



AROUND THE TABLE

“I studied marketing and am now employed as a marketer, but I feel I still have so much to learn. What kind of informal training and mental exercises outside of work can I undertake to make me a better marketer?” Donald Bailey, VIC

Every issue, we will post your question to a cross-section of marketing experts. If you have a question you would like the panel to comment on, email it to marketing@niche.com.au.



MELANIE JOHNSTONE
ADMA 2002 Young Direct Marketer of the Year and director of Rocket Science. melj@rocketscience.com.au

■ As marketers, our overall goal is to achieve set business objectives through the application of cost effective communications to customers and potential customers. Therefore it is crucial that marketers understand the basic principles of direct marketing.

>>Following is a list of recommendations that could assist you to further your knowledge of marketing:

- Spend time reading industry publications such as *Marketing, B&T Weekly*, and *AdNews*, paying particular attention to industry case studies. Visit web sites that detail case studies and relevant marketing information such as www.postdirect.com.au and www.draytonbird.com.
- Attend short courses such as the ADMA Certificate in Direct Marketing or nextphase (an Australia Post initiative that provides a practical insight into customer-focused marketing).
- Attend industry events such as the ADMA Pan-Pacific Conference. Adopt a mentor who you can bounce ideas off.
- Finally, identify where your true marketing passion lies. Is it developing strategy, building response models or creating ideas? Whatever it is find and explore your individual niche.



FRANK CHAMBERLIN
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■ A marketer who has a 'marketing personality' has an enquiring mind. Such a person is always on the lookout for new things, new methods, new ideas. Eagerness for learning, above all else, enables an individual to become a better and better marketer.

>>The professional marketer cannot see an advertisement without wondering about the objectives of the seller, the target market or the likely impact in the marketplace. Such mental exercises can create ideas and stimulate new approaches for one's own communications challenges.

>>It goes without saying that reading the thinking of leading marketers is of the utmost importance. But it is also critical to be on lots of mail and email lists to see what other marketers are doing, to ask questions of people in business, to be alert to new customer service techniques and to embrace new experiences in daily life.



BARRY URQUHART
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■ Every day marketers learn more...including just how much they never knew. It is a lifetime journey and is one of the rigours of the profession.

>>Adhere to the philosophy: "YOU LEARN BEFORE YOU EARN".

>>Knowledge worldwide is estimated to double every 30 months. Disturbing for some is that you'll never know it all. The marketplace is progressively becoming more complex in breadth, with globalisation, and in intensity, with nano-technology. Segmentation has evolved into fragmentation. Macromarketing has developed into micromarketing.

>>Lesson one. Understand your role as marketer, which is to: STUDY, RESPOND, FULFIL

>>The better marketers have attitude. Marketing success centres on attitude, not aptitude. Don't rely entirely on percentages that are derived from market research or reports on consumer habits.

>>Remember and constantly repeat this marketing mantra: 'THAT'S INTERESTING. WHY IS IT SO'

>>Finally, avoid value judgements. Remember, the customer is always right.



LUCY ASHLEY
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■ Congratulations for recognising that while a marketing degree is certainly an asset, it doesn't make you a good marketer on its own.

>>As a copywriter, I've learnt that even the most detailed and precise demographics are only half the story if you're serious about getting inside the heads of your target market. What are they happy about right now? What's most important in their world? What sort of words are they using? And how can your product or service really make their lives better/happier/easier?

>>I also think it's vital to consider what people might be DONG when they're exposed to your advertising - are they tired and hungry after work and struggling through their mail; or are they enjoying the *Good Weekend*, with the time and inclination to try something a little bit challenging?

>>So here's my advice to you: WATCH PEOPLE. And step outside your own comfort zone as often as you can. If you drive to work, catch the train occasionally and listen and learn. Find reasons to visit places far from where you live. Get to know people who aren't like you.

>>If you combine what you learn daily in the 'school of life' with what you've learnt at uni, there's no way you can fail to become a better marketer.

