

Mativity and the Marketing Supply Chain

Managing your Distributors and Suppliers more Effectively

What is the Marketing Supply Chain?

Perhaps more so than any other profession, the marketing world is awash with acronyms and descriptors which generally achieve little more than to breed confusion. So what do we mean by the Marketing Supply Chain?

MARKETING SUPPLY CHAIN

Mtivity view the Marketing Supply Chain (MSC) as a collection of resources and processes required to execute a marketing campaign.

Once conceived, the campaign begins with planning and budgeting; continues through the creative processes; is delivered into production; and finally, ends with reporting and measurement.

The MSC is a complex set of workflows and processes involving multiple suppliers and resources operating within immovable constraints. There is little tolerance for poor quality and failure can be very costly.

MARKETING PRODUCTION SUPPLY CHAIN

At Mtivity we also define the production and implementation stages of the MSC as the Marketing Production Supply Chain (PSC). This refers to the processes required to create the physical marketing items or take completed artwork through to print.

This flow of work is generally considered the responsibility of the Marketing Services or Marketing Operations Department.

The Challenges Faced by Marketing Services & Operations

Recent studies have shown a dramatic change in the priorities of those marketers responsible for campaign execution, services and operations.

WHAT ARE THE ISSUES?

As budgets are reduced and revenue targets increase, the adoption of technology solutions and process reviews have become high on the list of priorities for Marketing Operations. The traditional ideals of brand consistency and time to market, have found themselves sharing the spotlight with ownership, accountability and project control, as well as time and cost transparency.

MANAGING COSTS

A common mis-conception is that supplier costs, whether they be creative agencies, designers or printers, are actively mis-managed. The truth however, is that costs are generally not managed at all (due to a lack of visibility and ownership). Often the day to day control of both the campaign and supply chain resides with the agency, preventing an acceptable level of cost visibility.

GAINING CONTROL

Robust project management is a further campaign feature often controlled by the preferred suppliers, albeit by chance rather than design. Due to the agencies, pre-press houses and printers having few stringent procedures and supporting technology, processes often lack discipline and are far from optimised. This often leaves the marketing operations team with very little control or visibility of what is happening.

INSTALLING ACCOUNTABILITY

Accountability is extremely difficult for the marketing services teams to enforce without the appropriate visibility and reporting capabilities. Campaigns are frequently executed with "terrible tweaking" prevalent in the latter stages, especially in terms of duplication, multiple amendments and spiraling costs, specifically around localisation or multi-media synchronisation. However, on concluding the campaign, the capability to track the areas of greatest spend and time consumption and the reasons for this, are almost non-existent.

Meeting the Supply Chain Challenges

- 1 COST IDENTIFICATION**

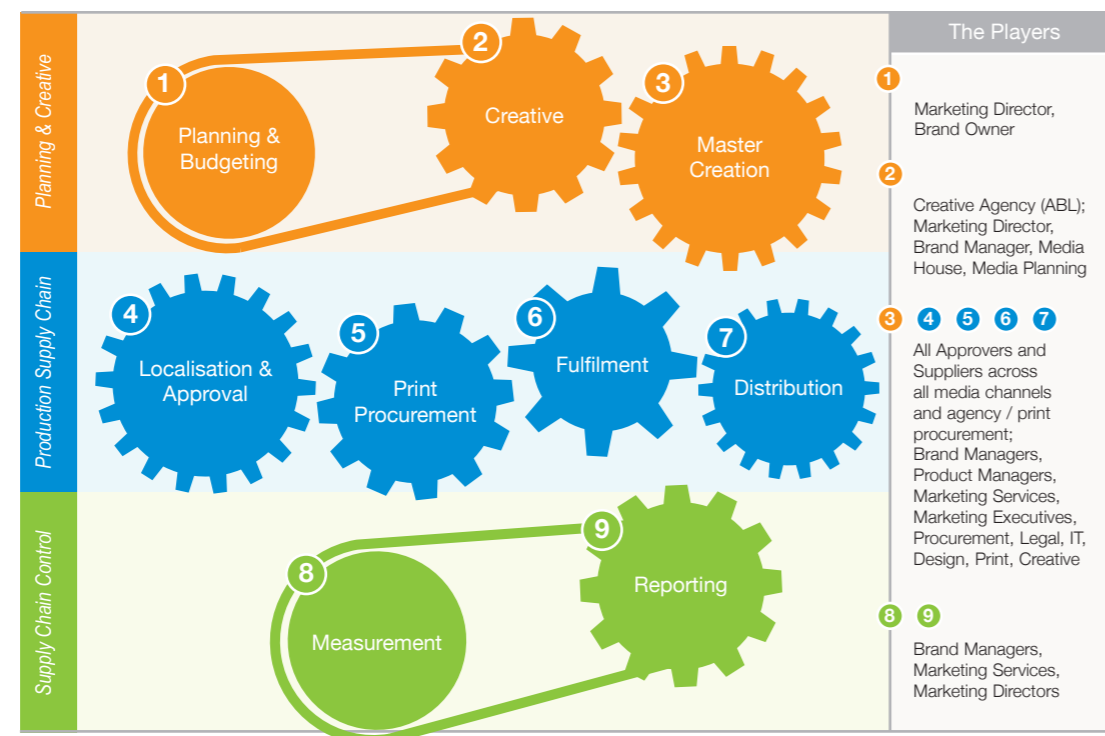
It may well seem obvious but gaining an understanding of where spend is being applied within the MSC is a critical starting point. In order to start addressing efficiencies, cost identification needs to be at an appropriate level of granularity, which for many organisations will require some analysis. For example, what the annual cost to an organisation of simply making approvals to artwork?
- 2 PROCESS REVIEW**

By analysing the core business processes operating within the Marketing Production Supply Chain an organisation is able to prioritise a programme of change designed to focus on the delivery of the greatest efficiency savings.
- 3 TECHNOLOGY DEPLOYMENT**

Technology has proven to be a key component of implementing and maintaining the disciplines associated with changes in business processes. The application of technology allows:

 - Processes to be implemented in a consistent way across the entire supply chain.
 - Management information to be collected in real-time
 - Reporting and visibility
 - Proactive notification of issues, alerts, events, tasks and activities to supply chain resources.

The Marketing Supply Chain in Action



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The Benefits of Technology Solutions for Marketers

Real value-added benefits are now achievable for marketers with the implementation of technology solutions for marketing services.

IMPROVED TIME TO MARKET

Technologies enable increased speed to market while helping manage marketing complexity. By capturing project management best practice and establishing standard marketing production processes for marketing campaigns, marketers can deliver streamlined activities, eliminate unnecessary delays and missed deadlines.

GREATER VISIBILITY

Technology solutions can also provide all project stakeholders with a clear, up to date view of current activities, project status, budgets, resource availability and performance. Organisations can consistently measure and track programmes through out the campaign lifecycle, allowing teams to identify issues and opportunities faster as well as ascertain marketing return-on-investment (ROI). Centralised calendar systems help marketers to optimise budgets, improve resource utilisation and synchronise marketing activities.

IMPROVED CAPACITY

Another capability of these solutions is to increase an organisation's capacity to design, develop, execute and analyse a greater number of marketing campaigns. By leveraging a central library containing best practices and prior campaign templates, marketers can get new projects

started quickly and easily. Digital asset management capabilities allow marketers to reuse approved materials such as creative briefs, graphics, direct mail pieces, ad copy, and more – quickly and easily.

DELIVERING EFFICIENCIES

Technology has proven to be the catalyst for achieving hard cost savings within the Marketing Production Supply Chain. Significant savings can be achieved in many areas.

Cost Saving	Area of Technology Implementation
87%	Artwork Amendment, PDF Creation, Distribution
81%	Print procurement Workflow following 'New & Improved' Artwork
77%	Print Procurement for 'Existing Artwork'
47%	Approvals

CONCLUSION

Marketing is one of the only remaining functions within organisations that until recently has not had its own suite of integrated software to drive greater efficiency, effectiveness and measurability. Organisations have invested in software for finance departments, sales forces, call centres and IT. The time for a marketing suite of software has now arrived.

How Can Mtivity Help

Mtivity develops and sells a hosted, Software as a Service (SaaS) solution that helps marketing and print professionals manage their marketing production, projects and processes. Professionals in a wide range of organisations, including blue-chip companies like Xerox, EDF; and David Lloyd Leisure, use Mtivity. Suppliers in the marketing value chain, including marketing agencies, printers and other marketing suppliers, also use Mtivity.

Mtivity provide tools and expertise to help organisations get more from their campaign budgets by achieving effective, efficient production and implementation processes within the Marketing Supply Chain (MSC). Our tools and expertise are focused on solving production challenges within the MSC including:

- Artwork creation, amendment and approval
- Distributing artwork throughout the marketing network
- Collating demand for printed/physical items
- Print procurement and management

Our specific areas of focus fall within the production and implementation stages of the MSC. In particular, this involves understanding costs and processes, then applying our tools to achieve efficiencies in the following areas:

- Localisation and approval
- Print procurement
- Fulfilment and distribution
- Additional marketing spend e.g. stock control and translation management

For more information please visit www.mtivity.com

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