

# High Technology Marketing

## Technology Marketing Highlights

- Technical audiences are *different*.
- They distrust and dislike many conventional sales and marketing approaches.
- They actively seek out highly detailed information.
- There are few actual **decision makers**:
- Technical people *recommend*.
- Senior Management *approves*.
- Both must be addressed for a sale to be made.

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## Technology Marketing

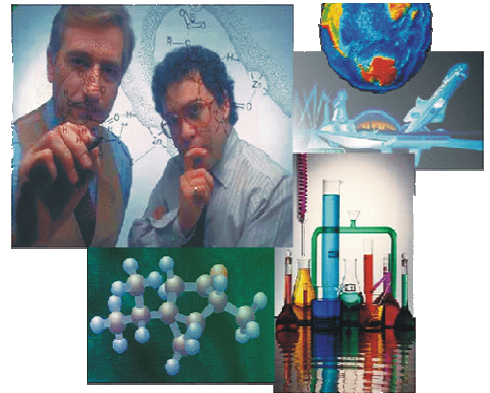
The marketing of advanced products to technical audiences has unique characteristics. Like any market segment, effectively reaching this audience requires meeting them on *their terms*.

This is an interesting challenge! It requires combining sales and marketing messages with useful information and presenting it to a suspicious and often cynical audience who distrust anything that looks like sales or marketing. It requires understanding their thought processes and

decision making style. It requires a deep understanding of product, technology, applications and alternatives. And it requires the ability to communicate this information in a credible way.

Beyond this, it is critical to address the fact that the technical people are usually recommenders and influencers, rather than the ultimate deci-

sion makers. A complete marketing and sales program must *also* reach the executives who have the final say.



## A Philosophy of Technology Marketing

While developing strategies to address certain high-end computer markets, we created a set of marketing guidelines. Although elements of these guidelines might be specific to computers, much of it is applicable to any technical market -- engineers, scientists and technical professionals have much in common, whatever their area of focus!

Traditional "decision makers," notably senior executives, do not so much *make decisions* on product selections as they *affirm the recommendations* made by their technical staff. They still hold the ultimate power, so it

is necessary to market and sell technical products to multiple audiences at the same time -- technical, financial and executive.

- Technology markets are technically astute and demanding.
- They value and demand solid, content-rich, credible information. They reach decisions and take action based on *research and analysis*.
- They are used to doing research -- it is part of their daily life.
- They rely on technical journals, papers and

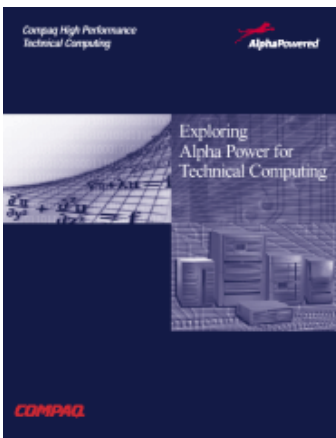
magazines for much of their information. They value quantitative data.

- They will read publications of almost any length -- if it is credible and useful!
- They absorb data, evaluate alternatives, reach conclusions and make decisions.
- They have little interest in -- or tolerance for -- traditional marketing and sales materials. They have an effective "marketing firewall" that filters out anything they perceive as marketing or sales.



Collaterals and presentation tools are key elements in marketing programs.

Technical people often have a “marketing firewall” that filters out anything perceived as marketing or sales.



Long, dense technical documents can be effective sales tools when dealing with a technical audience

## Philosophy of Technical Marketing (cont.)

- They demand performance, are price sensitive, but often have the ability to make large purchases.

These markets are fragmented and diverse. It is necessary to implement programs that have both broad-based and highly focused elements.

For smaller products, purchasing decisions are decentralized, and made at a relatively low level.

Benchmarking is an extremely common component

of the sales process.

For large products, major hands on benchmarks are run. These are expensive for everyone involved, especially vendors, and are becoming less common.

For less expensive products, "paper benchmarks" and detailed comparisons are usually done. It is critical to both supply sufficient information to enable these comparisons as well as to properly position this information. Explanation of the significance of specific

features and how to compare them can be critical in coming out on top in these comparisons.

There is extensive networking and sharing of information within each community. This is a double edged sword which makes it difficult to restrict information to a specific audience while at the same time widely disseminating information considered interesting or useful.

## Marketing Tools in the Internet Age

Direct marketing -- including "Dead trees to the desktop" -- is a powerful tool that should not be overlooked in today's online electronic world. There is a place for both paper and online -- and it is extremely straightforward to retarget content for delivery through multiple mediums.

The Web is a powerful medium, with many advantages:

- Instant availability of information.
- Supports text and graphics.
- Low development and distribution costs.
- Fast and inexpensive to update content.

The primary limitation of the Web is that it is a *pull medium* -- people have to come to a Web Site, you can't deliver the Web Site directly to them. Also, few people like to read long documents on a computer screen. A common situation is to go to a Web Site, download a long document, and print it out to read.

The Web is an excellent delivery medium, but doesn't stand by itself. You need to use other approaches and tools to get someone to go to a Web Site.

Email is an extremely powerful *push medium*. Email is delivered directly to a specific person, instantly, at very low cost. There are significant drawbacks to email as a marketing tool:

- It is best suited to short, unformatted text messages.
- Many people find unsolicited commercial email — "Spam" — extremely annoying. This can be counterproductive for marketing!

Paper documents have significant advantages:

- Extremely portable.
- Highly readable.
- Preferred by most people for long content (over a few pages).
- Universal format.
- High information den-

sity.

- Familiar to technical people .
  - Journals
  - Technical papers.
  - Documentation.

Paper also has a downside:

- High production costs.
- High reproduction costs (especially color).
- Long lead times.
- Slow delivery.
- Expensive to update content.

The final tool in the direct marketing toolbox is telemarketing. Telemarketing is powerful, expensive, and potentially annoying. In general, telemarketing is best as a part of an overall program, rather than a standalone effort. The best places to use telemarketing are usually as part of a response to customer queries and as a selective follow-up to direct mail.