

# Marketing Hardball



***“A good plan, violently executed now, is better than a perfect plan tomorrow.”***

General George S. Patton

**T**he great thing about having a plan is that it defines a clear-cut path. The direction is certain. The forces are marshalled and ready. So why doesn't the plan work? What's gone wrong with the picture?

It could very well be that the strategy is fine. The problem may be tactics. Execution is tentative, misguided or too rigid. Great ideas backed up by ineffectual follow-through are the worst waste of resources, because today's hyper-stressed economy will make quick work of traditional sequential organizations.

### **What's the cause?**

Most often, it's not lack of effort, enthusiasm or a basic deficiency of talent in the organization. The talent may be trained and focused on the core business process where the results in the past have been just great. However, rapidly changing market situations and non-traditional competition call for special skills and some quick flexing to achieve planned profitability.

### **What's marketing hardball?**

It has nothing to do with trying hard. It has everything to do with focussing the strength of experience. Our brand of heavy lifting is success-

ful as a direct result of migrating real world experience to unique situations. This happens because we understand instinctively what it takes to get from assessment through implementation. Call it a short learning curve. Some may talk about solutions, but it's accomplishments that count. We come ready to play.

### **SUCCESS**

The criteria for measuring success are changing rapidly. For example, it used to be that a distributor would proudly show off his warehouse filled to the rafters with product. Today, that same distributor works diligently to tailor his inventory as closely as possible to demand. Just in time, not just in case. Now they proudly display the empty warehouse.

### **The Third Set of Eyes**

It wouldn't be unfair to say that our approach is to look at a situation to see it for what it *really* is. Members of a company are prone to certain bias that results from seeing the world as a set of constructs that are the shared wisdom of the organization, and these constructs create their own validity over time ... simply by repetition. Training is often seen simply as a process of passing along this

shared wisdom. Certain "outsiders" that really aren't (such as accountants, suppliers and advertising agencies) are often just as likely to share this corporate point of view. We look at the situation and ask why ... again and again ... until the real problem is uncovered. Especially in situations like:

- A market/response crisis
- A one-time growth opportunity for company or brand
- A turnaround or startup

## The Importance of Context

We believe in understanding the context of each situation, including the role of customers, competitors, the overall economy, the pertinent industry and the specific market as a starting point. And that can be the core challenge. The pace of change today means a rapidly shifting background that can yield radically different market forces. Making sense of this world means understanding the challenges of change to the entire organization and how to position it to respond. Having multiple targets at once is key to our approach.

## Steering the Boat

Designing a context based strategy or a tactical design to carry out the

plan requires a fear free, robust approach. It also requires careful scrutiny of what are likely to be the hidden costs of change. All too often, organizations steer toward the future at flank speed only by watching the wake of their boat. The faster they race the bigger the collision. We help create focus in the right direction.

### CONTEXT

Understanding context is crucial to understanding the problem. Take the example of the customer ordering a replacement part. He complained that although it fit perfectly and the performance rating was correct, several previous parts failed. Upon investigation, it was discovered that the operating temperature routinely exceeded 300° F, a lubricant destroying operating environment that caused all earlier failures. Once the context was defined, the problem disappeared.

$$ER_{M\$} = \Delta EBIT (P_s) - I$$

(Your estimated return on marketing dollars equals the change in EBIT times the probability of success minus the required investment.)

**Choosing the right direction is a decision-making tool ... and a scorecard.**

## The sum is greater than the parts.

Wade & Partners are all about marketing hardball. We have a unique view of the world. We believe that the mission is more than simply coming in, asking a few questions and sending in a report. We define the goal as changing what's not working and improving upon what is. If it means temporarily becoming part of the organization, we can do that. If it means training your people in a new way of looking at the world, that's what we'll do. At the end of the day, the tough marketing and training issues are dealt with and the organization and the people are transformed in a positive way, in the most efficient and effective means possible. And it's your plan, not ours.

***"Everyone has a plan ... until they get hit."***

Cassius Clay

## The Wade Partners

If there's a single word that can be applied to all of the Wade Partners, it's "entrepreneurial." They have a real understanding of what it takes to create a business and sustain it over time. Each is a seasoned, top, hands-on manager and understands what it takes to meet a payroll. Most have also been part of large corporate entities and have had experience with the rigors of managing in large systems and organizations. All have a strong sense of the fundamentals of business and an especially keen sense of street level economics.

Because of their rich background, the Wade Partners bring an unbiased approach to analyzing needs and problems while developing short and long-term plans. They are adept at creating solutions that last, even though they sometimes don't reflect the current common company wisdom. Wade Partners have a wide-ranging set of skills that are used specifically to get results, quickly.

### The Basics

Two of the Wade Partners are recognized for a singular work: *The Power of One*, a widely used (110,000 copies in print) study guide geared to the front line employee with need for understanding the basics of business economics and the impact of the individual on the success of the company. *The Power of One* is used as contextual training with great success as a basic sign-on primer.

## Marketing Hardball In:

### STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

With a real world empathy for tactical execution.

### MARKET RESEARCH

Asking the right questions to the relevant market.

### LOGISTICS

Planning, implementation, control and creativity.

### COMMUNICATIONS

Comprehensive, pertinent, effective and creative for each critical constituent audience.

### TRAINING

Knowledge transfer and contextual comprehension at all levels.

### BRAND MANAGEMENT

Maximizing reach and prospective market coverage.

### ORGANIZATION DESIGN & RECRUITING

Building change-ready teams

### E-COMMERCE SOLUTIONS

Advanced technology leads to inspired marketing.

### CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT

An organization-wide approach utilizing new, relevant technologies.

### CHANNEL MANAGEMENT

Establishing, monitoring, redirecting and enhancing.

### PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

Strategic fit with tactical efficiency.

**WADE**  
&  
**PARTNERS**