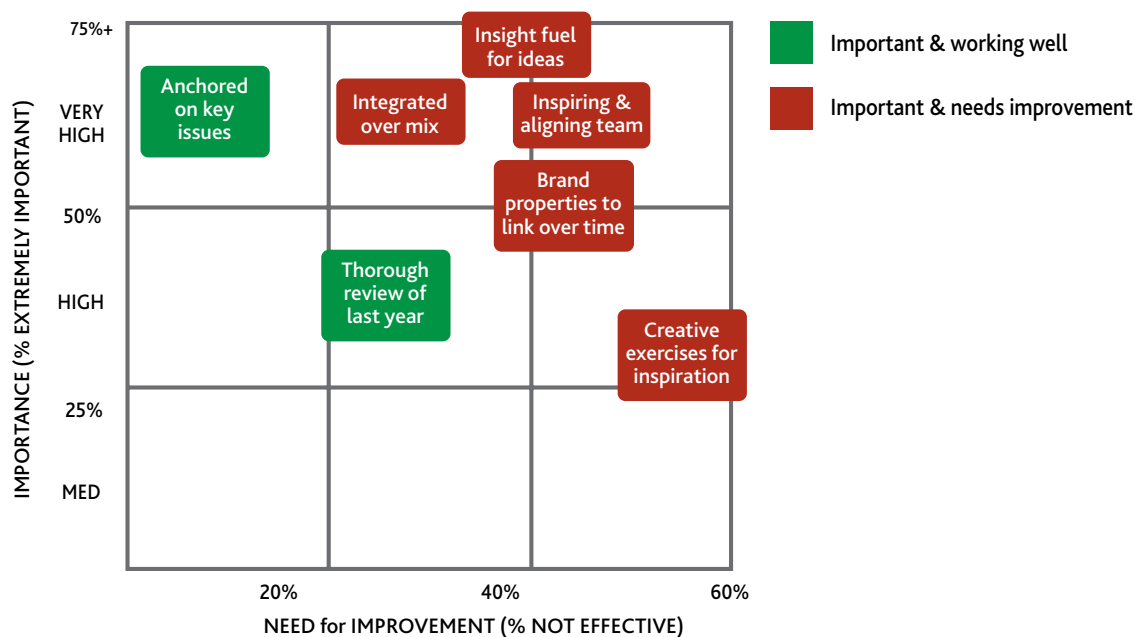
Importance of Marketing Plan for Brand & Business Growth?





Part 2: Turbo-charging marketing plans

All the areas we asked about were seen as important for a brilliant marketing plan. However, some were more crucial than others (see below for rating and the need for improvement also varied):



Follow the money: it was good to see that “anchoring plans on key business issues” was both extremely important, and working well: less than 20% of people said improvement was needed here. “A thorough review of what worked last year” was important, though less so, and working OK.

Insight, integration, inspiration: these areas were ranked as being very important AND in need of more improvement. “Insight fuel for ideas” was ranked as the single most important factor, but almost 40% of people said this was not working well at the moment. Creative exercises for inspiration were even more lacking, mentioned by 2/3 of the panel

In addition, there was a need to be much better at inspiring and aligning the team. Finally, there was also a need for better integration both across the mix, and especially over time using brand properties.

The next section of the paper looks at combining insight, integration and inspiration to create what we call ‘Turbo marketing plans’

Part 2: Turbo-charging marketing plans



1. Insight: Fuel for idea creation

Injecting fresh insight was rated the single most important factor for an effective marketing planning process and one with room for much improvement. For marketing plan inspiration we suggest going beyond standard qual groups to get under the skin of the consumer, and see them as people more than category users. Your marketing plan has to reach them through the clutter of their everyday lives, so getting a good understanding of their passions and “pain points” is a very good place to focus. Here are some starter ideas:



Bring your consumer to life : As one marketing director said, “Time spent defining the target audience - this is vital but not enough time is spent on it”.

Real life consumer portraits play an important role here. But don't rely on Powerpoint. Try using video diaries including TV clips from relevant programmes your consumers love.

Understand passion points: immerse your team in the consumer's world by understanding their passion points. You can spend time with consumers doing what they love doing. So, for a beer targeting young men this could be going to watch the game at their mates' house, fixing up cars or going to music festivals.



Understand cultural trends: what is going on in wider culture for your consumers that is impacting their lives? Recent topics discussed have included tablet computing/ iPads, uncertainty over jobs and concerns about health/diet. Find the things that have some relevance for your category and see them from your consumer's point of view. This may only need desk research or to watch the right TV programmes, or it may need a deeper study of culture and macro trends.



Part 2: Turbo-charging marketing plans

2 Integration: boosting marketing effectiveness

Two needs for improved integration of marketing were identified: integrating different activities over time and secondly, integrating for each of these activities across the marketing mix

Creating brand properties to link marketing over time was one of the biggest areas for improvement. Here, we've found inspiration by looking at the producers of TV series. They cleverly use theme music, symbols, characters, sets and the like to create consistency over time. Indeed, we now encourage teams to think about creating the 'season' for their brand, with each phase of activity telling a fresh chapter of a story, and brand properties creating consistency.



Used consistently over at least 2-3 years, brands properties such as logos, colours, symbols and slogans help create 'memory structure'. These associations become literally 'hard wired' into our brains, helping simplify the choices we have to make in an ever-more busy world.

For example, UK supermarket Sainsbury's have used Chef Jamie Oliver in over 60 episodes of their 'Taste the Difference' campaign over 13 years. Analysis by the IPA show this campaign has added £1.9billion in incremental sales.

Brand Properties: • Jamie Oliver • Music • Endline



Chapter 1: "Feed your family for a fiver"

Chapter 2: Xmas

Chapter 3: "Taste the Difference"

Part 2: Turbo-charging marketing plans



Driving integration across the marketing mix for each of the chapters of activity was also an important area where plans could be more effective. The real opportunity is to go beyond consistency in look and feel to what Phil Chapman, CMO of Kerry Foods and architect of T-Mobile's Dance campaign, calls 'amplification'.

Amplification involves getting different elements of the plan working together to reinforce one another, including harnessing the full power of online media. An example is the Lynx Jet campaign in Australia, which did just this in what the agency called a 'brand explosion', delivering a record all-time share and sales growth of 14%.



Part 2: Turbo-charging marketing plans



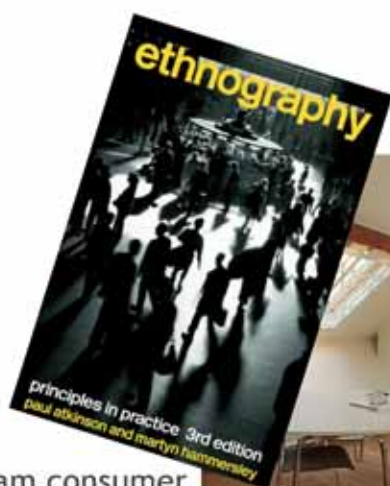
3 Inspiration: align and energize the team

The only strategy consumers see is what is executed in market, so you need to make sure the whole team is behind the plan and that it really will deliver on what is expected.

It is therefore key to get the wider business team and key creative agencies involved from the start. See this as a way to get them engaged in and inspired by the marketing plan process. This also has the benefit of speeding up the process by getting them aligned early on.

Ideas to make development of your marketing plan a shared journey that creates energy, rather than draining it, include:

- Key functions & agencies all involved
- Collaborative, creative exercises to cross-pollinate ideas
- Clear deadlines to keep everyone on track
- Use consumer immersion to inspire people



Team consumer immersion

Inspiring venues for collaborative work sessions

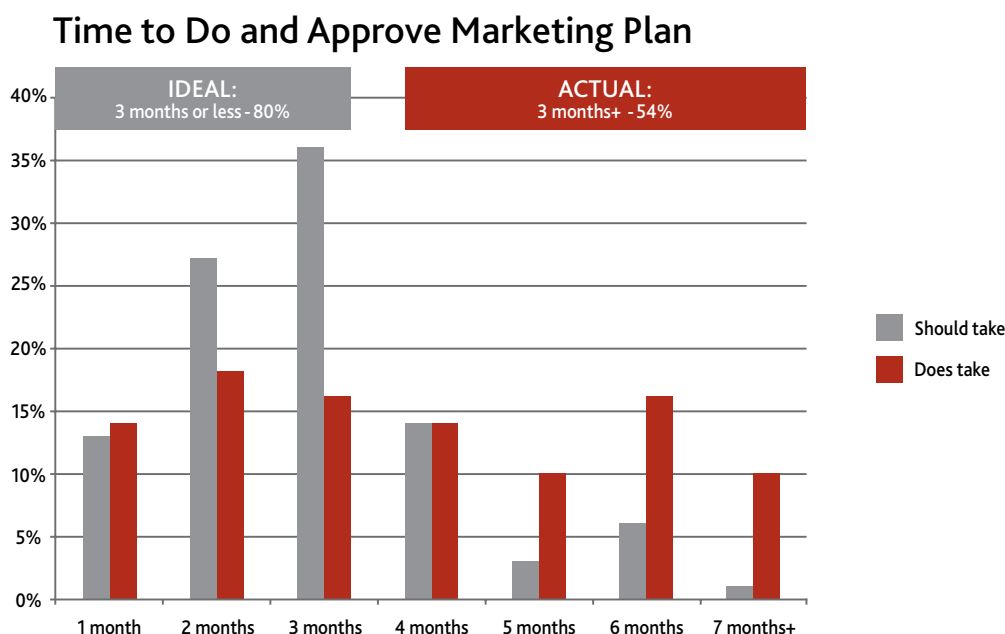


Clear deadlines

Part 3: Need for speed



The research suggests that 3 months is about the ideal time for the creation and approval of an annual marketing plan, with c.80% of the panel suggesting this time-frame. However, in reality marketing planning is taking much longer. Over half the panel said the process took 4 months or more, with an amazing 30% saying the process took 6 months or more!



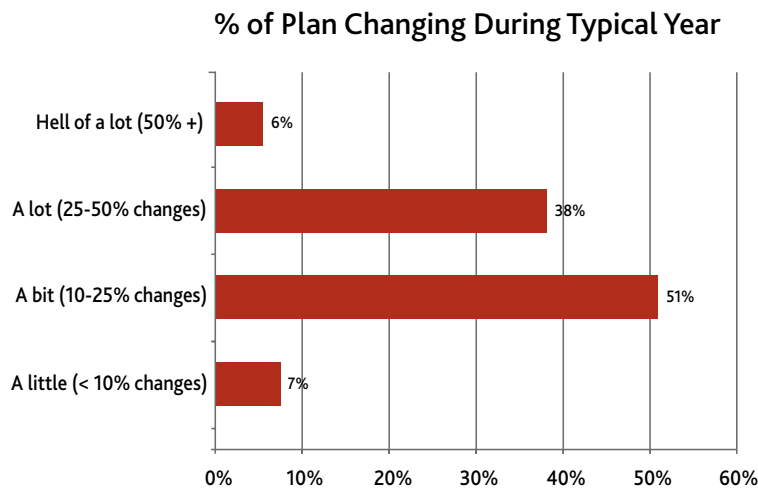
Feedback from the research, coupled with our own practical experience, suggests some ways of speeding up the process without cutting on the quality of the outputs:

- **Align senior stakeholders up-front:** seems a no-brainer, but failure to agree key brand, business and investment targets early on leads to painful re-work down the line
- **Cross-functional team:** as one survey participant said "A team-based process builds commitment to implementation." Involving the creative agencies and key functions like Sales creates a better plan, and less re-work.
- **'Drop-dead lines':** every process had dead-lines, but few stick to them. Try to build in key events or activities that force sticking to timings, such as Apple's key announcements of launch plans in their staged external events.

Part 4: Keep some flex



The final finding from the research shows the need for flexibility in the planning process. Almost half the panel said that 25%+ of the plan changed during a typical year, with a small minority saying that 10% or less changed.



The main suggestion from survey participants was for brand planning to be more of an ongoing, fluid process. An annual review and plan is important, to help a team step back, review what's working and inject fresh insight to create an overall plan. But this annual review should be complemented with follow-up work, as one survey participant suggested: "brand planning should be an ongoing, rolling process with break points for standing back, checking and submitting refreshed numbers."

Conclusion

This research has confirmed the key role still played by the annual marketing plan in driving brand and business growth. The ideal planning process to create what we call "Turbo Marketing Plans" should build on the following principles:

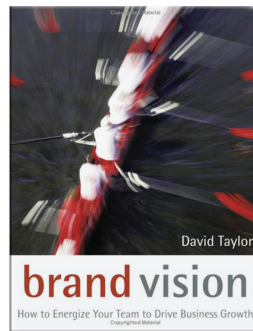
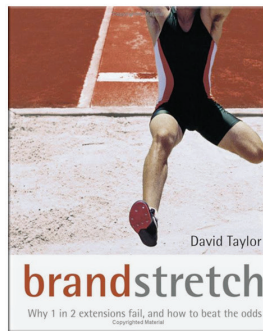
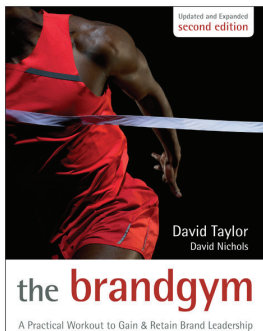
- **Insight:** fresh insight fuel to inspire new ideas
- **Inspiration:** a team journey that creates energy and alignment
- **Integration:** chapters of a brand story, amplified across the mix and linked over time
- **Fast and flexible:** efficient process completed in c. 3 months, flexible enough to adapt to changes

the brandgym

Brand Leadership Coaching



- We are a network of **6 senior brand coaches** helping companies gain and retain brand leadership.
- Our Turbo Marketing approach builds on the key findings from this research, helping you:
 - Use fresh insight fuel as inspiration
 - Create a series of integrated "chapters" of your brand story
 - Build brand properties to boost marketing effectiveness
 - 'Follow the money' approach anchors plans on business issues
 - Build team energy and alignment through a collaborative, cross-functional process
- Additional brandgym services include **Brand Vision to Action** and **Brand-led Innovation**
- We have published **6 books on brand leadership** including the updated version of *the brandgym*, Amazon's best-selling management book



- We have a **track record with leading companies** including SAB Miller, Unilever, Tesco and Philips



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