

ISBM Business Marketing Educators Consortium

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by

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Action items for the next Consortium meeting, in January:

1. Rao and his organization will examine the recent Trends Report from ISBM and come back with recommendations for future-oriented marketing training.
2. Stines and Lindholm will report progress on their research proposals.
3. Oliva will report on training ROI measurement options/ideas, with help from Wilson and Lilien.
4. Oliva will distribute materials developed by Steinberg.
5. Oliva will have the benchmarking study in the field with ISBM members.

MEETING ACTIVITY:

Introduction by Ralph Oliva: ([click here for powerpoint slides](#))

-Includes November 1998 meeting review.

Question: (Oliva) Has the investment in marketing education flattened? We've seen evidence of that.

(Hobbs) Once you get people to a meeting they do see the value, and some even say they wish it ran longer. We do, however, sometimes try to do too much in education.

(Steinberg) You can begin the training in class, but continue it in a continuing education program.

(Hobbs) A small part of the market wants to go the remote learning route.

Benchmarking study: ([click here for powerpoint slides](#))

Oliva presented handout with results from the benchmarking study pilot (conducted among Consortium members), noting that the data support bringing more professional educators into the corporate training process. The nine respondents showed lots of variability in the approaches they desire.

Oliva introduced doctoral students Allen Stines and John Lindholm who express an interest in working with the data from a full-scale benchmarking study and in surveying member organizations.

ROI measurement of results is a major corporate requirement, Oliva said, pointing to a suggestion by Ben Fisher: Examine the quality of marketing plans written *after* the training. Oliva added that some marketing program effects are more direct and

measurable, such as the six-fold profit gain claimed by a marketer who attended Irv Gross's value and pricing course.

Question: (Oliva) The question to the Consortium, what do *you* want to do next? Should we survey all ISBM members?

(Fisher) We should survey all members, look for new ideas and details. Rich detail is important.

(Hobbs) Would be great to see what people do to validate your own program and see where you are lagging.

Standards of success?

(Harris) I'm more interested in ROI measurement, establishing the value of training. Also, knowing how people use existing resources. Perhaps we should create a database of resources and recommendations: university resources, for example, and people to network with.

(Ros) We've had one marketing training course at Southern Company and are now doing a skills inventory for all our training needs. Corporate budget cutting, if it occurs, could jeopardize the program.

Question: (Oliva) How can we make training an investment, rather than an expense? Now it seems to be a leading indicator of marketing budget cuts.

(Harris) We seek examples of success to help us sell training internally.

(Nolte) Information from all of ISBM will be helpful, as we restructure our training around markets rather than training projects. Even with a VP on our marketing council who's a big champion of training, having ISBM data will help us demonstrate effect.

(Steinberg) We need to examine best practice firms for the behaviors and skills that produce the desired marketing training results.

(Wilson) Some training courses are more important than others. Examine improvement in marketing practices; that might be more powerful evidence than trying to measure ROI.

(Rothwell) Different stakeholders have different standards of success. Most trainers get the ROI questionnaire after their courses end, but let's explore front-end questions as well—such as needs.

If we rely on training alone to make a change, it won't solve marketing problems without implementation skills as well. Our goal is not training, but marketing results.

At the university, our attempt to quantify results uses an 86-variable model.

(Lindholm) We are studying CEO perceptions of workplace learning and performance programs and the competencies of people who run them. We would like some participation by ISBM members.

Consortium members' needs:

(Harris) At AlliedSignal, I'm organizing a 5-6 day Marketing College with Northwestern University—and integrated curriculum for marketing and e-business training. We're also looking at a deep, targeted project with ISBM, with CD-ROM and Web-based products.

- Trying to change the culture to marketing thinking at all levels of company. One problem is marketing managers being afraid to acknowledge what they do not know.
- Our six-sigma quality thrust has led to a marketing program, but I (a marketing person two months in the training job) am a bit nervous about translating marketing into six-sigma process terms. I need to ensure that that program does not conflict with our marketing college.
- Managers keep requesting front- and back-end proof that marketing training is needed, and then that it worked.
- We have also worked with the Burke Institute on market research issues.

(Hobbs) At Dow, our Marketing & Sales Technology Center gives 15 different courses globally. Some I teach; for others, we bring people in. We use classroom training, and then work with people who want to go further on a consulting basis. We promote best practices in the company to keep different units talking with each other.

- Our plans for marketing recognition programs were defeated. People said you couldn't judge if a marketing plan would lead to good implementation. People were scared. Some don't have marketing plans. Some from technical backgrounds do not know marketing.
- An impartial jury should review marketing plans, rather than review nebulous statements of marketing goals.

(Fisher) At PPG, we have a heavy training program [working with ISBM] that's been cut back this year for budget purposes. We did get all our key people through the program. Now we are looking for on-the-job type training. We do seek a long-term relationship with Penn State.

We're big on applauding success stories. We have a best practices day to promote them and share stories.

(Oliva) At Texas Instruments, we tried to replace courses with consultants, but it didn't work. We learned that we should do both. Then we [rather than consultants] will own the competencies developed.

(Nolte) At Air Products & Chemicals, the corporate group does not have a marketing training budget, but individual business units do. One unit did have a modest program that has stopped and started.

I could show survey results to our marketing council, address organizational training and promoting best practices. There has to be some interest there, or we will not have a program.

(Rao) Rohm & Haas is a \$4-\$6.5 billion company (whether one counts acquisitions) that has worked with Price Waterhouse studying global training needs.

Our marketing board made no commitment or request on training. They had asked me to lead it. I disbanded it.

We need to create a marketing council patterned after Keith Smith's approach [at Hercules, Inc., presented at last year's annual members' meeting]. We need to examine the role of marketing in the future.

Steinberg presentation:

Professional Development Program designed for the American Marketing Assn., where the notion of certification was an idea that had been casually considered for years.

- The curriculum plan is based on survey data collected 7-8 years ago, which might need updating.
- AMA dropped the project just as it began seeking writers for the training modules.
- Steinberg owns the material and plans to share it with ISBM.
- She has used parts of the curriculum successfully in an ongoing program developed with the Market Research Assn. A similar new program with the National Retail Merchants Assn. is being developed.

AMA's Professional Development Task Force drafted a Skills Matrix that contained substantial overlap among the technical, marketing, and managerial tracks specified.

- The matrix approach, simplified, became the Core Body of Knowledge curriculum, developed with the help of a 1991 AMA member survey, to be delivered through self-study modules.
- Participant would take a diagnostic test for skills assessment.
- The test would be scored and appropriate training prescribed.
- Participant would study as directed by a study guide, then sit for a proctored competency test.

AMA and its members have different needs than ISBM and its members.

- AMA's 1991 survey found that 75% of AMA member respondents had no formal marketing training, representing a major opportunity for AMA. (The sample included both business and consumer marketers.)
- The knowledge/skills section of the 1991 questionnaire produced the gaps in knowledge needed vs. knowledge possessed.
 - The results show wide gaps on many fundamental marketing concepts.
 - Note the 30-point gap in "marketing ethics." Is that a function of high knowledge possessed, or of low knowledge needed?

AMA planned to have experts—educator practitioner teams—write the training module materials.

Updating the modules today, you could weave technology through each of them.

The project represents a philosophy of curriculum development.

- self-directed
- redundant media
- partnerships in curriculum development

We also began work on “knowledge beyond the core”: a matrix of the disciplines relevant to specific industries/specialty areas.

AMA chapters were to administer the program. The Connecticut Chapter did run a successful program for four years with the University of Hartford (where Steinberg teaches).

Comment on Steinberg presentation: curricula, certification, specialty MBAs

(Oliva) Companies have been asking for material like this. Xerox is working on it. AlliedSignal has a very proprietary program. We could update this work; it does include many timeless elements. This is a great foundation to begin with. Companies could adapt this approach for their own planning.

- What should ISBM do:
 - Develop a full marketing curriculum for business-to-business?
 - Address certification. Is it an issue for us?
 - Let's have a subgroup study this.

Several participants indicate broad agreement with Oliva on the value of the Steinberg work. In addition ...

(Fisher) Certification could be a good program for ISBM.

(Plunkett) I need internal programs, not so much certification.

(Steinberg) Then use the program as a benchmarking tool, not necessarily for certification.

(Rothwell) You could outsource program development elsewhere at Penn State. This group could oversee the work.

(Oliva) Business Marketing Assn.'s “Certified Business Communicator” program is not a good example to follow. Among the problems at TI, we saw CBCs angered if their certificate did not guarantee them a promotion.

Another option: an ISBM executive MBA program.

(Wilson) We could survey top MBA programs for additional direction about the important variables to teach: business-to-business business plans, for instance. Which courses are most useful?

(Fisher) The training need in corporations is quite different than the training in an MBA program.

(Oliva) We could provide building blocks around core knowledge. You could design your own program. We would provide the flexible tools.

Additional member needs:

(Cranmer) At NIST, we're putting together programs for smaller manufacturers, for managers with technical backgrounds. We are working with ISBM to strip material down for our audience.

(Plunkett) the issue for us is moving to a marketing culture. We have invested in executive education, but not yet marketing education. We do have a good sales training program. We need to know what we need to teach in marketing, not just sales skills in the guise of marketing.

(Oliva) All firms are at various stages working toward excellence in marketing. The ones making the best progress seem to have both executive support and grassroots pressures from below. It would be good to have a skills inventory to give to marketers. We don't have that now.

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