

*"Read the text, do the exercises, and get ready to kick butt. Your competition will never know what hit them unless they read this book, too."*

—GUY KAWASAKI, Cofounder Alltop.com and Author of *The Art of the Start*

# real-time **MARKETING** for Business Growth

**How to Use  
Social Media,  
Measure Marketing,  
and Create a Culture  
of Execution**

**MONIQUE REECE**  
FOREWORD BY **KEN BLANCHARD**

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Publishing as FT Press

Upper Saddle River, New Jersey 07458

FT Press offers excellent discounts on this book when ordered in quantity for bulk purchases or special sales. For more information, please contact U.S. Corporate and Government Sales, 1-800-382-3419, [corpsales@pearsontechgroup.com](mailto:corpsales@pearsontechgroup.com). For sales outside the U.S., please contact International Sales at [international@pearson.com](mailto:international@pearson.com).

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Printed in the United States of America

First Printing March 2010

ISBN-10: 0-13-701010-9

ISBN-13: 978-0-13-701010-3

Pearson Education LTD.

Pearson Education Australia PTY, Limited.

Pearson Education Singapore, Pte. Ltd.

Pearson Education North Asia, Ltd.

Pearson Education Canada, Ltd.

Pearson Educación de México, S.A. de C.V.

Pearson Education—Japan

Pearson Education Malaysia, Pte. Ltd.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Reece, Monique.

Real-time marketing for business growth : how to use social media, measure marketing, and create a culture of execution / Monique Reece. — 1st ed.

p. cm.

ISBN 978-0-13-701010-3 (pbk. : alk. paper)

1. Marketing—Management. 2. Telemarketing. 3. Strategic planning. I. Title.

HF5415.13.R367 2010

658.8—dc22

2010001944

# Foreword

*Real-Time Marketing for Business Growth* is an important book. Those of us who have been in business for a while know that business growth is rarely the result of one miraculous strategy or tactic. It's a series of small things that guide a business in upward growth. That's what I like about this book. It teaches people how to combine time-tested business concepts with new marketing tools and strategies. The result is an efficient and effective process to develop a plan—a roadmap for growth and success for your business.

This book presents marketing in an entirely new light. It highlights some of the problems in sales and marketing that have persisted for decades—and how to fix them. It shows companies how to organize around customers instead of products, and the need for companies to break down the silos between marketing, sales, customer service, and other teams to more effectively fulfill customer needs. It shows companies how to create a thriving culture that respects customers and employees—both of which are stakeholders.

This book was written for people like me—and most of you, I imagine—who are looking for something new in marketing. New and experienced entrepreneurs, marketers, and CEOs will find this book full of fresh new insights, including how to measure marketing and how to use social media to build customer relationships. Most importantly, it provides a process for writing a marketing plan—and smart business leaders know that the key to successful business growth is business planning. Monique teaches you a real-time planning process that keeps pace with change. It's a flexible, collaborative, and measurable process so your plan is a living, breathing operational document to help the entire business execute strategy and continuously improve.

*Real-Time Marketing for Business Growth* explains marketing in simple terms that can be understood by any business owner. This is not to say that this book oversimplifies. In fact, I have never seen a more comprehensive explanation of marketing. Many books deal with marketing as a tactic. This book presents marketing holistically through the P•R•A•I•S•E Marketing Process, which is a new paradigm that takes a fresh look at marketing planning. The plan it produces can make a company “market smart” and improve profitability. How could it do anything else? To me, the most important concept I've ever taught is about praising—catching people doing something right. So I certainly would love a P•R•A•I•S•E Marketing Process.

There are four aspects of this book which I feel are unique in the field of marketing. First of all, *Real-Time Marketing for Business Growth* integrates culture throughout the marketing process. It starts with defining your company purpose, and I have always

believed that a compelling vision and strong core values are the basic foundation of any business.

I know from experience that a healthy, thriving culture is woven into the fabric of every successful business. Companies that foster a thriving culture create a strong *internal* brand and that is the secret to creating a powerful *external* brand. This book will show you how to create happy, engaged employees—who in turn create delighted, engaged customers who become “raving fans.”

Second, I like the fact that *Real-Time Marketing for Business Growth* simplifies and clarifies what can be a complex subject. The *One Minute Manager* series of books is focused and simple—and I have received considerable feedback that this is a powerful way to teach. Since I have made it my life’s work to take the “BS” out of the behavioral sciences, I can relate to the power of simplicity when you want the learner to get full value from a book. Monique Reece has taken the “BS” out of the marketing planning process. Thankfully, this book avoids technical terms when possible and explains them when necessary.

Third, this approach focuses on customer experience and how to build customer loyalty. This is accomplished through ongoing real-time feedback from customers. I’ve often said that “feedback is the breakfast of champions.” You’ll get fresh ideas on how to attract new customers, retain them, and grow your relationships with them. This transforms customers into evangelists for your business—which of course increases profitability for your business.

Serendipity is the fourth fresh quality of *Real-Time Marketing for Business Growth*. Akin to luck, serendipity lets us know that there’s a force greater than ourselves. Serendipity within the research step, for example, can reveal insights that dramatically influence the way a company chooses to market itself. And in a world that changes constantly, businesses must always adapt and change. I believe, as Monique does, that you should put your antennae up. If you are looking for something to happen, you’ll get it.

Anyone wanting to increase profitability and reach a wider audience should venture through the P•R•A•S•E Marketing Process. It’s a journey that can lead you to your greatest achievements. Thanks, Monique. All aboard!

**—Ken Blanchard**

Coauthor of *The One Minute Manager* and *Leading at a Higher Level*

# Introduction

Predictable, profitable business growth is not as hard as you might think. Business growth is rarely the result of one miraculous strategy or tactic. It's the culmination of several small things that guide a business in upward growth. Sustainable business growth is also the result of business planning. Even though this fact is substantiated by countless studies and respected business leaders, most businesses don't have an *operational* marketing plan that is used daily to guide decision making, interactions with customers, and processes for people to collaboratively execute.

This book will show you the most effective way to create continuous, profitable growth. It combines timeless marketing concepts with many new marketing tools and strategies to provide you with the most efficient way I know to create a market plan—a roadmap for growth and success for your business.

You will learn a proven process that entrepreneurs and business professionals have been using for well over a decade to create significant success in their businesses. As an entrepreneur, marketing executive, and professor, I have helped business leaders launch and grow their companies for over 20 years, and I understand the challenge of finding time for business planning. That is why I made it a mission to develop the most efficient and effective method of planning that I possibly could.

Business owners are overwhelmed with information and the need to adapt to a constantly changing global market place—these factors highlight the need for business planning more than ever. How do we quickly assimilate and adjust strategies to respond? The answer is to apply *a new way of planning that is in real-time and has execution built into the process*. Planning and execution must be tightly integrated to occur not as an event or annual process, but part of day-to-day operations.

It's also time to fix the problems in sales and marketing that have persisted for decades, such as how to make marketing more measurable, organizing the company around customers instead of products, and breaking down the silos between marketing and sales teams to sell more effectively to customers. Marketing must also be flexible to integrate the latest marketing tools, social media, and online marketing strategies.

This book is written for CEOs, entrepreneurs, marketers, and sales professionals who are looking for a new, yet proven method to create business growth. This process and framework have been used to develop hundreds of marketing plans for companies in consumer, business, non-profit, retail, and manufacturing industries. Companies of all sizes and stages of maturity have used this process to increase revenue, profitability, and discover new business opportunities. Start-ups have used the planning framework as a

feasibility study to test a new business idea or launch a new company. Fast-growing businesses use the process to grow at triple-digit rates. Even companies that have been in business for several decades have reaped tremendous value by developing a plan that keeps pace with customer needs in an ever-changing business climate.

In short, the process is flexible and proven to be successful. If you're tired of the same old marketing and business strategies and ready for growth, read on.

## **Imagine**

### **A New Way of Marketing.....**

#### **...in Real-Time**

Eliminate the sacred and inefficient annual planning process and replace it with real-time planning that keeps pace with change. Use a process and tools that are flexible, collaborative, and measurable so the plan is a living, breathing operational document shared across the organization to help the entire business execute strategy and continuously improve.

#### **...Improves Execution**

Research proves that 90 percent of a company's strategy is not executed. Business planning cannot be disaggregated from execution; businesses need a planning process *with execution built in*. Learn how to create a culture of execution that is accountable and measurable.

#### **...Makes Marketing Measurable, Predictable, and Successful**

Introducing the ROI Optimizer, an industry-changing process that links and optimizes the entire demand chain so marketing and sales programs achieve increased levels of measurability and success. You will learn how to accurately predict the return on investment of sales and marketing programs by linking them to revenue goals, product and service forecasts, sales channels, and target market segments.

### **...Integrates Proven Concepts and Best Practices with New Tools**

Even best practices need updating to reflect today's market realities.

Integrate best in class business tools like the Balanced Scorecard and strategy fundamentals from leading business experts into your plan. Combine proven marketing strategies with innovative new tools and techniques to target elusive buyers.

### **...Improves Customer Experience and Lifetime Value**

Learn the easiest, most consistent way to create profitable business growth. Get fresh insight on how to attract new customers, retain them, and grow customer lifetime value. Learn how to create customers who are evangelists for your business and create increased levels of customer loyalty and profitability for your business.

### **...Develops Company Culture into Marketing's Secret Weapon**

As former IBM CEO Lou Gerstner said, "Culture isn't part of the game. It IS the game." A thriving culture is woven into the fabric of successful businesses. Throughout this marketing process, you will learn how to create happy, engaged employees—who in turn create delighted, engaged customers. Businesses that foster a thriving culture create not only a powerful brand, they are *proven* to have substantially higher profits—up to 50 percent more—than businesses that don't.

### **...Innovates Using Social Media and New Media Marketing**

New media tactics are rapidly beginning to overshadow, and in some cases replace, more traditional media channels. Build an integrated marketing plan that uses new media like search engine marketing, email marketing, viral marketing, social networking, and blogging. Learn how these tools will help you generate new leads as well as improve customer relationships and your company brand.

### **...Inspires by Producing Fast Results**

Entrepreneurs and marketing and sales professionals aren't looking for "fill in the blank" exercises to help them run their business. Nor do they want to wade through long theoretical explanations of strategy. They need to know *how* to execute real-time marketing into a business plan that gets results. Learn a six-step process that provides your business with the fastest and most efficient method to create a plan for business growth...and life-long skills that can be used to continuously improve your business.

## ***In Summary***

The P • R • A • I • S • E™ Marketing Process will introduce you to a new way of planning. It will help you continuously understand and respond to a constantly changing global marketplace and ever-evolving customer needs. Learn to innovate and optimize your go-to-market strategy, link planning to execution, and measure results so your business will continuously grow and improve.

*“A fool with a plan can outsmart a genius with no plan.”*

*T. Boone Pickens*

## **Decision-Making Framework**

This book is organized in sections according to each step in the P • R • A • I • S • E™ Marketing Process (Purpose, Research, Analyze, Implement, Strategize, and Execute and Evaluate). Each step provides a decision-making framework that guides you to summarize your actions and decisions (see Figure I.1). Here’s a quick summary of what we will cover in each section:

**Purpose:** Your company mission, vision, and values will define the direction for your business. You will define specific goals in several strategic areas and your marketing plan will be written to achieve these goals. You’ll also create a situation analysis and SWOT analysis.

**Research:** The work you do in this section will lay the foundation for the rest of your plan. This part of the process may take you the longest, *but it is the most important so don’t skip it!* The results are an understanding of customer wants and needs, customer segmentation, a definition of your target market, and a competitive analysis. You will also gain a deep understanding of the market forces impacting your industry. All of this information will be used to develop your strategies later in the process.

**Analyze:** In this section you will analyze research findings, distribution channels, and pricing to discover new product and service growth opportunities. You will also analyze competitors, market trends, and customer insight to identify new areas for business growth and improve customer experience.

**Strategize:** You will apply everything you have learned to develop a sales plan, marketing objectives, and marketing strategies. You will develop a positioning statement that differentiates your business and develop customer, target market, competitive, product, price, promotion, distribution, growth, and innovation strategies for your business.

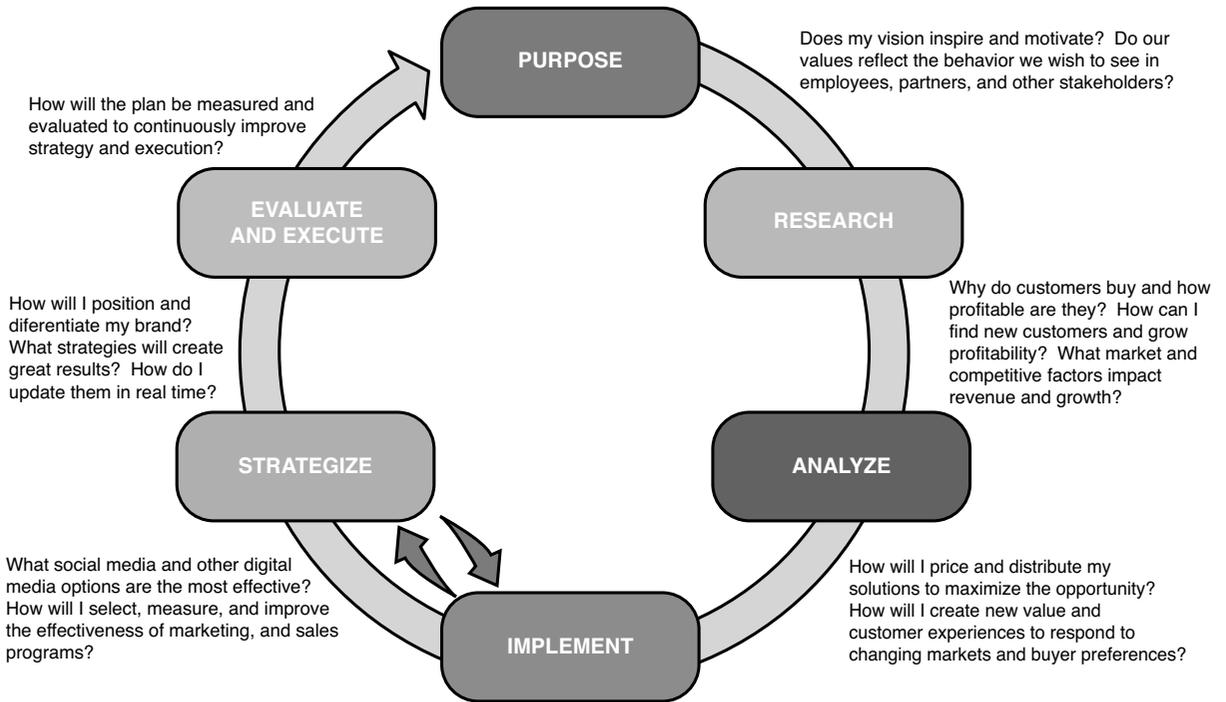
**Implement:** You will learn how social media and other types of digital media can help you create brand awareness, drive leads, and engage customers. You will learn how to develop a tactical plan that defines the sales and marketing programs, timeline, budget, and resource needs. Apply these processes and methodology to improve execution, ROI, and sales for your business.

**Execute and Evaluate:** The “E” in P•R•A•I•S•E stands for Execute and Evaluate. You will identify critical metrics to track and evaluate strategies, and learn how to use the ROI Optimizer to measure and improve the results of marketing and sales programs across your entire demand chain. You will learn how to integrate marketing with operations and learn 10 principles that will improve your company’s culture and ability to execute.



### **Real-Time Marketing**

Creating a marketing plan takes more time to develop the first time, but once it’s written, it is much easier to update in real-time and keep it fresh. A good analogy is having a goal of getting fit. If you are out of shape, the first few weeks are tough. You can’t delegate “getting in shape” to someone else; you have to do the push-ups yourself. But it becomes easier over time, and once you’re in shape, it is much easier to stay that way. The same is true with your plan. Once it is developed, it is much easier to keep it current—and your business is in good shape to respond to changing market conditions.



**Figure I.1** *Decision-making framework*

# 1

## What Is Purpose and Why Is It Important?

If people understand where the company is headed (vision), what the company stands for (mission), how they will work together to get there (values), and what must be accomplished (goals), then the strategy to get there can be understood and executed.

These four elements will ultimately define your company culture, the kind of people you hire, suppliers you work with, how you treat your customers, and even the quality of the customers you attract. Ultimately, it is the best way you can create a solid foundation for your business that will set the compass in the direction you intend.

If you are an entrepreneur, your purpose is further refined by the reason you started your business. It's the passion, vision, and opportunity that inspired you to start the company. Company purpose is unique to every entrepreneur, just as personality is unique to every person. The goal in defining your purpose is to get clarity about what business you are in, how it is unique from others in the market, and the value you provide to all your stakeholders. A business does not exist solely to make money (although that is a nice goal). A business exists to provide value to customers who buy its products and services. If you focus on providing extraordinary value to customers, this alone can drive success.

Just to be clear, this section of your marketing plan is not about “fluff.” Most of us have been in strategic planning sessions (or have worked at companies) in which considerable time was spent drafting mission statements only to wonder about the significance of what was really accomplished. And surely as a consumer, you have had an experience where you observed a mission statement displayed prominently on the wall of a business only to discover the words in the statement were anything but *your* experience with the company.

### Purpose-Driven Companies Make Higher Profits

If you want higher profits, have a purpose. Writing this section of your plan will increase profits while also creating a business that is more fun and meaningful for you, your employees, and your customers. *Companies that clearly define their mission, vision, and guiding principles, and communicate this consistently across the organization, have significantly higher profit per employee than companies who perform poorly*

*in this area.*<sup>1</sup> Success Profiles, a performance management company, studied 600 businesses and found that the average profit per employee in the survey increased from \$7,802 per employee to \$27,401 in companies that make this a best practice in their organization.

If you think things like mission, vision, values, goals, culture, and company purpose are merely “soft,” nice-to-have attributes for a business, this fact alone should change your mind.

As the leader driving the development of this important effort, you have the opportunity to create the experience people have with your company. If you are the company founder, you will develop the mission, vision, values, and goals to inspire your employees. If you are a marketing or strategic planning executive, you will have the opportunity to drive this process and communicate the messages in unique and creative ways so they are understood and integrated into the company culture. You will facilitate this important assignment and communicate the messages in your internal company brand campaign. As you will learn in the chapters that follow, an internal brand campaign is as important as your external campaigns because it inspires the actions and behaviors that ultimately become part of your brand.

We will explore several examples of companies that have done an exceptional job of defining their purpose. We will also look at a few special companies that have taken the road less traveled to create a company where company purpose is THE distinct competitive advantage for their company. Author Jim Collins defines the characteristics of companies like this in his book *Good to Great*. CEOs like Tony Hsieh of Zappos and Kimberly Jordon of New Belgium Brewery run companies powered by purpose.

## **Create Raving Fans**

While hundreds of companies are beginning to embrace the concept of a purpose-driven organization, these companies tend to be the exception, rather than the rule. I find this surprising given the fact that not only are these companies adored by their employees and customers, but they also *deliver consistent profitability and return to their shareholders*. Perhaps I am oversimplifying this concept, but when you have a choice to run a great company versus a mediocre company, *why not* create a great company? Not only will you have more fun; but you will create loyal employees and customers who are “Raving Fans.”<sup>2</sup>

*Raving Fans*, the title of a book coauthored by Ken Blanchard, describes customers who believe so much in a company's people and products that they actually become a part of the sales force. The way to create customers who are raving fans is to first treat your employees with great care and respect. If you do this, they in turn will care for customers. The result of creating raving fan customers, being the employer of choice, and the investment of choice is a "triple bottom line." As Blanchard is famous for saying, "Profit is the applause you get for taking care of your customers and creating a motivating environment for your people."<sup>3</sup>

Blanchard not only writes about companies with extraordinary purpose, he runs a company that lives by these principles every day. As Chief Spiritual Officer of The Ken Blanchard Companies, Ken Blanchard's role is to lead others at a higher level. He not only does this in his organization, but he also teaches other companies to embrace this concept. If you don't think this concept is important, especially in tough economic times, read on to see how Blanchard handled a difficult choice in our last recession during the period of time immediately following the 9/11 tragedy.

## **When Employees Leave at Night, So Does Your Business**

In the first thirty days following 9/11, the Blanchard Company lost \$1.5 million. During the economic downturn that affected most companies at this time, Blanchard was losing between \$350,000 and \$400,000 a month. He did not lay off people or shutter the business (as many other businesses did) because he said it would be the wrong thing to do. Instead he said, "Here's the deal. This is what we've got to do. Let's break into task forces and look for ways to cut costs and increase sales. Let's see how we can all pull together."<sup>4</sup> Employees responded by agreeing to cut their salaries and stop paying into the 401k. If people quit, it was agreed that they would not be replaced.

As Blanchard observed the sacrifice his employees made, he declared that when they pulled out of the slump, he would take everyone to Hawaii. In February of 2005, he followed through on his promise and took 350 people to Hawaii for a celebration.

When Blanchard discussed his decision to handle a crisis in this manner, he said, "You know, without your people, you are nothing. That is the biggest leadership mistake most people make. They think people and results are an either/or proposition rather than a both/and proposition. At the end of the day, when everybody heads home, your business just left. So leadership is about your people. If you turn around and nobody is following you, you are probably not leading."<sup>5</sup>

The result of a purpose-driven, triple-bottom-line company is a concept Blanchard calls the “Fortunate 500.” What I love about this concept is that the meaning of business success is redefined. Companies in the future will be successful not by their size, but by the quality of service offered to customers and the quality of life experienced by employees.

## **Company Purpose: Intentional or Dysfunctional?**

This is what makes a purpose-driven company so unique: *The words in mission and value statements are supported by actions that drive behavior.* Company culture is ultimately (and simply) defined as “the way things are done around here.” As actions and behaviors define the culture of a company, it would be wise to do this in a purposeful way. Companies that don’t pay attention to culture or view it as unimportant will by default create an atmosphere that could be described as “dysfunctional.”

If you have a company that has been in business for several years, it will be helpful to reflect on what your purpose is today and what you intended it to be when you started it. An important part of the marketing planning process is reflecting on past results and taking a series of small incremental steps to improve based on the new knowledge acquired throughout the process.

If you have already defined a vision, a mission, and values for your company, ask yourself if they are still relevant or if they need to change. Ideally, a company’s mission and value statements stand the test of time; however, if you feel the statements do not accurately reflect where you are going today, now is the time to change them. The first few years of an entrepreneur’s business tend to evolve opportunistically; therefore, it’s extremely valuable to step back and evaluate whether your businesses is heading in the intended direction. Ask: “Have I communicated my company purpose so everyone understands where we are headed and why?” If not, this is your opportunity to create a solid foundation for the business. The future success and growth of your business depends on its purpose, so take time to complete this important first step in the planning process. As your marketing plan develops, you will see that purpose drives your marketing and business strategies.

# Index

## Numbers

**3M, culture of innovation example, 199**

**80/20 rule, 32**

## A

**Abercrombie and Fitch, viral marketing example, 262**

**accountability in culture of execution, 321-322**

**acquisition as growth strategy, 189**

**activity-based cost, 51**

**Adobe, new markets example, 191-192**

**advertising exchanges, 229**

**advertising spending statistics, 214**

**advisory boards, customers on, 172-173**

**affiliate advertising, 228**

**airline industry, poor customer experience, 64**

**alliances/partnerships, 139-140**

as growth strategy, 190

**Alltop, 102**

**Amazon**

affiliate advertising, 228

distinctive delivery example, 118

long-tail business model example, 197

**analysis**

business expansion, 106-107

disruptive innovation, 110-113

distribution channels

*channel conflict, 137*

*checklist for, 137-138*

*evaluating, 130-132*

*real-time channel development, 133-135*

*selecting, 129-130, 136*

*types of, 131-132*

elements of, 105

evaluating, 297

pricing strategy, 121-124

*factors affecting, 122*

*mapping customer value to, 122-124*

*objectives, 121-122*

*training industry example, 124*

revenue/cost analysis, 127-128

social media strategy, 256

strategic alliances/partnerships, 139-140

substitute products/services, 108-109

value creation process, 114-120

**analyst firms for real-time research, 102-103**

**Analyze stage (P•R•A•I•S•E Marketing Process). See analysis**

**Anderson, Chris, 197**

**Andreessen, Marc, 63**

**Andretti, Mario, 211**

**AOL, customer service example, 170-171**

**Appel, Joel, 58, 69, 135**

**Apple**

customer advisory board example, 173

customer-centric example, 324

flank strategy example, 186

preemptive strategy example, 187

**applications for mobile devices, 232-233**

**Arizona Iced Tea, 181**

**Arm and Hammer**

broadening potential market  
example, 115

primary research example, 94

**art and science of strategy development,  
208-209**

**Artful Frame Gallery, customer buying  
reasons example, 66**

**attack strategy, 185-186**

**B**

**B2B (business-to-business) target  
markets, 74**

**Balanced Scorecard (BSC), 33, 298, 308,  
311-312**

**Barnes and Noble, long-tail business  
model example, 197**

**Beckham, Daniel, 282**

**Bedbury, Scott, 27-29, 162**

**Best Buy, viral marketing example, 261**

**Blanchard, Ken, 4-5, 23, 95**

**blogs, 251-252**

real-time research with, 102

**Blue Ocean Strategy (Monbourge and  
Chan), 111**

**Bodet, Tom, 164**

**bookmarking, 250**

**Bossidy, Larry, 313-316**

**bottom-up analysis in ROI Optimizer,  
305-306**

**brand equity, 159-161**

**brand essence, 159-160**

designing, 162-165

**brand innovation, 195**

**brand personality, 159-160**

designing, 162-165

**brand positioning in social media  
strategy, 257**

**brand roadmaps, Mike Moser  
interview, 163-165**

**brand strength of purpose-driven  
companies, 27-29**

**brands**

designing, 162-165

ingredient branding, 153

Mike Moser interview, 163-165

positioning strategy, 154-155, 157

*brand influence factors, 157*

*characteristics of success, 158*

*creating positioning statements, 156*

*elements of positioning*

*statements, 155-156*

*examples of positioning*

*statements, 157*

*types of, 154-155*

worth of, 159-161

**Branson, Richard, 196**

**break-even point, evaluating, 297**

**brewery example, purpose-driven companies, 25-26**

**BrightHouse, culture of innovation example, 199**

**Brooks, Todd, 183**

**BSC (Balanced Scorecard), 33, 298, 308, 311-312**

**budget statistics, 215**

**budget worksheet for tactical plans, 275-276**

**budgets**

- basis for, 291-292
- evaluating, 297
- value-based marketing, 292-293

**Burger King, Web site interactivity, 222**

**Bush, George W., 63**

**business case for changing corporate culture, 319-321**

**business expansion, analysis of, 106-107**

**business models**

- customer engagement business model, 175-176
- long-tail business model, 197-198

**business value, 110**

**business-to-business (B2B) target markets, 74**

**Butler, David, 182-184**

**buyers, broadening potential market, 114-115**

**buying, determining reasons for, 66-68**

**buzz marketing, 261**

- pranksters, 261-262
- in presidential elections, 262-264

**C**

**calendar worksheet for tactical plans, 275-276**

**Campbell's, market penetration strategy example, 152**

**car rental industry, poor customer experience, 64**

**Chan, Kim, 110-111**

**channel conflict, 137**

**channels**

- channel conflict, 137
- checklist for, 137-138
- evaluating, 130-132, 297
- as growth strategy, 190
- real-time channel development, 133-135
- selecting, 129-130, 136
- types of, 131-132

**Charan, Ram, 313**

**Chief Marketing Officer (CMO) Council, 214**

**Christensen, Clayton, 75-76**

**Citizen's Bank, customer experiences, 61**

**Clark, Dick, 279**

**Clinic Service Corporation**

- mission statement, 6-7
- positioning statement example, 157

**CLV (customer lifetime value), 51**

**CMO (Chief Marketing Officer) Council, 214**

## **Coca-Cola**

brand equity of, 159

“designing with a purpose,” 182-184

Facebook example, 246

## **cocreators, customers as, 174-176**

## **Cohort, market segmentation example, 79**

## **collaboration**

between sales and marketing, 283-284

on CRM, 286-288

## **Collins, Jim, 146**

## **Colorado ski resorts, brand personality example, 160**

## **commitment to core values, Zappos example, 14-16**

## **communication**

in culture of execution, 325-326

of values, 23

## **communications industry, poor customer experience, 64**

## **company culture, 12**

customer-centric culture, creating, 57-60

employee turnover statistics, 20

Ritz-Carlton example, 17-18

*employee training program, 18-20*

in social media strategy, 259

Zappos example, 12

*commitment to core values, 14-16*

*customer service, 13*

## **company culture assessments, 298**

## **company culture of execution, creating, 319**

business case for, 319, 321

communication, 325-326

customer-centric service, 323-324

employee recognition, 324-325

integrity, accountability, trust, 321-322

Larry Bossidy interview, 313-316

leadership by example, 321

linking planning and operations, 326

marketing as state of mind, 327

performance feedback, 325

vision, 322-323

## **company culture of innovation, encouraging, 199-202**

## **company purpose**

culture, 12

*customer-centric culture, creating,  
57-60*

*employee turnover statistics, 20*

*Ritz-Carlton example, 17-20*

*in social media strategy, 259*

*Zappos example, 12-16*

customers as raving fans, 3-4

elements of, 2

employees as heart of business, 4-5

evaluating, 295-296

intentional versus dysfunctional, 5

mission statements

*elements of, 6*

*examples of, 6-7*

*as inspiration, 7*

profits and, 2-3

values

*behavior, effect on, 11*

*commitment to, Zappos example,  
14-16*

*communicating and executing, 23*

*defining and prioritizing, 21-23*

*evaluating, 295*

*measuring, 23*

*personal and professional values,  
relationship between, 11*

vision statements, 8-10

### **company values**

behavior, effect on, 11

commitment to, Zappos example, 14-16

communicating and executing, 23

defining and prioritizing, 21-23

evaluating, 295

measuring, 23

personal and professional values,  
relationship between, 11

### **competitive advantage. *See also* differentiation**

with disruptive innovation, 110-113

training to maintain, 288-289

value creation process, 114-120

### **competitive research**

tracking competitors, 87-89

types of competitors, 86-87

### **competitive strategies, 185-188**

attack strategy, 185-186

defensive strategy, 186

flank strategy, 186

preemptive strategy, 187

retreat strategy, 187

risks of success, 188

substitute product strategy, 187

**contests, Netflix example, 174-175**

**Converse, customer experiences, 61**

**Cook, Scott, 53-54**

**core messaging, 164**

### **core values**

behavior, effect on, 11

commitment to, Zappos example, 14-16

communicating and executing, 23

defining and prioritizing, 21-23

evaluating, 295

measuring, 23

personal and professional values,  
relationship between, 11

**corporate culture. *See* culture**

### **costs**

fixed costs, 127

variable costs, 127

### **CRM (customer relationship management), 55**

collaboration on, 286-288

strategy implementation, 55-56

### **Crocs**

acquisition example, 189

mass market example, 151

### **crowdsourcing, 195**

**Cru Vin Dogs, passion example, 30-31**

**cultural information, researching, 92**

### **culture, 12**

customer-centric culture, creating, 57-60

employee turnover statistics, 20

Ritz-Carlton example, 17-18

*employee training program, 18-20*

- in social media strategy, 259
- Zappos example, 12
  - commitment to core values, 14-16*
  - customer service, 13*
- culture assessments, 298**
- culture of execution, creating, 319**
  - business case for, 319-321
  - communication, 325-326
  - customer-centric service, 323-324
  - employee recognition, 324-325
  - integrity, accountability, trust, 321-322
  - Larry Bossidy interview, 313-316
  - leadership by example, 321
  - linking planning and operations, 326
  - marketing as state of mind, 327
  - performance feedback, 325
  - vision, 322-323
- culture of innovation, encouraging, 199-202**
- customer advisory boards, 172-173**
- customer delight, customer satisfaction versus, 52**
- customer engagement business model, 175-176**
- customer experience**
  - creating, 61-62, 115-116
  - evaluating, 297
  - Golden Rule in, 64-65
  - poor customer service, 63-65
  - sharing information about, 286, 288
- customer experience innovation, 195**
- customer innovation, 195**
- customer lifetime value (CLV), 51**
- customer relationship management (CRM), 55**
  - collaboration on, 286, 288
  - strategy implementation, 55-56
- customer satisfaction, customer delight versus, 52**
- customer segments, defining in ROI Optimizer, 303-304**
- customer service**
  - based on customer segmentation levels, 47
  - designing Web sites for, 223-224
  - Orange Glo example, 58
  - poor service, 63-65
  - response by, 169-171
  - Ritz-Carlton example, 59
  - Zappos example, 13
- customer strategies, 166-168**
  - customer advisory boards, 172-173
  - customer service response, 169-171
  - customers as cocreators, 174, 176
- customer surveys**
  - creating, 96-97
  - online surveys, 97-98
- customer value, 110**
  - mapping to pricing strategy, 122-124
- customer-centric culture**
  - creating, 57-60
  - product-centric versus, 285-286
- customer-centric service, in culture of execution, 323-324**

## customers

loyalty, 50

*CLV (customer lifetime value), 51*

*Intuit example, 53-54*

*NPS (Net Promoter Score), 52-53*

*penalization for, 65*

market segmentation

*based on product role, 75-78*

*Globus example, 79-81*

new customers as growth strategy, 192

power shift with social media, 235-237

primary research

*creating customer surveys, 96-97*

*developing plan for, 96*

*online surveys, 97-98*

*quantitative versus qualitative  
research methods, 94-95*

as raving fans, 3-4

real-time customer research, 69-70

reasons for buying, 66-68

segmentation, 44-49

skepticism of, 63-64

target market identification, 71-73

*B2B target markets, 74*

**customization, designing Web sites  
for, 222**

## D

**decline stage (product life cycle),  
179-180**

**defensive strategy, 186**

**defining**

core values, 21-23

secondary research plan, 93

**DeHart, Jacob, 176**

**delivery process, distinguishing from  
others, 117-118**

**Dell**

customer service example, 169

social media example, 236

**Dell, Michael, 163**

**demand, forecasting, 83-85**

**demand chain, 299**

optimization, 307

**demographics, 72**

researching, 91

**Denison Consulting, 320**

**Design Machine (Coca-Cola), 184**

**“designing with a purpose,” Coca-Cola  
example, 182, 184**

**detractors, 53**

**development framework for strategy,  
147-148**

**differentiation, 164. See also  
competitive advantage**

in positioning statement, 156

in product strategy, 181-184

**Digg**

social bookmarking, 250

trendsetting example, 117

**digital media**

advantages of, 219

email marketing, 230-231

mobility marketing, 232

*applications for, 232-233*

*examples of, 234*

*growth rate, 233*

online advertising, 227  
    *advertising exchanges*, 229  
    *affiliate advertising*, 228  
    *display advertising*, 227-228  
    *sponsorships*, 229

public relations, 265-270

social media, 235  
    *blogs*, 251-252  
    *Facebook*, 246-247  
    *LinkedIn*, 245-246  
    *measuring ROI*, 241-244  
    *operational budget for*, 242-244  
    *power shift with*, 235, 237  
    *principles of*, 238  
    *social bookmarking*, 250  
    *statistics*, 239-240  
    *strategy formulation*, 254-260  
    *Twitter*, 247-249  
    *value of*, 237

viral marketing, 261  
    *pranksters*, 261-262  
    *in presidential elections*, 262-264

Web sites, 220-221  
    *integrated customer service technology*, 223-224  
    *interactivity*, 222-223  
    *mass customization*, 222  
    *search engine optimization*, 225  
    *targeted markets*, 222-223  
    *usability design*, 221  
    *value-added services*, 224

**direct competitors**, 86

**display advertising**, 227-228

**disruptive innovation**, 110-113, 194

**distribution channels**  
    channel conflict, 137  
    checklist for, 137-138  
    evaluating, 130-132, 297  
    as growth strategy, 190  
    real-time channel development, 133-135  
    selecting, 129-130, 136  
    types of, 131-132

**distribution innovation**, 196

**distribution services for public relations**, 266

**Doyle, Peter**, 292

**DreamWorks, customer advisory board example**, 172

**Drucker, Peter**, 61, 110, 281, 327

**Ducati Motor Holdings**, 174

**dysfunctional purpose, intentional purpose versus**, 5

## **E**

**early adopters, attracting**, 151-152

**ecological information, researching**, 91

**economic information, researching**, 91

**Edwards, John**, 234

**elections, viral marketing in**, 262-264

**email marketing**, 230-231

**emotions, effect on customer service reputation**, 170-171

**employee recognition in culture of execution**, 324-325

**employee turnover statistics**, 20

## **employees**

- in customer-centric culture, 57-60
- as heart of business, 4-5
- Ritz-Carlton training program, culture example, 18-20
- understanding of company strategy, 308

## **Enterprise Rent-A-Car, flank strategy example, 186**

## **entrepreneurship**

- brand strength, 27-29
- Cru Vin Dogs example, 30-31
- New Belgium Brewery example, 25-26
- profitability, 24
- Firms of Endearment (FoE)*, 24-25

## **environmental factors, researching, 90-93**

## **environmental impact, New Belgium Brewery example, 25**

## **Evaluate and Execute stage (P•R•A•I•S•E Marketing Process). See evaluation; execution**

## **evaluation**

- of Analyze stage (P•R•A•I•S•E Marketing Process), 297
- with Balanced Scorecard, 308-312
- of distribution channels, 130-132
- of Evaluate and Execute stage (P•R•A•I•S•E Marketing Process), 298
- of Implement stage (P•R•A•I•S•E Marketing Process), 297-298
- of Purpose stage (P•R•A•I•S•E Marketing Process), 295-296

- of Research stage (P•R•A•I•S•E Marketing Process), 296-297
- with ROI Optimizer, 299-307
- of Strategize stage (P•R•A•I•S•E Marketing Process), 298

## **evaluation stage (social media strategy), 259-260**

## **exclusive distribution strategy, 131**

## **execution**

- creating culture of, 319
  - business case for*, 319-321
  - communication*, 325-326
  - customer-centric service*, 323-324
  - employee recognition*, 324-325
  - integrity, accountability, trust*, 321-322
  - Larry Bossidy interview*, 313-316
  - leadership by example*, 321
  - linking planning and operations*, 326
  - marketing as state of mind*, 327
  - performance feedback*, 325
  - vision*, 322-323
- evaluating, 298
- real-time marketing planning, 317-318
- of values, 23

## **execution stage (social media strategy), 259**

## **Execution: The Discipline of Getting Things Done (Bossidy and Charan), 313**

## **expansion, analysis of, 106-107**

## **experiences**

- creating, 61-62, 115-116
- evaluating, 297

Golden Rule in, 64-65  
poor customer service, 63-65  
sharing information about, 286-288  
**experiential marketing, 28**  
**experimentation in social media  
strategy, 260**  
**exponential growth strategies, 189**  
**external brand strength, 27-29**

## **F**

**Facebook, 246-247**  
**Federal Express, positioning statement  
example, 157**  
**feedback**  
in culture of execution, 325  
importance of, 95  
**Ferrari, Vincent, 170-171**  
**Firms of Endearment (FoE), 24-25**  
**fixed costs, 127**  
**flank strategy, 186**  
**focus groups, 69-70**  
**FoE (Firms of Endearment), 24-25**  
**follower strategy, 180**  
**forecasting demand, 83-85**  
**Foss, Bill, 30**  
**frame of reference in positioning  
statement, 156**  
**frequency in public relations, 267**  
**Frontier Airlines, attack strategy  
example, 186**  
**Fruit Growers Association, market  
penetration strategy example, 152**

## **G**

### **gadgets**

for mobile devices, 232-233  
for Web sites, 222

### **Gates, Bill, 265**

**Generational Tag, social media ROI  
example, 241**

**Globus, market segmentation example,  
79-81**

### **goals**

BSC (Balanced Scorecard)  
categories, 33  
categories, 33-34  
evaluating, 295  
setting in ROI Optimizer, 301-302  
SMART goals, 32, 206

### **Godin, Seth, 110, 251**

**Godiva Chocolatier, market penetration  
strategy example, 152**

**Golden Rule in customer experience,  
64-65**

### **Google**

customer-centric example, 324  
social networking example, 101  
**“green” initiatives, New Belgium  
Brewery example, 25**

### **Grove, Andy, 187**

**growth opportunities, analysis of**  
business expansion, 106-107  
disruptive innovation, 110-113

distribution channels  
*channel conflict, 137*  
*checklist for, 137-138*  
*evaluating, 130-132*  
*real-time channel development, 133-135*  
*selecting, 129-130, 136*  
*types of, 131-132*

elements of, 105

evaluating, 297

pricing strategy, 121-124  
*factors affecting, 122*  
*mapping customer value to, 122-124*  
*objectives, 121-122*  
*training industry example, 124*

revenue/cost analysis, 127-128

social media strategy, 256

strategic alliances/partnerships, 139-140

substitute products/services, 108-109

value creation process, 114-120

**growth stage (product life cycle), 178**

**growth strategies, 189-192**  
acquisition, 189  
new customers, 192  
new distribution channels, 190  
new markets, 190-192  
new products, 192  
strategic alliances/partnerships, 190

## **H**

**Hallmark, 174**

**Herman Miller, 181**

**Heskett, John, 320**

**holistic marketing metrics, 292-293**

**HP (Hewlett-Packard), customer advisory board example, 172-173**

**Hsieh, Tony, 12-15**

## **I**

**imaginative innovation, 119**

**IMC (integrated marketing communications), 213**

**implementation**

advertising spending statistics, 214

email marketing, 230-231

evaluating, 297-298

mobility marketing, 232

*applications for, 232-233*

*examples of, 234*

*growth rate, 233*

online advertising, 227

*advertising exchanges, 229*

*affiliate advertising, 228*

*display advertising, 227-228*

*sponsorships, 229*

public relations, 265-270

relationship with strategy, 143

social media, 235

*blogs, 251-252*

*Facebook, 246-247*

*LinkedIn, 245-246*

*measuring ROI, 241-244*

*operational budget for, 242-244*

*power shift with, 235-237*

- principles of*, 238
- social bookmarking*, 250
- statistics*, 239-240
- strategy formulation*, 254-260
- Twitter*, 247-249
- value of*, 237
- tactical plans
  - creating*, 274
  - implementation calendar and budget worksheet*, 275-276
- viral marketing, 261
  - pranksters*, 261-262
  - in presidential elections*, 262-264
- Web sites, 220-221
  - integrated customer service technology*, 223-224
  - interactivity*, 222-223
  - mass customization*, 222
  - search engine optimization*, 225
  - targeted markets*, 222-223
  - usability design*, 221
  - value-added services*, 224
- Implementation Calendar, evaluating**, 297
- implementation calendar and budget worksheet**, 275-276
- Implement stage (P•R•A•I•S•E Marketing Process)**. *See* **implementation**
- impressions**, 305
- indirect competitors**, 86
- ingredient branding**, 153
- innovation**
  - disruptive innovation, 110-113
  - imaginative innovation, 119
  - innovation strategies**, 194, 196
    - culture of innovation, 199-202
    - long-tail business model, 197-198
    - models for, 194-196
  - inspiration in mission statements**, 7
  - integrated customer service technology, designing Web sites for**, 223-224
  - integrated distribution strategy**, 131
  - integrated marketing communications (IMC)**, 213
  - integration of strategies**, 209
  - integrity in culture of execution**, 321-322
  - Intel, retreat strategy example**, 187
  - intensive distribution strategy**, 131
  - intentional purpose, dysfunctional purpose versus**, 5
  - interactivity, designing Web sites for**, 222-223
  - internal brand strength**, 27-29
  - internal competitors**, 87
  - Internet distribution strategy**, 132
  - introduction stage (product life cycle)**, 177-178
  - Intuit, customer loyalty example**, 53-54
  - iPhone, trendsetting example**, 117
- J**
  - JetBlue, substitute product strategy example**, 187
  - Johnson's, market penetration strategy example**, 153
  - Jordan, Michael**, 165
  - Jordon, Kim**, 25
  - justification in positioning statement**, 156

## **K**

**Kaplan, Robert, 308**  
**Kawasaki, Guy, 107, 248**  
**The Ken Blanchard Company, response after 9/11 attacks, 4-5**  
**Kent, Muhtar, 183**  
**keywords in public relations, 266-268**  
**Knight, Phillip, 27**  
**Kodak, market penetration strategy example, 152**  
**Kotler, Philip, 110, 145**  
**Kotter, John, 320**  
**Kraft, market penetration strategy example, 152**  
**Kumar, Nirmalya, 145, 200-202**  
**Kvietok, Frank, 69**

## **L**

**Landmark Theaters, customer experience example, 115**  
**Launch Pad**  
    real-time channel development example, 133-135  
    real-time customer research example, 69-70  
**leadership by example, 321**  
**leads, 305**  
**Lebesch, Jeff, 25**  
**legal factors, researching, 90**  
**lenses, 251**  
**Levitt, Theodore, 75**  
**LinkedIn, 101, 245-246**  
**LinkExchange, 14**  
**links in public relations, 268**

*The Long Tail: Why the Future of Business is Selling Less of More* (Anderson), 197

**long-tail business model, 197-198**  
**Louis Vuitton, customer experience example, 116**  
**Lowry, Adam, 182**  
**loyalty of customers, 50**  
    CLV (customer lifetime value), 51  
    creating customer experiences, 61-62  
    Intuit example, 53-54  
    NPS (Net Promoter Score), 52-53  
    penalization for, 65

## **M**

**macro research, 42, 71**  
    competitive research  
        *tracking competitors, 87-89*  
        *types of competitors, 86-87*  
    environmental factors, 90-91, 93  
    forecasting demand, 83-85  
    market segmentation  
        *based on product role, 75-78*  
        *Globus example, 79-81*  
    target market identification, 71-73  
        *B2B target markets, 74*  
**Madoff, Bernie, 63**  
**Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award, 17**  
**market leadership (pricing objective), 121**  
**market penetration strategy, 152-153**  
**market segmentation**  
    B2B target markets, 74  
    based on product role, 75-78

- Globus example, 79-81
- target market identification, 71-73
- market share penetration (pricing strategy), 121**
- market size, identifying, 83-85**
- marketing**
  - budget statistics, 215
  - current trends in, 213-215
  - improvements needed in, 282
    - collaboration on CRM, 286-288*
    - customer-centric organization, 285-286*
    - metrics, 289-290*
    - sales and marketing collaboration, 283-284*
    - strategic versus solution sales, 284-285*
    - training to maintain competitive advantage, 288-289*
- metrics
  - in Analyze stage (P•R•A•I•S•E Marketing Process), 297*
  - Balanced Scorecard, 308-312*
  - in Evaluate and Execute stage (P•R•A•I•S•E Marketing Process), 298*
  - in Implement stage (P•R•A•I•S•E Marketing Process), 297-298*
  - performance measures, list of, 293-294*
  - in Purpose stage (P•R•A•I•S•E Marketing Process), 295-296*
  - in Research stage (P•R•A•I•S•E Marketing Process), 296-297*
- ROI Optimizer, 299-307*
- in Strategize stage (P•R•A•I•S•E Marketing Process), 298*
- perception of, 281-282
- ROI measurement, 216-218
  - as state of mind, 327
- marketing and sales programs, defining in ROI Optimizer, 304-305**
- Marketing as Strategy: Understanding the CEO's Agenda for Driving Growth and Innovation (Kumar), 200***
- marketing budgets**
  - basis for, 291-292
  - evaluating, 297
  - value-based marketing, 292-293
- marketing innovation, 195**
- marketing objectives, strategy and, 206**
- Marketing Program ROI worksheet, 271, 297**
- markets, new markets as growth strategy, 190-192**
- Marquis Banking Partners, competitive research example, 88**
- Mashable, 102**
- mass market penetration strategy, 150-151**
- maturity stage (product life cycle), 178-179**
- Maytag, 181**
- McCarty, Tyler, 93**
- McConnell, Mac, 66**
- McEnroe, John, 165**
- McKenna, Regis, 98**

## **measurable goals**

- BSC (Balanced Scorecard)
  - categories, 33
- categories, 33-34
- evaluating, 295
- setting in ROI Optimizer, 301-302
- SMART goals, 32, 206

## **measuring. *See also* metrics**

- marketing effectiveness, 271
- values, 23

## **media room, creating, 269-270**

## **Method Products**

- attack strategy example, 186
- differentiation example, 182

## **metrics**

- improvements needed in, 289-290
- marketing budgets, basis for, 291-292
- marketing metrics
  - in Analyze stage (P•R•A•I•S•E Marketing Process), 297*
  - Balanced Scorecard, 308-312*
  - in Evaluate and Execute stage (P•R•A•I•S•E Marketing Process), 298*
  - in Implement stage (P•R•A•I•S•E Marketing Process), 297-298*
  - performance measures, list of, 293-294*
  - in Purpose stage (P•R•A•I•S•E Marketing Process), 295-296*
  - in Research stage (P•R•A•I•S•E Marketing Process), 296-297*

- ROI Optimizer, 299-307*
- in Strategize stage (P•R•A•I•S•E Marketing Process), 298*
- in social media strategy, 259-260
- value-based marketing, 292-293

## **micro research, 42**

- customer loyalty, 50
  - CLV (customer lifetime value), 51*
  - Intuit example, 53-54*
  - NPS (Net Promoter Score), 52-53*
- customer segmentation, 44-49

## **microsites, 222**

## **Microsoft, defensive strategy example, 186**

## **million-dollar prize (Netflix) example, 174-175**

## **Mint Financial Services, mobility marketing example, 234**

## **mission, evaluating, 295**

## **mission statements**

- elements of, 6
- examples of, 6-7
- as inspiration, 7

## **mobility marketing, 232**

- applications for, 232-233
- examples of, 234
- growth rate, 233

## **Monbourne, Renee, 110-111**

## **Moser, Mike, 162**

- interview with, 163-165

## **MoveOn.org, 262**

## **Mrs. Fields, brand imaging example, 165**

## **Myers, Jack, 214**

## **N**

**NAICS (North American Industry Classification System), 85**

**Naisbitt, John, 39**

**Net Promoter Score (NPS), 52-53**

Intuit example, 53-54

**Netflix**

distinctive delivery example, 118

long-tail business model example, 197

million-dollar prize example, 174-175

value creation process example, 110

**NetJets, distinctive delivery example, 118**

**New Belgium Brewery, purpose-driven companies example, 25-26**

*A New Brand World (Bedbury), 162*

**news advisories, writing, 269**

**news aggregators, 99-100**

**news releases, writing, 268-269**

**niche markets, 149-150**

**Nickell, Jake, 175**

**Nielsen Media Research, 85**

**Nike, 174**

brand strength example, 27-29

branding example, 165

customer experiences, 61

**Nisbet, Scott, 79**

**North American Industry Classification System (NAICS), 85**

**Norton, David, 308**

**NPS (Net Promoter Score), 52-53**

Intuit example, 53-54

## **O**

**Oakley, customer experiences, 61**

**Obama, Barack, 263-264**

**objectives**

evaluating, 295

for social media, defining, 255

**observational research, 75**

**one-to-one marketing, 55**

collaboration on, 286-288

strategy implementation, 55-56

**online advertising, 227**

advertising exchanges, 229

affiliate advertising, 228

display advertising, 227-228

sponsorships, 229

**online survey tools, 97-98**

**operational budget for social media, 242-244**

**operations, linking with strategy, 326**

**opt-in/opt-out marketing, 230**

**Orange Glo, customer service example, 58**

**Oreck, Diana, 17**

**organic growth strategies, 189**

**organizational innovation, 195**

## **P**

**Pareto principle, 32**

**partnerships, 139-140**

as growth strategy, 190

**passion, Cru Vin Dogs example, 30-31**

**passives, 53**

**Patagonia, 224**

**performance feedback in culture of execution, 325**

**performance measures, list of, 293-294**

**permission marketing, 230**

**personal values, relationship with professional values, 11**

**personification of brands, 159-160**  
 designing, 162-165

**pet food example, niche markets, 149**

**PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals) Super Bowl ad, social media example, 236**

**Phelps, Ron, 6**

**pioneer strategy, 180**

**pitching stories in public relations, 267**

**Pixar, customer advisory board example, 173**

**Plank, Kevin, 192**

**platform innovation, 194**

**PLC (product life cycle) stages, 177-180**

**policies for social media strategy, defining, 259**

**political factors, researching, 90**

**Pollard, William, 42**

**PollDaddy, 101**

**Porter, Michael, 143-145**

**positioning in social media strategy, 257**

**positioning statements**  
 creating, 156  
 elements of, 155-156  
 examples of, 157

**positioning strategy, 154-157**  
 brand influence factors, 157  
 characteristics of success, 158  
 creating positioning statements, 156  
 elements of positioning statements, 155-156  
 examples of positioning statements, 157  
 types of, 154-155

***Positioning: The Battle for Your Mind* (Trout and Reese), 162**

**Post-its, mass market example, 150**

**potential market, broadening, 114-115**

**power shift with social media, 235, 237**

**PR (public relations), 265-270**

**PR kits, creating, 269-270**

**PR Newswire, 266**

**pranksters in viral marketing, 261-262**

**preemptive strategy, 187**

**presence, social media type selection, 257-258**

**presidential elections, viral marketing in, 262-264**

**pricing map, 122-124**

**pricing strategy, 121-124**  
 factors affecting, 122  
 mapping customer value to, 122-124  
 objectives, 121-122  
 training industry example, 124

**primary research, 42**  
 creating customer surveys, 96-97  
 developing plan for, 96

online surveys, 97-98  
 quantitative versus qualitative research methods, 94-95  
**prioritizing core values, 21-23**  
**PRIZM (Potential Rating Index by Zip Codes), 79**  
**process development for strategy, 147-148**  
**process innovation, 194**  
**product development process, 107**  
**product innovation, 194**  
**product life cycle (PLC) stages, 177-180**  
**product role, market segmentation based on, 75-78**  
**product strategy**  
     differentiation, 181-182, 184  
     PLC (product life cycle) stages, 177-180  
**product-centric organization, customer-centric versus, 285-286**  
**products**  
     listing in ROI Optimizer, 302  
     new products as growth strategy, 192  
**professional information, researching, 91**  
**professional values, relationship with personal values, 11**  
**profit maximization (pricing objective), 121**  
**profitability**  
     of loyal customers, 50  
     of purpose-driven companies, 24  
         *Firms of Endearment (FoE)*, 24-25  
**profits, purpose and, 2-3**  
**promoters, 53**  
**psychographics, 72**  
**public relations, 265-270**  
**pull strategy (distribution channels), 130**  
**purpose**  
     culture, 12  
         *customer-centric culture, creating, 57-60*  
         *employee turnover statistics, 20*  
         *Ritz-Carlton example, 17-20*  
         *in social media strategy, 259*  
         *Zappos example, 12-16*  
     customers as raving fans, 3-4  
     elements of, 2  
     employees as heart of business, 4-5  
     evaluating, 295-296  
     intentional versus dysfunctional, 5  
     mission statements  
         *elements of, 6*  
         *examples of, 6-7*  
         *as inspiration, 7*  
     profits and, 2-3  
     values  
         *behavior, effect on, 11*  
         *commitment to, Zappos example, 14-16*  
         *communicating and executing, 23*  
         *defining and prioritizing, 21-23*  
         *evaluating, 295*  
         *measuring, 23*  
         *personal and professional values, relationship between, 11*  
     vision statements, 8-10

**Purpose stage (P•R•A•I•S•E Marketing Process).** *See purpose*

**purpose-driven companies**

brand strength, 27-29

Cru Vin Dogs example, 30-31

New Belgium Brewery example, 25-26

profitability, 24

*Firms of Endearment (FoE)*, 24-25

**push strategy (distribution channels), 130**

**Putten, James, 51**

## **Q**

**Q leads, 305**

**Qik, 63**

**qualitative research methods, 94-95**

**quantitative research methods, 94-95**

## **R**

**rapid growth strategies, 189**

**Rashid, Karim, 182**

**raving fans, customers as, 3-4**

***Raving Fans* (Blanchard), 4**

**reach, in public relations, 266**

**real-time channel development, 133-135**

**real-time customer research, 69-70**

**real-time marketing planning, 317-318**

linking operations and strategy, 326

**real-time product development, 107**

**real-time research**

analyst firms for, 102-103

integrating with other research, 103

news aggregators, 99-100

with social media, 100

*blogs*, 102

*social networking*, 100-101

*tools/gadgets*, 101

**RedShift Framing, mission statement, 6**

**Reese, Al, 162**

**Reichheld, Fredrick, 52**

**research**

CRM (customer relationship management), 55

*strategy implementation*, 55-56

customers' reasons for buying, 66-68

evaluating, 296-297

goals of, 42-43

importance of, 40-41, 43

macro research, 42, 71

*competitive research*, 86-89

*environmental factors*, 90-93

*forecasting demand*, 83-85

*market segmentation*, 75-81

*target market identification*, 71-74

micro research, 42

*customer loyalty*, 50-54

*customer segmentation*, 44-49

primary research

*creating customer surveys*, 96-97

*developing plan for*, 96

*online surveys*, 97-98

*quantitative versus qualitative research methods*, 94-95

real-time research, 69-70

*analyst firms for*, 102-103

*integrating with other research*, 103

*news aggregators, 99-100*  
*with social media, 100-102*  
secondary research plan, defining, 93  
**Research stage (P•R•A•I•S•E Marketing Process).** *See* research  
research stage (social media strategy),  
256-257  
**Restoration Hardware, 181**  
return on investment. *See* ROI  
retreat strategy, 187  
revenue forecast, creating, 203  
revenue/cost analysis, 127-128  
rituals, 23  
**Ritz-Carlton**  
culture example, 17-18  
*employee training program, 18-20*  
customer service example, 59  
daily rituals, 23  
**The Ritz-Carlton Gold Standards, 18**  
**The Ritz-Carlton Leadership Center, 17**  
**Roberson, Donavon, 15**  
**ROI (return on investment)**  
defined, 305  
measuring, 216-218, 271  
of social media, 241-244  
**ROI Optimizer, 298-307**  
demand chain optimization, 307  
goals, setting, 301-302  
marketing and sales programs, defining,  
304-305  
products and services, listing, 302  
sales channels, defining, 303

target customer segments, defining,  
303-304  
top-down and bottom-up analysis,  
305-306

**Rose, Kevin, 117**

**Ryan, Eric, 182**

## **S**

sales

collaboration with marketing, 283-284  
strategic versus solution sales, 284-285

sales channels, defining in ROI  
Optimizer, 303. *See also*  
distribution channels

sales funnel analysis, 298

Sales Funnel Effectiveness  
worksheet, 271

sales programs, defining in ROI  
Optimizer, 304-305

sales strategy, 204-205

Samuels, Denzil, 8-9

Schultz, Horst, 19

Schultz, Howard, 1, 27, 157

search, in public relations, 266-268

search engine marketing (SEM), 225

search engine optimization (SEO), 225

secondary research, 42

secondary research plan, defining, 93  
segmentation

of customers, 44-49

*defining in ROI Optimizer, 303-304*

market segmentation

*B2B target markets, 74*

*based on product role, 75-78*

- Globus example, 79-81*
- target market identification, 71-73*
- selecting**
  - distribution channels, 129-130, 136
  - social media types, 257-258
  - strategy, 145
- selective distribution strategy, 131**
- SEM (search engine marketing), 225**
- SEO (search engine optimization), 225**
- service innovation, 194**
- service strategy. *See* product strategy**
  - differentiation, 181-184
  - PLC (product life cycle) stages, 177-180
- services, listing in ROI Optimizer, 302**
- Sheraton Hotels, market segmentation example, 75**
- Shop Savvy, mobility marketing example, 234**
- Shultz, Don, 215**
  - interview, 216-218
- silos, breaking down, 283-284**
- SIM (social influence marketing), 236**
- Situation Analysis, 35**
- skepticism of customers, 63-64**
- ski resorts example, brand personality, 160**
- skimming strategy, 151-152**
- SMART goals, 32, 206**
- Smirnoff Vodka, Web site interactivity, 222**
- Smith, Brad, 54**
- Snellgrove, Jay and Mary, 30**
- social bookmarking, 250**
- social influence marketing (SIM), 236**
- social information, researching, 92**
- social media, 235**
  - blogs, 251-252
  - Facebook, 246-247
  - LinkedIn, 245-246
  - measuring ROI, 241-244
  - operational budget for, 242-244
  - poor customer service and, 63
  - power shift with, 235-237
  - principles of, 238
  - real-time research with, 100
    - blogs, 102*
    - social networking, 100-101*
    - tools/gadgets, 101*
  - social bookmarking, 250
  - statistics, 239-240
  - strategy formulation, 254-260
    - brand positioning, 257*
    - evaluation stage, 259-260*
    - execution stage, 259*
    - experimentation in, 260*
    - objectives, 255*
    - research stage, 256-257*
    - roles and policy, 259*
    - selecting social media types, 257-258*
    - tactical plan, 258-259*
    - target audience, 256*
  - Twitter, 247-249
  - value of, 237
- social networking, real-time research with, 100-101**

**solution innovation, 194**

**solution sales, strategic sales versus, 284-285**

**Southwest Airlines**

customer experience, 64

value creation process example, 111

**sponsorships, 229**

**Sprint, market penetration strategy example, 152**

**Squidoo, 251**

**Starbucks**

brand influence factors, 157

brand strength example, 27-29

channel conflict example, 137

**start-ups, importance of research, 41**

**statistics**

advertising spending, 214

display advertising, 227

employee turnover and company culture, 20

employee understanding of company strategy, 308

marketing budgets, 215

Obama presidential campaign, 263

social media, 239-240

**stories**

pitching in public relations, 267

vision statements as, 10

**strategic alliances/partnerships, 139-140**

as growth strategy, 190

**strategic sales, solution sales versus, 284-285**

**Strategize stage (P•R•A•I•S•E Marketing Process). See strategy**

**strategy**

art and science of development, 208-209

brand equity, 159-161

brands, designing, 162-165

competitive strategies, 185-188

*attack strategy, 185-186*

*defensive strategy, 186*

*flank strategy, 186*

*preemptive strategy, 187*

*retreat strategy, 187*

*risks of success, 188*

*substitute product strategy, 187*

customer strategies, 166-168

*customer advisory boards, 172-173*

*customer service response, 169-171*

*customers as cocreators, 174-176*

development framework, 147-148

employee understanding of, 308

evaluating, 298

explained, 145-146

growth strategies, 189-192

*acquisition, 189*

*new customers, 192*

*new distribution channels, 190*

*new markets, 190-192*

*new products, 192*

*strategic alliances/partnerships, 190*

innovation strategies, 194-196

*culture of innovation, 199-202*

*long-tail business model, 197-198*

*models for, 194-196*

integration, 209

linking with operations, 326

marketing objectives, 206

positioning strategy, 154-157  
*brand influence factors, 157*  
*characteristics of success, 158*  
*creating positioning statements, 156*  
*elements of positioning statements, 155-156*  
*examples of positioning statements, 157*  
*types of, 154-155*

product strategy  
*differentiation, 181-184*  
*PLC (product life cycle) stages, 177-180*

relationship with implementation, 143

revenue forecast, creating, 203

sales strategy, 204-205

selecting, 145

for social media, 254-260  
*brand positioning, 257*  
*evaluation stage, 259-260*  
*execution stage, 259*  
*experimentation in, 260*  
*objectives, 255*  
*research stage, 256-257*  
*roles and policy, 259*  
*selecting social media types, 257-258*  
*tactical plan, 258-259*  
*target audience, 256*

target market strategies, 149-153  
*market penetration strategy, 152-153*  
*mass market penetration, 150-151*  
*niche markets, 149-150*  
*skimming strategy, 151-152*

**strategy maps, 309-311**

**StumbleUpon, 250**

**stunts in viral marketing, 261-262**

**substitute product competitors, 86**

**substitute product strategy, 187**

**substitute products/services, analysis of, 108-109**

**Success Profiles, 320**

**SurveyMonkey, 98**

**surveys**  
 creating, 96-97  
 online surveys, 97-98

**survival pricing (pricing strategy), 121**

**sustainability, New Belgium Brewery example, 25**

**SWOT Analysis, 35-36**  
 evaluating, 296

**syndication innovation, 196**

**T**

**Taco Bell, viral marketing example, 262**

**tactical plans**  
 creating, 274  
 implementation calendar and budget worksheet, 275-276  
 social media strategy, 258-259

**Target, product differentiation example, 181**

**target audience for social media, defining, 256**

**target customer segments, defining in ROI Optimizer, 303-304**

**target market**

customer segmentation, 44-49

*defining in ROI Optimizer, 303-304*

designing Web sites for, 222-223

identifying, 71-73

*B2B target markets, 74*

market segmentation

*B2B target markets, 74*

*based on product role, 75-78*

*Globus example, 79-81*

*target market identification, 71-73*

**target market strategies, 149-153**

market penetration strategy, 152-153

mass market penetration, 150-151

niche markets, 149-150

skimming strategy, 151-152

**target profit, evaluating, 297**

**technological information,  
researching, 92**

**Technorati, 102**

**TED (United Airlines subsidiary), value  
creation process example, 111**

**threadless, customer engagement  
business model example, 175-176**

**tiered distribution strategy, 131**

**top-down analysis in ROI Optimizer,  
305-306**

**traditional media spending  
statistics, 214**

**train example, imaginative  
innovation, 119**

**training industry example,  
pricing map, 124**

**training programs, Ritz-Carlton culture  
example, 18-20**

**training to maintain competitive  
advantage, 288-289**

**Treacy, Michael, 145**

**trendsetting, 116-117**

**Trout, Jack, 162**

**trust in culture of execution, 321-322**

**Turner, Ted, 117**

**Twitter, 100-101**

explained, 247-248

tips for using, 248-249

**TwtPoll, 101**

## **U**

**Under Armour, new products example,  
192-193**

**United Airlines**

attack strategy example, 186

value creation process example, 111

*United We Brand (Moser), 162*

**Upshaw, Lynn, 154**

**usability, designing Web sites for, 221**

**user innovation, 195**

## **V**

**value, mapping customer value to  
pricing strategy, 122-124**

**value creation process, 110-120**

broadening potential market, 114-115

creating customer experiences, 115-116

distinctive delivery process, 117-118

imaginative innovation, 119  
trendsetting, 116-117  
**value innovation, 195**  
**value network, 200**  
**value propositions, 157, 200**  
**value-added services, designing Web sites for, 224**  
**value-based marketing, 292-293**  
**valued customers, 200**  
**values**  
behavior, effect on, 11  
commitment to, Zappos example, 14-16  
communicating and executing, 23  
defining and prioritizing, 21-23  
evaluating, 295  
measuring, 23  
personal and professional values, relationship between, 11  
**variable costs, 127**  
**Velcro, brand imaging example, 165**  
**Victoria's Secret, Facebook example, 246**  
**viral marketing, 261**  
pranksters, 261-262  
in presidential elections, 262-264  
**vision**  
in culture of execution, 322-323  
evaluating, 295  
**vision statements**  
Denzil Samuels example, 8-9  
as stories, 10  
**Volvo, 174**

## **W**

**Wanamaker, John, 215**  
**Web 1.0, 219**  
**Web 2.0, 219**  
**Web 3.0, 219**  
**Web sites, 220-221**  
integrated customer service technology, 223-224  
interactivity, 222-223  
mass customization, 222  
search engine optimization, 225  
targeted markets, 222-223  
usability design, 221  
value-added services, 224  
**Welch, Jack, 325**  
**widgets**  
for mobile devices, 232-233  
for Web sites, 222  
**Wiersema, Fred, 145**  
**Williams Sonoma, email marketing, 231**  
**Wilson, Edward O., 105**  
**wins, 305**  
**Wirth Business Credit, macro-environmental factors example, 93**  
**Woods, Tiger, 165**  
**word-of-mouth marketing, 261**  
pranksters, 261-262  
in presidential elections, 262-264  
**The World Business Forum, 62**  
**WuFoo, 101**  
**Wyckoff, Luke, 11**

## **X-Z**

### **Zappos**

culture example, 12

*commitment to core values, 14-16*

*customer service, 13*

customer-centric example, 324

vision example, 323

### **Zarella, Dan, 247**

**Zillow.com, mobility marketing  
example, 234**

### **Zoomerang, 98**