

# WINNING...WITH SPEED AND INNOVATION

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As **Apple**, **Coach** and **Nike** have proven, market-share flows to companies whose culture, organization and systems foster both innovation and speed. In the beauty industry, growth acceleration requires leaders who are not afraid to take risks, who champion bold new ideas, who inspire and motivate their teams to step out of the box, and who move new products and services to market . . . quickly. Cosmetics marketers will increasingly encounter the following opportunities:

## I. Leaner Marketing Departments Move Faster

As improvements in supply-chain management have shrunk purchasing and manufacturing lead times with speedier processes, so must marketing departments streamline their own organization and systems. After corporately mandated headcount reductions, marketing organizations will get flatter, eliminating assistants and decreasing hierarchies, thus facilitating quicker information flow and decision-making. Although some executives find that they are performing the same work they had done before they were promoted, their hands-on managerial style is required to guide and expedite work flow.

As corporate and brand-strategy creation moves up higher in the executive suite, marketing departments become the hub of real-time information flow and analysis for retail sales, competitive movement, market share, consumer insights and trend-spotting. Competitive advantage will go to those companies who execute quickly and flawlessly. Smart managers will focus on reducing time at each phase of a project, speeding up the internal decision-making processes, and breaking the inevitable project logjams.

## II. Motivation Drives Support Teams

As the marketing department itself becomes leaner, its dependence on other departments increases. Typically, most of those departments do not report to marketing, but as every brand manager knows, these staff groups are part of their "team" and impact the speed of the development and launch processes. Consider the many departments involved in a new product launch: market research, R&D, copy, legal, package design, package development, package engineering, forecasting, finance, purchasing, manufacturing, distribution, sales, training, advertising, display, sales promotion and public relations. During the early stages of product development, each step in the process is sequential. A delay at any stage can significantly slow down the entire project, and jeopardize the launch date.

Each supporting department has its own internal organization, politics, reports, budgets, systems and processes, not to mention an ever-increasing project load. Changes in a department's personnel, systems and reports can rank higher in importance to some staffers than a new product introduction.

Accordingly, those marketers with the best motivational skills will be the ones whose projects move the fastest. Marketing executives who create coalitions or teams, who clearly and concisely communicate their vision, and who inspire and lead, will get the most respect and cooperation, and hence, gain priority for their projects. In fact, relationship building with key departments can be the key factor ensuring an on-time launch. Clear communication and presentation skills as well as gentle persistence engender support, cooperation and speed.

While most communication is via email, face-to-face meetings become even more important. No matter how bright the marketing manager or how impeccable his or her credentials, interpersonal skills become the key to gaining support from department managers in beating tight deadlines.

## III. Innovation Flows Upward

The major responsibility for innovation will no longer be vested in top management. Instead, that group will create a culture in which change and innovation can flourish at every level of the organization. Since the lower, grass-roots-level managers are closest to the consumer and trade, those marketers become the company's most effective change agents and sources of innovation.

A culture that encourages risk taking and tolerates failure permeates all levels of the firm. Consumer insights combined with out-of-the-box thinking lead to innovative products, package designs, promotions, services, special events, processes and systems. As pro-active and passionate champions of a new idea, with no fear of failure, these managers will successfully engender support from their team, and ultimately gain senior management approval. These newly minted leaders will have the skills required to break the status quo with vision, passion, strong presentation skills, motivational ability, tenacity and persistence.

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