

INSIDE THE MINDS™

# UPDATING YOUR MARKETING STRATEGY

LEADING EXECUTIVES ON LEVERAGING NEW  
TECHNOLOGIES AND STRATEGIES TO INCREASE  
VISIBILITY AND GROW REVENUE



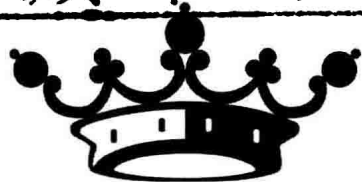
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Lance Malesh, BDP International; Ron C. Ringness and John C. Moore, Millwood Inc.  
Purnima Menon, CSS Corp.; Caroline MacDonald, Auberge Resorts  
Jonathan Bank, Aurionpro Solutions; Rob Cameron, Moneris Solutions

I N S I D E   T H E   M I N D S

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# Building a Best-of-Class Branding Consultancy Brand

Hayes Roth

*Founder and Principal*

HA Roth Consulting LLC



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## **Introduction: A Little about Me and My Life at Landor**

I am the former chief marketing officer for Landor Associates, one of the largest and oldest branding and design firms in the world. At Landor, where I worked for nineteen years, my primary job was to oversee all marketing worldwide for the agency. At the time I left the firm in spring of 2014, Landor had grown to twenty-four offices, with some 750 people in nineteen countries. My global Marketing Communications team and I were responsible for leading and coordinating all major Landor marketing initiatives and helping with business development across the different offices. The team itself resided in both New York and San Francisco, with direct responsibility for managing the website, our global outreach efforts, our public relations agency and programs, and leading and managing any marketing initiatives that were executed on a cross-office scale. In addition to that, I was the senior executive leader on major branding programs for such clients as the World Trade Center, the Moody's Foundation, Concern Worldwide, New York-Presbyterian Hospital, and Hartford Healthcare, plus countless other projects over the years.

One of the more interesting aspects of my position was that I essentially held a dual role managing the marketing of a relatively small but highly respected B2B (business-to-business) company while also advising Fortune 500 clients on their own branding and marketing. This meant I often wore two hats, one being to understand how to market a small professional services business to a high-level B2B audience and the other helping clients position and market themselves from a branding perspective.

## **Selling in the Annual Marketing Strategy and Plan**

For Landor, the process of starting the yearly marketing plan begins right around mid-summer. In September we usually performed a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) analysis of some kind, including a competitive assessment, then evaluated our core priorities from a marketing standpoint, including those initiatives we generally do year in and year out, and what our upside opportunities were. We would also look at what programs we wanted to do that budgets or resources had prevented us from accomplishing in the past, plus new ideas and initiatives we wanted to try.



The Marketing Communications team would then submit a budget that, of course, always totaled more than what the corporation had to spend, leading to the traditional negotiating dance through the fall, with much back and forth with finance and the chief executive officer before finally winnowing the wish list down to the most critical priorities.

The primary leaders of the strategic planning process from the Marketing Communications side would be myself and the corporate communications and digital marketing heads, but we would also work closely with Knowledge Sharing, essentially the webmaster, whose team was responsible for actually making all digital efforts happen. They are more of an information technology function at Landor but have always worked closely with the marketing group so the team would ultimately be in synch. Then we would present our recommendations to our chief financial officer and chief executive officer as well as the chief talent officer. We would also make sure we involved the rest of the marketing managers and managing directors for each of Landor's offices and regions in the dialogue. This would include sending out questionnaires asking for their special priorities and needs. "Listening to the field" is always a critical success factor in any marketing program.

### **When to Update Your Marketing Strategy**

There are a number of different, sometimes conflicting, issues at work in the development of any marketing plan. First, there is always the struggle for resources and budgets that rarely increase. The Landor marketing team prided itself on getting more efficient about what we did; in some ways we actually did more with less every year, but that was a reality we had to deal with. Obviously social media has changed marketing for everyone and we were no different at Landor. Used judiciously, it can be very cost-effective, whether keeping the company Facebook page up to date, leveraging alumnae groups on LinkedIn, or pushing thought leaders in the firm to blog and tweet about relevant topics on a regular basis. We evolved Landor towards two primary selling tools. First and foremost is Landor.com, which is updated monthly with new topic areas. Depending on the subject for that month, the team makes sure relevant white papers and case studies are accessible on the web. Secondly, there is outreach through an emailed alert called "On Deck," which is distributed to the firm's entire database