

Brainwave series | No.2

Resourcing

– selecting the ultimate fantasy marketing team

The great thing about fantasy football is the ability to shape your team without limitation. Selecting just the right players to sharpen your squad's competitive edge, choosing players with the right balance of strength, experience and flair to outsmart the opposition – in attack and defence. As the season progresses, you can adapt to improve your league position, to make the most of new opportunities and to tackle unexpected threats. 'Resourcing' provides you with that same flexibility for your marketing team. From signing up a strike force for specific sales goals, to instilling a temporary manager for a particular marketing programme. In short, resourcing could have the biggest impact on your marketing performance in any season.

It's important to appreciate that resourcing is not just about recruitment. Resourcing recognises the importance of a human resource as an integral element of marketing communications activity, but at the same time exploits agency commitment to a project by establishing dual responsibility for its success and ROI.

Selecting your fantasy marketing team

Resourcing is all about the ability to shape your marketing team according to planned activities and in response to market conditions. You can pick and choose team members with particular campaigns and activities in mind. For example:

- you have a marketing programme at planning stage and need someone with previous relevant experience and knowledge to ensure that the programme really does meet the company's business objectives and will attract and retain programme members
- a significant exhibition is on the horizon but none of your current managers has the experience or the capacity to fully manage your expo expenditure
- for the first time you are carrying out joint marketing activity with a partner organisation in Europe and you could use a bilingual co-ordinator
- you learn that one of your current team members will be absent from work for a few months for health reasons and you need a replacement for a limited time period or for a specific project
- to maintain the balance of skills across your whole team, you require an extra player who will complement and enhance your marketing department (but unfortunately your organisation has a headcount freeze)

But the benefits of resourcing go much deeper than flexible provision of staff.

Resourcing – a definition

It's important to appreciate that resourcing is not just about recruitment. Resourcing recognises the importance of a human resource as an integral element of marketing communications activity, but at the same time exploits agency commitment to a project by establishing dual responsibility for its success and ROI. It's a hybrid solution, combining the focus of headhunting with the marcoms skills of a specialist marketing agency.

As a client you acquire targeted and scalable marketing expertise without adding headcount, whilst gaining greater access to agency creative skills and production facilities.

Resourcing in its true sense can only be offered by an agency with the right mix of human resource, specialist ICT knowledge and marketing innovation skills.

Resourcing – reality not fantasy

ICT businesses face particular challenges when it comes to programme management and campaign management issues. Those challenges include:

- a requirement for high calibre marketers
- the need for the right level of technical understanding plus the ability to perceive the benefits of technology from a purchaser or end user's perspective
- a surfeit of apparently well qualified ICT marketers available for contract work, but very few who have the tenacity, flair and communication skills required to champion your programmes or campaigns

The concept of flexible team selection appeals to marketing departments in most industries. But for ICT businesses, the need to have the right skills in the right place at the right time is perhaps more acute.

- a history of inflated salary rates for telecoms marketers in particular which, today, makes recruiting someone with the right level of experience and commitment, especially difficult
- the ability to manage and effect direct and indirect sales campaigns.

ICT marketing differentiators

The concept of flexible team selection appeals to marketing departments in most industries. But for ICT businesses, the need to have the right skills in the right place at the right time is perhaps more acute. Why? Because the challenges of direct and indirect sales, lengthy sales cycles, fluctuating market conditions, extended decision making groups, ever-evolving technologies and investor demands create a tough market where only the best can win.

Resourcing - ICT industry specific issues

There are operational issues which face ICT marketing departments, that make resourcing a compelling option. They can include:

- increased focus on quarterly activity which does not correspond with staff planning
- sceptical investors (and/or the Board) placing a freeze on recruitment
- increasingly short development cycles for programme roll-out, product launches, event set-up and delivery, and even faster turnaround, tactical product marketing initiatives in response to investor community concerns
- a move towards creating a workforce which is more dynamic and flexible
- a greater emphasis on collaborating with partner organisations for marketing activity

When budgeting for a human resource within project costs, you can acquire a star player on loan, with a time-limited contract.

Resourcing explained

The starting point for exploring the resourcing option is usually where you find yourself with a new marketing programme to launch, or a particular, time-limited campaign to run, and your marketing team comprises staff who are already stretched and do not necessarily have the precise skills you need to make the new activity successful. By considering resourcing as a key element in campaign development and delivery, it is possible to (a) ensure the project is delivered on time and with full attention to detail, (b) guarantee that the manager has the appropriate skills and experience you

need, (c) guarantee that the agency working on the project is fully responsible for its success and the delivery of return of investment. When budgeting for resourcing within project costs, you can acquire a star player on loan, with a time-limited contract. They then have access to the specialist skills of the marketing agency.

Why choose Resourcing?

Resourcing proves a more effective route for many ICT organisations, when compared to freelance, recruitment or stretching existing resources.

1 Resourcing vs stretching in-house resource

	Resourcing	In-house resource
Similarities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specialist ICT marketing skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specialist ICT marketing skills
Differences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can deploy specific skills and experience required Manager is fully committed to project/ programme delivery Resource is scalable in line with project schedule Benefits of close relationship between agency and project manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing team member may not have the specific skills and experience for maximising project ROI Time divided between new and existing responsibilities Team member's start and finish availability may be influenced by existing workload Time pressures will inhibit close liaison with the marketing communications agency

2 Resourcing vs Recruitment

	Resourcing	Recruitment
Similarities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporary contract • Application of specific ICT and/ or marcoms skills and experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporary contract • Recruitment agency charged with shortlisting candidates with required experience
Differences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agency understands ICT marketing, knows the client's organisation and company culture and the project management capabilities required • Agency is rigorous in shortlisting only those 1 or 2 candidates that are suitable. (The successful candidate will also be the agency's 'ambassador' within the client's marketing department so the agency will be particularly careful to place the best qualified person) • Saves time for the client as agency carries out all first interviews and proposes only one or two for a meeting with the client • No up front recruitment fee. Instead the agency provides the marketer for a fixed monthly cost which can be built into the marketing communications programme budget • In the event that the agency wishes to offer the marketer a permanent post or direct employment after the contract has expired no 'introduction fee' is payable • The agency is responsible for reference checking and ensuring the manager signs both agency and client non-disclosure agreements • Benefits of close relationship between agency and manager plus enhanced access to the agency's creative skills and production facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment agency account managers are (generally) not marketers and do not have first hand experience of the IT company culture. This will affect the quality of the candidate screening and shortlisting they are able to provide • Not every candidate put forward by a recruitment agency will have been interviewed by them face-to-face and therefore client will need to invest more time in carrying out first and second interviews • Recruitment agencies charge an up-front fee or commission which can be as much as 35% of salary. This is non-refundable should the candidate leave after one month of joining. This represents a real risk in the case where you are offering a temporary contract but the candidate is still seeking full time employment • Generally, if a client wishes to offer a candidate direct employment at the end of a temporary contract, a further 'introduction fee' is payable • Once the candidate has been appointed, the client is responsible for taking up references and background checks

3 Resourcing vs Freelancing

	Resourcing	Freelancing
Similarities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporary contract • Specialist skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporary contract • Specialist skills
Differences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agency is responsible for providing a 'service' and delivery is therefore not dependant on one person • Fixed monthly cost makes for straightforward marcoms program budgeting • Agency carries out reference checks and ensures NI and tax payments are made • Agency ensures that non-disclosure agreements are signed to protect client and agency data • Benefits of close relationship between agency and manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Freelancer may get a 'better offer' part way through the project and not complete the agreed term • Monthly cost can fluctuate as freelancers will bill on an hourly rate basis, making budget management more difficult • Inland Revenue can pursue clients if freelancer has not paid NI or tax on their earnings • Whilst the agency will work to ensure the project is a success, there will be a degree of distance between the freelancer and the agency due to client confidentiality

4 Resourcing vs Headhunting

	Resourcing	Headhunting
Similarities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted search for precise skills and experience • Requires understanding of ICT marketing expertise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted search for precise skills and experience • Requires understanding of ICT marketing skills
Differences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equally applicable for senior and junior roles • No up-front fees or commissions – a monthly fee is chargeable • Contract extensions are easily negotiated and do not attract any one-off fees • Benefits of close relationship between agency and manager and enhanced access to the agency's creative skills and production facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tends to be used for more senior roles • Up-front commission or fee – the percentage usually reflects the seniority of the role and the bespoke approach involved. Therefore not a cheap option. • A contract extension will incur an additional fee from the headhunter

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How Wilson Miller Resourcing can help you gain competitive edge

Wilson Miller Resourcing is a Wilson Miller company, one of the UK's leading technology marketing agencies. Wilson Miller has an enviable track record of delivering significant return on investment for information and communications technology clients in the UK and across EMEA. Fundamental to this success is a clear understanding of the unique demands of ICT marketing. The application of this understanding, and a genuine commitment to working closely with clients, is the focus of Wilson Miller Resourcing. We assist clients at any and every level in the delivery of marketing programmes and marketing communications activities, in order to optimise budgets and resource – and win market share.

Clients who have already used resourcing to strengthen their marketing team have found that:

- finding marketers who are a good fit for both the client company culture and the Wilson Miller culture ensures success
- the blurring of the agency/client division means that the agency not only 'buys in' to the client's goals but also has a vested interest in achieving them (and even surpassing them). As the agency shares responsibility for campaign success at grass roots level, so the agency becomes more closely accountable for campaign results.
- the agency becomes an extension of the client marketing team, giving the client direct access

- to creative and production expertise and facilities
- agency and client work together as a team in a way that has not been possible in the past
- resourcing is a scalable offer, flexible to fluctuating needs and demands

Resourcing can be used as a valuable tool to enhance your marketing performance. Let us share with you our 10 top tips for successful resourcing:

- 1 bring in expertise to support particular specialist activities or projects, targeting key skills
- 2 scale up in times of increased activity
- 3 scale down in quiet periods – consider part time if necessary
- 4 don't restrict your company's ambitions because of limited in-house resource
- 5 look afresh at what your marketing budget can do for you
- 6 learn from the experience hired in to expand your own team's knowledge
- 7 take full advantage of the blurring of the client/agency boundary
- 8 improve budget management by linking resources to marketing activity
- 9 benefit from an off-site virtual extension to your marketing department
- 10 remember that ICT marketing professionals are specialists

'Resourcing – selecting the ultimate fantasy marketing team', is part of the Brainwave series published by Wilson Miller, one of the industry's leading technology marketing agencies. This series of white papers provides innovative solutions to serious business issues facing the ICT business. Visit www.wilsonmiller.co.uk for more titles in the series.

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