
CAREER OPPORTUNITIES IN MARKETING AND SALES

Description of the Field

The objective of any firm is to market and sell its products or services profitably. In small firms, the owner or chief executive officer might assume all advertising, promotions, marketing, and sales responsibilities. In large firms, which may offer numerous products and services nationally or even worldwide, an executive vice president directs overall advertising, promotions, marketing, and sales policies. Advertising, marketing, promotions, and sales managers coordinate the market research, marketing strategy, sales, advertising, promotion, pricing, and product development.

According to the Occupation Outlook Handbook, there are several ways to achieve these goals. *Strategic marketing* involves planning the way a firm will handle the marketing of its product or service by targeting their appropriate audience or clientele. *Tactical marketing* includes the tasks to achieve this strategy, such as distributing fliers or making cold calls. Those distinctions depend upon whether a firm is marketing to another business (*business to business marketing*) or whether they are advertising a service (*services marketing*). It is important to remember the 3C's (customers, competitors, channels) and the 4P's (product, positioning, price, promotion), which are the basic foundations of marketing.

Marketing managers develop the firm's detailed marketing strategy. With the help of subordinates, including *product development managers* and *market research managers*, they determine the demand for products and services offered by the firm and its competitors. In addition, they identify potential markets—for example, business firms, wholesalers, retailers, government, or the general public. Marketing managers develop pricing strategy with an eye towards maximizing the firm's share of the market and its profits while ensuring that the firm's customers are satisfied. In collaboration with sales, product development, and other managers, they monitor trends that indicate the need for new products and services and oversee product development. Marketing managers work with advertising and promotion managers to promote the firm's products and services and to attract potential users.

Sales managers direct the firm's sales program. They assign sales territories, set goals, and establish training programs for the sales representatives. Managers advise the sales representatives on ways to improve their sales performance. In large, multi-product firms, they oversee regional and local sales managers and their staffs. Sales managers maintain contact with dealers and distributors. They analyze sales statistics gathered by their staffs to determine sales potential and inventory requirements and monitor the preferences of customers. Such information is vital to develop products and maximize profits.

Career Paths and Entry Salaries

A wide range of educational backgrounds are suitable for entry into advertising, marketing, promotions, and sales managerial jobs, but many employers prefer those with experience in related occupations plus a broad liberal arts background. A bachelor's degree in sociology, psychology, anthropology, literature, journalism, or philosophy, among other subjects, is acceptable for most entry level positions. However, requirements vary, depending upon the particular job.

For marketing, sales, and promotion management positions, some employers prefer a bachelor's or master's degree in business administration with an emphasis on marketing. Courses in business law, economics, accounting, finance, mathematics, and statistics are advantageous. In highly technical industries, such as computer and electronics manufacturing, a bachelor's degree in engineering or science, combined with a master's degree in business administration, is preferred.

Most advertising, marketing, promotions, and sales management positions are filled by promoting experienced staff or related professional or technical personnel. For example, many managers are former sales representatives, purchasing

agents, buyers, product or brand specialists, advertising specialists, and promotion specialists. In small firms, where the number of positions is limited, advancement to a management position usually comes slowly. In large firms, promotion may occur more quickly.

Although experience, ability, and leadership are emphasized for promotion, advancement can be accelerated by participation in management training programs conducted by many large firms. Many firms also provide their employees with continuing education opportunities, either in-house or at local colleges and universities, and encourage employee participation in seminars and conferences, often provided by professional societies. In collaboration with colleges and universities, numerous marketing and related associations sponsor national or local management training programs. Courses include brand and product management, international marketing, sales management evaluation, telemarketing and direct sales, interactive marketing, promotion, marketing communication, market research, organizational communication, and data processing systems procedures and management. Many firms pay all or part of the cost for those who successfully complete courses.

According to a National Association of Colleges and Employers survey, in 2005 starting salaries in marketing averaged \$33,873; starting salaries in advertising averaged \$31,340.

Demand

Advertising, marketing, promotions, and sales managers held about 646,000 jobs in the U.S. in 2004. These managers were found in virtually every industry. The following tabulation shows the distribution of jobs by occupational specialty:

Sales managers	337,000
Marketing managers	188,000
Advertising and promotions managers	64,000
Public relations managers	58,000

Sales managers held almost half of the jobs; most were employed in wholesale and retail trade, and finance and insurance industries. Marketing managers held more than one-fourth of the jobs; the professional, scientific, and technical services industries employed almost one-third of marketing managers. About one-fourth of advertising and promotions managers worked in the professional, scientific, and technical services industries, and the information industries, including advertising and related services, and publishing industries. Most public relations managers were employed in service-providing industries, such as professional, scientific, and technical services, finance and insurance, health care and social assistance, and educational services.

Qualifications Necessary to Enter the Field

Persons interested in becoming advertising, marketing, promotions, public relations, and sales managers should be mature, creative, highly motivated, resistant to stress, flexible, and decisive. The ability to communicate persuasively, both orally and in writing, with other managers, staff, and the public is vital. These managers also need tact, good judgment, and exceptional ability to establish and maintain effective personal relationships with supervisory and professional staff members and client firms.

Sample Group of Employers

- Action Marketing Research <http://www.action-research.com/>
- Hanover Direct, Inc. <http://www.hanoverdirect.com/>
- Nielson Media Research Company <http://www.nielsenmedia.com/nc/portal/site/Public/>
- Most major companies have their own marketing departments

Future Challenges of the Profession

Advertising, marketing, promotions, and sales manager jobs are highly coveted and will be sought by other managers or highly experienced professional and technical personnel, resulting in keen competition. College graduates with related experience, a high level of creativity, and strong communication skills should have the best job opportunities. Those who have new media and interactive marketing skills will be particularly sought after.

According to the 2006 Occupation Outlook, employment of advertising, marketing, promotions, public relations, and sales managers is expected to [increase faster than the average](#) for all occupations through 2014, spurred by intense domestic and global competition in products and services offered to consumers. However, projected employment growth varies by industry. For example, employment is projected to grow much faster than average in scientific, professional, and related services, such as computer systems design, and in advertising and related services, as businesses increasingly hire contractors for these services instead of additional full-time staff.

Resources for Additional Information

Associations

- American Marketing Association (AMA) provides professional development services for marketing professionals such as special interest groups, seminars and publications. It also has a reference center focusing on marketing issues. <http://www.marketingpower.com>
- Business Marketing Association. <http://www.marketing.org>
- Direct Marketing Association (DMA) has been the leading source of news and information for direct marketers since 1917. <http://www.the-dma.org>
- Association for Women in Communications (AWC) recognizes the complex relationships that exist across the communications disciplines. <http://www.WOMCOM.org>

Internet Resources

- Careers in Marketing. <http://www.careers-in-marketing.com>
- Wetfeet Careers in Marketing. <http://www.wetfeet.com/Content/Careers/Marketing.aspx>

Publications

- AMA Publishing Group publishes some of the top marketing books as well as eight business magazines and scholarly journals. All of their resources can aid professional development and knowledge of the latest research and trends in the marketing industry.