



The Chartered
Institute of Marketing

Shape the agenda

Less smoke, more fire:

The benefits and impacts
of social marketing

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Marketing comes good



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and Professional
Development

Although as marketers we may wish otherwise, marketing unquestionably suffers from some negative associations. Many sceptical consumers associate marketing with manipulation and duplicity, whilst in business, many still perceive marketing as wasteful and a cost.

As marketing struggles for respectability, social marketing shows how the techniques and tools of the profession can be used as a force for good in the world.

Social marketing has its roots in the public health messages being communicated to the illiterate in India in the 1960s. But since then it has evolved considerably, and now embraces strategic marketing planning, measurability, and effective behaviour change.

We believe that social marketing is now at the stage that instead of borrowing techniques from the commercial world, it can teach commercial marketers valuable lessons about understanding and effecting behaviour change in their customers.

With the UK government pouring more and more resources into campaigns to change unhealthy and ingrained behaviours, social marketing is only going to grow in importance. As social marketers move into positions of influence, it makes increasing sense for commercial marketers to explore, learn from, and blend social marketing approaches into their own.

Social marketing offers marketers exciting new opportunities to use their talents for positive change in the world. In time, as more and more marketers apply their skills in this rapidly developing field, we may see a more favourable attitude towards marketing emerge, one that recognises the important role marketing can play in making the world a better place.



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Less smoke, more fire:
The benefits and impacts of social marketing

Social marketing historically has been about using commercial marketing practices, and other techniques such as from social sciences, to influence positive behaviour change for social good. Whilst it's been accepted for several years that social marketing can learn from commercial marketing, we're now at the point where commercial marketing can learn much from social marketing.

The reason for this is that social marketing is not about merely communications, as is sometimes perceived, but has over the past few years developed a range of strategies to achieve significant behaviour change. Often, social marketers work with those whose behaviour is the hardest of all to change – people who are disadvantaged, hard to reach or socially excluded, and whose social, cultural and peer pressures create enormous barriers and resistance to change. And yet, social marketers have a very high success rate. They understand customer psychology and motivations in ways that commercial marketers do not always implement.

In essence, marketing is about changing behaviours – behaviour change is the engine that drives successful competitive advantage, developing a strong brand, building a relationship with customers and running a profitable company. Social marketers, more so than many commercial marketers, have become the behaviour change experts.

Social marketing is also going to impact on commercial marketing in future years, as the public sector and governments turn to social marketers for recommendations and guidance about their own marketing campaigns, designed to promote positive societal change. As social marketers move into positions of influence, it makes increasing sense for commercial marketers to explore, learn from, and blend these approaches into their own.

“In essence,
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about changing
behaviours.”

ONE:

Introduction

Social marketing, as currently broadly defined, is the application of commercial marketing practices and other techniques (eg social sciences) for social good. Smoking cessation initiatives, environmental projects, reducing crime and drugs usage, and promoting the benefits of exercise and responsible drinking are all examples of social marketing that have been undertaken with notable success in recent years.

Social marketing as a discipline partly emerged from commercial marketing, and partly from social sciences. As far as transfer of knowledge between commercial marketing and social marketing is concerned, it's been largely assumed that it moves in one direction only – social marketers learn from commercial marketers. In fact, social marketing has developed so comprehensively and widely that we're now at the point where there's much that commercial marketers can learn from social marketers.

Researching what customers want, providing it by means of innovation and new product design, and communicating your offering in ways that turn interest into action, are the key elements of marketing that commercial marketers are good at,

and are the skills that have been honed over a century or so of marketing. Yet marketing at heart is about behavioural change. Being able to influence changes in behaviour leads to competitive advantage and encourages customers to buy from your company, rather than someone else's. That then leads to being able to develop a long-term relationship with customers, which leads to long-term success for the company. Strategic marketers understand that it's changing behaviours and influencing customer choice that's key to successful marketing – not finding ways of persuading customers to consume more, as is sometimes supposed, or trying to create a need or a want for a particular product or service.

Commercial marketers can learn a lot from social marketers because social marketers have quietly become experts at behaviour change. They work with people who are often resistant to change, whose norms are influenced by the cultural and situational surroundings and the behaviour norms and attitudes of their peers, who frequently have difficult barriers to change to overcome, or who are simply not motivated to change. The fact that social marketers are so successful in creating behavioural change in difficult areas, like obesity, drug abuse

and anti-social behaviour, is testament to their mastery of building relationships, innovating effective marketing practices, and developing a true understanding of psychology and decision-making; both at individual and broader segment levels. Social marketing achieves behaviour change by embedding a strategic customer-focused approach involving customer insight, social theory, branding, stakeholder strategies, marketing mix including communications, and above all a behavioural focus (rather than awareness raising) based on deep customer insight. Social marketing can also be about emphasising particular behaviours, as well as being a tool for behaviour change. The National Social Marketing Centre uses the expression 'behavioural interventions' rather than behaviour change, as a perhaps more accurate description of what social marketers do. From a commercial point of view, maintaining particular customer behaviours can be as relevant as trying to change them, if you are trying to retain customers.

The current perception of social marketing by outsiders is that it is primarily about communications. Yet this is a highly misleading perception, based largely on experience of social and environmental campaigns that have been communications-only focused (and thus often fail to deliver behaviour change). True social marketing involves a much broader marketing mix, and policy makers are now realising the need for this deeper and longer term approach to influencing behaviours. As governments and public sector bodies

invest more time and budget in social marketing strategies, a move from communications-only to fully integrated behaviour change campaigns has been possible. This movement has largely been off the radar of the majority of commercial marketers, but we think it's now time for commercial marketers to learn from their social marketing peers.



Social marketing is the application of commercial marketing practices for social good.

We also believe that social marketers and commercial marketers will inevitably work more closely together in the near future, and that this shift will be beneficial for companies, customers and wider society alike. Social marketing interventions are increasingly involving partnerships between the public sector and businesses, and we are now witnessing the maturing of corporate responsibility (CR) into a built-in strategic approach within business. In many ways, we are now seeing the coming together of three professional areas – social marketing, commercial marketing and CR – into one unified discipline.

TWO:

Psychology and counter-psychology

Commercial marketers will also want to take note of developments in social marketing because they could be of benefit to them, in perhaps surprising ways. In an increasingly commoditised marketplace, where marketers are looking for the next differentiator, or want to understand consumer psychology effectively to understand what makes them tick, there's no better place for commercial marketers to watch with interest, and learn from, than social marketing.

In fact John Drummond, chief executive at CorporateCulture, argues that social marketing presents something of a challenge for commercial marketing. This is because "it's no longer enough simply to ask customers for their views on products, services or reputations and expect them to be able to articulate a response. To get under the skin of lifestyles and beliefs, deeper research and insight is necessary. So perhaps the latest thinking in neuroscience,

psychology and behaviour change that focuses on what motivates people to act, may give mainstream marketers insight into new product development"¹.

Drummond also asserts that "the private sector is not as good as it believes it is at getting under the skin of their customers – what they think, their lifestyles, their beliefs and their behaviours". He refers to Gerald Zaltman, (Zaltman, G. (2003) *How customers think: essential insights into the mind of the market*. Boston, Harvard Business School Press), who offers an explanation for the well-known fact that as many as 80% of new products fail when they are introduced to the market. The reasons for this are likely to be a combination of the fact that commercial marketers are not as expert as they'd like to think at understanding what customers need and want; combined with the suggestion from Zaltman that 95% of people's thinking happens in the unconscious.²

Social marketing perhaps has an advantage over commercial marketing here; Jeff French, Director of the National Social Marketing Centre (NSMC), points out that "as social marketing has a purely behavioural objective, as compared with commercial marketing which is driven by sales/profit/market share, this clear focus on behaviour is one of the reasons why social marketing is in some ways leading the latest thinking"³. French also adds that "changing long-term behaviours requires a deeper insight – for example, the average smoker makes several attempts to stop smoking over a long period of time". As social marketing is familiar with long-term processes, "this partly explains why in many ways social marketing is leading the thinking: changing habits is a tougher proposition than changing products"⁴.

Commercial marketers are not as expert as they'd like to think at understanding what customers need and want.



THREE:

Dark horses for courses

Paul White, director of The Social Marketing Practice, cites the Dove 'Campaign for Real Beauty' as a powerful example of a commercial company applying social marketing thinking for insights that led to a successful marketing strategy. Dove wanted to understand women's perceptions about their bodies, in order to develop products women of all ages would want, target them more effectively, and communicate with them in ways they would identify with. However, rather than researching 'what kind of product do you want' or market testing existing sample products, Dove asked women questions like, what issues did they have about their bodies and how did they feel about them; and how did they think about the way women were represented in the media.

After researching 3,300 girls and women aged 15-64 in 10 countries, the social marketing-influenced research revealed findings that regular product research would never have yielded. Firstly, Dove

identified that a different approach to advertising and marketing was needed, and that this different approach needed to empower women rather than make them look at beauty products from an aspirational point of view; standard at the time, and still prevalent today. The women who were researched wanted to see beauty re-defined as ageless, as celebrating curves, and as appreciating 'inner beauty'. These elements were then directly used in the campaign, which led to a 700% increase in product sales, and increased Dove's share of firming lotions in the UK from 1% to 6%.⁵

Social marketing is beginning to influence commercial marketing in subtle but unusually effective ways. Consider the way Lloyds TSB, in its 'For the journey' campaign, positions itself as being relevant to the lifestyle of its customers, at a time when many financial services companies still market their products and features. It's long been recognised that building

Social marketing-influenced research revealed findings that regular product research would never have yielded.

a brand requires a long-term relationship with the customer and finding some emotional resonance with them: think of how Marmite taps into childhood nostalgia with its Paddington Bear campaign, or appeals to the desire to join a community with its 'Love it or hate it' strapline. Yet where Lloyds TSB has pushed this further, and where it has learnt from techniques developed by social marketers, is in its understanding of how customers perceive their own habits, lifestyles and values, and that what they want from a bank is trust, security and a sense of belonging and safety.



FOUR:

Image and perception

Like all effective marketing, social marketing works by building long-term trust in the process of exchange. Paul White explains why it is far more than simply effective communications, as it is often perceived to be by many marketers across the board, and generally in the public sector, because they are only seeing the 'visible' outputs of campaigns. "It's about building a long-term relationship – understanding the customer situation whilst building trust on one side; and helping them see that what you are offering is of value to them, making it easier for them to voluntarily make changes, on the other"⁶. Jeff French of the NSMC adds that social marketing is also about "tailoring the service offering/intervention/product based on the customer understanding and insight"⁷.

Dove followed these principles by turning what might be a relatively short period of product testing into a long-term research process of developing insights into what

women wanted emotionally. When it came to campaign launch, because the messages were credible, and backed by a real understanding of the target market, the customer trusted what was being offered to them and empowered women to think differently about how they looked – a powerful connection with customers' emotions and values.

Figures that social marketing techniques reveal – such as, that 77% of 11-14 year-olds feel fat, ugly and depressed – are what persuaded Dove that something needed to change in the way that women were perceived in the media, and how cosmetics products were marketed. It's one of the clearest examples of how social marketing is now adding value to commercial marketing, rather than the other way round.

Dove continue to use social marketing principles to reinforce the success of the campaign, as well as investing positively back into society, working with the eating

Dove is one of the clearest examples of how social marketing is now adding value to commercial marketing.

disorder charity, Eat. One response to Dove's follow-up survey in 2007, three years after the campaign was launched, was from a girl in the 11-14 year-old category, who said: "the images I see in magazines make me feel sad because I know I could never be that beautiful"; an indication that the Dove attempt to prove beauty can come in different types, rather than being standardised media images, is welcome and more of this kind of campaign is needed.⁸



FIVE:

Commercial influences

According to John Drummond, “more and more leading edge companies are interested in taking this kind of thing even further – and engaging stakeholders outside of the company in the co-creation of new products and services that help improve lives”⁹. Procter & Gamble (P&G), for example, offers a commercial service in the US through its Tremor business unit, to help other companies tap into their networks of mothers and teens, to develop bespoke and fit-for-purpose products that can genuinely help improve the lives of individuals, and create powerful word-of-mouth communications – a symbiotic relationship that benefits both company and individual.

The recent ‘no’ vote by Manchester residents against congestion zone charging might be used as an example of how difficult it is to persuade people to change long-ingrained travel habits. Yet it’s arguable that if some social marketing approaches had been adopted by the ‘yes’ campaign, things could have turned out differently. Worcestershire County Council’s ‘Choose how you

Move’ attempted to change people’s travel habits over a 5-year period, as part of a Department for Transport Sustainable Travel Towns project. The marketing mix combined several techniques, including motivational engagement, discovering individuals’ travel patterns and using them to gain insights about what was needed; working with partners such as schools and businesses, support (such as cycle training), and an improved system infrastructure including travel information systems, cycle parking and bus sheltering. There were also incentives available offering rewards for behaviour change.

The project is not due to finish until later this year, yet has already achieved a 22% increase in public transport usage, a 17% increase in walking and a single-occupancy car driving reduction of 12%. Partly it achieved this by involving households, employers and schools, over a sufficiently lengthy but viable timescale, to show the ‘customers’ how it would be in their interests to change their behaviour.

Manchester, of course, is a very different and much larger proposition, but it’s arguable that a different result could have been achieved with the kind of level of engagement outlined above. Instead, residents were faced with (or perceived that they were faced with) a simple ‘yes’ or ‘no’ with an unclear timescale for public transport improvement. For example, there were few incentives for behaviour change in the congestion charging plan, other than promises of improvements, which did not resonate with the majority of respondents, but instead made them feel cynical and suspicious of the whole project. If it had been run over a longer period, as the Worcestershire project was conducted, and the ‘show me’ element of social marketing’s techniques for behaviour change had been included, a better result might have been achieved.

The negative impact of the Manchester ‘no’ vote is that future congestion charge plans, such as for Bristol and Bath, are now being questioned. Yet the validity of congestion charging hasn’t been rejected by the ‘no’ vote – just the way the campaign was orchestrated.

For Paul White, social marketing is essentially about a dialogue with the customer, which builds a trusted relationship over time. The

communications campaign is just the visible output of the marketing mix that many observers are still mistaking as the essence of social marketing. Rather, the communications and wider marketing mix come after insight, exploration and understanding of the ‘customer’, (ie the person or social group that the social marketer is trying to engage and encourage). This is

The communications campaign is just the visible output of the marketing mix that many are still mistaking as the essence of social marketing.



firmly grounded in social psychology. Social marketers as a matter of course develop a real understanding of the people they’re trying to help. They don’t take an agenda to them; they discover what their needs are, and fulfil them in ways that motivate people to voluntarily change behaviour, by making the offering more convenient, fun and engaging to adopt.

SIX:

Future antenna

An embracing of social marketing can help build the reputation of marketing and help distance us from the remaining suspicions amongst customers that marketing is an untrustworthy, manipulative profession. An increased awareness of social marketing principles shows that our profession can lead positive social change as well as economic success. It's not 'marketing' that's at fault – it's the occasional unscrupulous marketer. Better understanding and application of social marketing helps redress the balance.

P&G's 'Turn to 30' campaign, conducted under the Ariel label, is a good example of this. By understanding the barriers to behaviour change, and what motivators would encourage it, P&G were able to build a campaign that promoted the benefits of their new 'cool cleaning' technologies, whilst also influencing shifts in green behaviour. Partially, this was achieved by showing how customers could pursue their

desires to have less personal contribution to harming the environment, whilst also allaying concerns about the cleanliness of washing at low temperatures. It also proved to the customer that the campaign was sincere and based on truth, and that the company could be trusted – a 'we're on your side' element to the initiative. Since the campaign started, over 1 million households have turned to washing at 30 degrees, which brings with it an energy saving in excess of 40%, and 89% of customers confirm they will continue to do so.

Ariel won the Business in the Community 'Responsible Marketing Award for Excellence' as a result – another small brick in the wall of demonstrating that (to use Stephen Brown's analogy) 'black' marketing can be countered, outweighed and superseded by 'white' marketing.

P&G used a thorough process of research, discovering and understanding the barriers to change, thinking carefully and

An increased awareness of social marketing principles shows that our profession can lead positive social change as well as economic success.

shrewdly about how those barriers could be overcome, and asking the right questions of customers. The result was a win-win situation for company, customer and environment alike, differentiating the company, saving money and improving lifestyles for individual customers, and above all, taking action on climate change. Paul White adds: "this deeper connection with peoples' values, and helping them change habits through product innovation, builds the brand and helps retain and build market share"¹⁰.



SEVEN:

Eats, shoots and smokes

Social marketing is still regarded as something of an offshoot of commercial marketing – and indeed, there is plenty of literature discussing whether social marketing should be defined as ‘marketing’ at all. Certainly the two disciplines have largely trodden their own paths over the last few years. That situation is now changing. Commercial marketers need to take notice of social marketing, because of the way social policy is increasingly seeking the skills of social marketers.

not in itself necessarily lead to changes in people’s behaviour. As an example, consider the extension to pub opening hours, which was designed to create a European ‘café culture’ and prevent binge drinking at closing time. That plan was largely unsuccessful because the Government failed to take into consideration the wider cultural implications involved; the problem was not just closing time, but the ingrained culture of binge drinking and its pre-determining social causes.

Instead, to achieve social behaviour change, more in-depth strategies are needed. To do this, the Government is beginning to recognise the potential of social marketing to influence public behaviour, and applying it to public policy. An instance of this is the recent directive from Alan Johnson to remove cigarette packets from public display in tobacconists and supermarkets. Marketers have long known that one of the factors that influences children to start smoking is brand awareness; and so being

constantly exposed to brand signage is creating that awareness. Public policy has not previously taken much notice of what’s known to marketers; but it is taking note of what social marketers say, asking their advice, and acting on their guidance. Whilst legislation still has its place, governments are now recognising that their public policies have to be coherent and synergistic across social policy areas and more strategic than they have been in the past – and that both legislation and public policy has to be alongside enabling voluntary behaviour change.

What this means in practice is that there is value in dialogue between social marketers and commercial marketers, learning and applying from each others’ experience – because the advice, recommendations, leadership and position of influence that social marketers have is going to affect commercial marketers in their day-to-day activities. Any marketer working in food, for example, will have been affected by the recent ‘traffic light’ system that has been brought in for foodstuffs, another public policy directly influenced by social marketing.

To achieve social behaviour change, more in-depth strategies are needed.

The UK Government, for example, now appreciates more than ever before that passing legislation does

generating solutions to behavioural challenges

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EIGHT:

New standards

Veronica Sharp, Director at The Social Marketing Practice, points out how misunderstood social marketing really is – from the perspective of buyers, practitioners and the marketing profession in general. “Is this perhaps

marketing as a profession through occupational standards, which have been developed by the Marketing and Sales Standards Setting Body (MSSSB) in full consultation with stakeholders including the National Social Marketing Centre and The Chartered Institute of Marketing. The standards “will bring much-needed clarity to the profession”, according to Veronica Sharp.

Not only is the private sector recognising that there is much happening in social marketing that is of relevance to them, but also there is a wider recognition that organisations need to actively help customers lead healthier lifestyles (including exercising more, eating more healthily and drinking more responsibly) and reduce their negative impacts on the environment. These social challenges are important now in commercial marketing because no longer is it acceptable for companies to assert that ‘the business of business is business’ and leave it to governments to legislate on the societal consequences of a

Now seems the right time to capture the essential elements of best practice in social marketing.

because marketing has become too tactical and communications focused?” Sharp asks. “Or, is it that marketing has lost its strategic focus and customer insight?”¹¹ With these issues in mind, it now seems the right time to capture the essential elements of best practice in social

Key social marketing principles for commercial marketers to learn from:

- Developing insight – from understanding the customer ‘in the round’ through deep research to generate insight, avoiding focusing on a single aspect or feature
- Having a clear focus on behaviour – using social behaviour theory and having a measurable behaviour focus for strategic design
- Taking a longer term view – as behaviour change is itself long term, and is a continuous learning process
- Scoping and working with stakeholders (as CR does) to influence change, co-design with the target audience, and building a brand through developing the relationship
- Convincing the customer that it is in their interest to change behaviour – which can only be done by a gradual process of building up mutual understanding and building a relationship over time
- Comprehending barriers to change, and building a strategy to overcome those barriers and motivate change
- Having a clear exchange analysis – understanding the cost and benefits to the customer from changing behaviour. Considering and tailoring incentives, rewards, and being aware of the disincentives to behaviour change. Being aware of the difference between actual costs and benefits, versus perceived costs and benefits
- Cementing trust and building further insights by contributing actively and positively to societal and/or environmental projects
- Measuring effectively and feeding measurement back into future strategy

Many of these points relate to The National Social Marketing Centre’s benchmark criteria for effective social marketing approaches, which interested marketers can read in more depth at www.nsmcentre.org.uk

Social marketing is going to develop and expand significantly over the next few years.

market-based economy. If these areas are important to society, they're important to companies too – and the responsible marketer who wants to differentiate their company, and advance their personal career, understands their importance and relevance.

Social marketing is a field that is going to develop and expand significantly over the next few years. The increased interest and available budget for social marketing from the NHS in particular, other public sector organisations, not-for-profits and charities, and the Government, means there are powerful opportunities for those wanting to look at social marketing as a potential career, or new career, because demand is currently outstripping supply of competent professionals. It's also a good career opportunity that we want to

highlight to marketers, who may want to contribute something to society, or would like to give greater relevance and resonance to their daily working lives.



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NINE:

Mutual benefits

Gerard Hastings, Director of the Institute for Social Marketing at the University of Stirling argues that “I have long felt that social marketing will truly have come of age when it starts teaching commercial marketing a few lessons”, and it would seem that time has arrived.

and knowledge about social marketing will be good for organisations, individuals and society as a whole. There's much latent opportunity now for the company that wants to integrate CR and relationship marketing into one effective symbiotic approach to business. In the future, social marketers and commercial marketers will work together more frequently; as Paul White points out, “finding the touch-points for transferable learning between the two professions through dialogue and practice can benefit the entire marketing community”.

The key link between social marketing and commercial marketing is the emphasis on relationship marketing – significant change (which includes brand building, competitive advantage and profitable growth) cannot be achieved unless the marketer builds a long-term, mutually trusting relationship with the customer. Lloyds TSB, Dove and Procter & Gamble are amongst the first commercial organisations to understand this and tap into it – and the future opportunities are potentially much wider and broader.

If marketing is about ‘getting to yes’ then social marketers are the experts at arriving there from often deeply entrenched positions of ‘no’. There's much for the marketer, who wants to advance their individual career, to learn from social marketing; and an increased acceptance, understanding

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There's much for the marketer, who wants to advance their individual career, to learn from social marketing.



Social Marketing

Gerard Hastings
Butterworth-Heinemann
ISBN: 9780750683500
£24.99

Hastings sets out the principles of social marketing, covering its theories (in particular human behaviour theory) and communication techniques (including the use of fear in changing behaviour). He also looks at relationships with stakeholders, 'competition' in social marketing, research and the ethical issues involved.

Besides delving into the theory, the book features 18 case studies of social marketing in practice, making use of some excellent, thought-provoking exercises that really help the reader get to grips with the thorny issues involved.

The book is aimed at seasoned marketers with an interest in social marketing, and those in the public health or safety sector, who are perhaps new to marketing, introducing them to key marketing concepts that they might find useful.



The Social Entrepreneur Revolution

Martin Clark
Marshall Cavendish
ISBN: 97819055736423
£14.99

The Social Entrepreneur Revolution offers a comprehensive, in-depth critical analysis and step-by-step guide to equip aspiring social entrepreneurs with all the understanding they need to set up a business that has societal benefit at its heart.

Clark argues in this excellent title that social entrepreneurs are perfectly placed to prosper in a climate of change and uncertainty. Anyone with the right attitude, ideas and drive can make a difference – and a profit.

He sets out seven types of social entrepreneurs and provides step-by-step advice on how to get started as a social entrepreneur. With lots of action points, case studies and examples, Clark offers an excellent and eminently practical guide to this important and emerging field.

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The survey, completed for The Institute by Ipsos MORI, reveals that 73 per cent of marketers believe the UK will be in recession in 2009, and 70 per cent believe conditions for the UK economy will worsen in the year ahead – the highest figure since the survey began, and up 30 per cent on this time last year.



MTS is produced by Ipsos MORI for The Chartered Institute of Marketing on a bi-annual basis. It is now available to purchase from The Institute's Information and Library Service. A summary of the report is available to Institute members at www.cim.co.uk/mts. Please contact +44 (0)1628 427333 for further details.

Price: Members £125
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Looking ahead...

With many businesses facing the toughest economic climate in a generation, there is much talk of the crisis confronting UK businesses and the SME sector in particular.

But as John F Kennedy once remarked, "The Chinese use two brush strokes to write the word 'crisis.' One brush stroke stands for danger; the other for opportunity. In a crisis, be aware of the danger – but recognise the opportunity."

Our next Agenda Paper will argue that the present crisis offers a golden opportunity for SMEs to look at things afresh, and realise the benefits of a marketing approach to their business.

Our paper argues that a focus on marketing strategy and understanding your markets and customers is vital for SMEs in today's challenging times. Although SMEs may not have the multimillion pound budgets, our paper contends that with far greater adaptability and responsiveness than their larger rivals, SMEs can get closer to changing customer needs and respond quicker to them. SMEs can also learn from the expensive mistakes larger competitors have made, to ensure they get the most from their more limited resources.

The paper will outline how SMEs can create real value for their customers and ensure they use the most appropriate and effective techniques for their business. All too often SMEs are urged to seek out expensive solutions, so our paper highlights how creativity, common sense and knowing your customers can work wonders for your marketing budget.



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Marketing for social change

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Interested in gaining a deeper understanding of issues surrounding social marketing? Why not attend one of our highly practical courses that will provide you with the tools and techniques to develop and implement successful marketing approaches:

- **Introduction to Social Marketing**
Develop insight-driven marketing that influences behaviour for social and environmental benefit
www.cim.co.uk/1248
- **Sustainability in Marketing**
Why sustainability is turning marketing upside down – understand the implications and maximise on the opportunities
www.cim.co.uk/1246
- **Corporate Social Responsibility**
Enhance your brand reputation through responsible business practices and relationship strategies
www.cim.co.uk/0575
- **Developing a Green Marketing Strategy**
Use sustainability to create competitive advantage
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