

BrandMatters

Connecting Business to Brand™

Marketing in 2009: What it takes to win *Highlights & Insights*

In April 2009, we solicited input from marketing professionals (including yourself), representing a wide range of industries, on the topic of *Marketing in 2009: What it takes to win*.

Below please find a summary (by question) - a total of 28 respondents input were included in the summary.

Q.1. On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is 'much more concerned' and 5 is 'much less concerned', how concerned are you about expected business results (revenue and profitability) in 2009 compared to the previous year?

Rating	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	Mean
# of responses	8	9	4	6	1	2.39

➔ Almost two-thirds of respondents (65%) are concerned or very concerned about business results (revenue & profitability) for 2009.

Q.2. What are the top marketing issues on your mind (list up to three)?

- (1) **Attracting and retaining customers.** As expected, organizations want to continue to grow their customer base by reaching new customers as well as enhancing customer loyalty. A specific challenge noted by many respondents to reach 2009 business objectives is overcoming low consumer confidence. Many organizations cited a need for more effective communications, including using new channels (social networking), as well as adapting strategy to address low consumer confidence.

Verbatim:

- "Creating new revenue streams"
- "Leveraging the current market environment to strengthen client/prospect relationship"

- (2) **Marketing budget constraints.** Although not all organizations are cutting their marketing spend, most marketing managers are feeling increased pressure to maximize the efficiency of their marketing dollars. This resultant focus on MROI is accompanied with a renewed attention to innovative, cost-efficient marketing strategies.

Verbatim:

- "Maximizing the efficiency of our spend"
- "Measurability [is an issue]"

- (3) **Losing long-term strategic focus/momentum.** With an increased focus on immediate results, many respondents indicated the challenge of following through on pre-recession strategic planning initiatives.

Verbatim:

-“Getting government officials to see the benefit of staying the course on long-range marketing plans.”

Q.3. In which of the following marketing & communications programs do you intend to place the most focus (time and budget) during 2009? Please rank your top three (3) areas of focus, where 1 indicates the highest priority, 2 denotes the second priority, and 3 is the third.

PROGRAM	#1 rank	#2 rank	#3 rank	Total # of rankings
Marketing communications planning	3	5	2	10
E-marketing (ie. Email campaign)	4	2	2	8
New product development	2	2	3	7
Promotion	1	3	3	7
Advertising	2	4		6
Branding (ie. Brand repositioning)	4		2	6
Social networking		2	4	6
Distribution (ie. New channel distribution)	1	1	4	6
Market research	2	1	2	5
On-line branding (ie. Web redevelopment)		4	1	5
Employee communications	2	2		4
Pricing	3		1	4
OTHER: Public relations	2			2
Employee research	1			1
OTHER: In-store product sampling	1			1
OTHER: Integrated mainstream and social media communications	1			1
OTHER: CRM		1		1
OTHER: Brochure development			1	1
OTHER: cross selling			1	1
OTHER: Sponsorship			1	1

- ➔ General themes include: cost-efficient communications spending, obtaining short-term returns, and a need for innovation (product and brand).

Q.4. Why did you rank these marketing programs as top priorities for 2009?

(1) Support strategic planning;

Verbatim:

- “Determine priorities, will impact quality of planning...”
- “Solidify strategic objectives”

(2) Maintain a fresh brand image and innovatively communicate it;

Verbatim:

- “Improve our profile”
- “Spread word-of-mouth in an innovative, cost-efficient way”

(3) Maximize MROI; and

Verbatim:

- "Get the most tangible return on reduced marketing investment"
- "Leveraging cost-efficient methods of communicating to the largest group of people I can touch in order to generate leads"

(4) Emerge from the recession in a competitively stronger position.

Verbatim:

- "Build brand equity"
- "Need to maintain top of mind awareness with customers, will payoff in droves after the recession"

In general from our questionnaire responses, the top sectors which continue to invest in marketing and branding are health care, education and professional trade Associations.