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The seven steps to implementation success (fast track)

Billions of dollars are lost every year from marketing plans that fail to get implemented properly. The risks around implementation are high and the challenges are many. To help overcome them, good marketing leaders need new knowledge, skills and tools. This book draws upon fresh research, new technology and decades of experience to help marketers improve their chances of success. We propose a simple marketing navigation system to help all businesses ensure their plan identifies the implementation risks and remains on course to deliver its targets. This releases significant profits for the business and helps ensure it continues its journey to sustainable competitive success.

Implementing a marketing plan is one of the most perilous journeys that anyone can undertake. Our research suggests that over 60% of marketing plans fail to achieve their targets. Overall, there is more chance a marketing plan will fail than succeed.

This is a multi-billion dollar problem. Across the top 50 corporations of America, we estimate the total lost profits from poor implementation to be well over \$50billion, four times the annual profits of Apple! Add to that the lost profits from the thousands of companies further down the ranking and repeat it for the other global regions and you can see this is a considerable global goldmine.

However, this is no easy task. If you are not armed with the right knowledge, skills and tools, then there is a good chance that your marketing plan will simply be dashed on the rocks of fate, like so many others before it. Your plan will be like a ship, sailing swiftly and blindly towards submerged rocks, uncharted icebergs and unforeseen storms, without any navigation aids to help you.

Here is how you can successfully navigate the implementation journey.

1 Learn to use the Marketing Navigation System (Chapter 2)

To help you maintain control of implementation, we recommend you use the Marketing Navigation System. This is a suite of tools to help you implement your marketing plan more successfully. It has four core tools:

- The Marketing Helm
- The Marketing Navigation Dashboard
- The Risk–Commitment Diagnostic
- The Risk–Commitment Matrix.

The core tools are based on good demonstrated practice in a range of professions. We have identified the best tools, imported their essential ingredients into our system and adapted them for our use. The end result is a powerful system with solid foundations.

The Dashboard pulls together the key elements of the tools onto one page (see Figure 11.1).

2 Plan your implementation carefully (Chapters 3 and 4)

This is the first phase of the implementation journey. In this phase you will need to understand what your marketing strategy (and plan) is seeking to achieve and then plan a route to get you there. This is done by being crystal clear about your marketing orders, diagnosing your current implementation issues, anticipating implementation problems ahead and planning your best route to success. This implementation plan is a vital additional element of an excellent marketing plan. Good work today will save many a weary night later.

Key principles

- The marketing plan must be ready for implementation
- Do the implementation diagnostics
- Write a change plan
- Test this in a variety of ways
- Move firmly to the next phase only when ready.

Marketing Navigation System

Navigation Dashboard Plan/Project: _____ Date: _____
Owner: _____ Revision: _____

On Course? Yes/No

The Risk-Commitment Matrix: Current Position

Key Actions

Action	Who	By When	Done?

On Time? Yes/No
Comments here

On Budget? Yes/No
Comments here

The Helm
Implementation Phase: Pilot

Risk - Commitment Diagnostic

Top Risk Issues						Conclusion
Ref	Desired State	Risk Area	Failure Threat	Test	Current Status	GO/ NO GO

Top Commitment Issues						Conclusion
Ref	Desired State	Stakeholder	Failure Threat	Test	Current Status	GO/ NO GO

Figure 11.1: The Marketing Navigation Dashboard