

Making marketing dollars work harder

The 5MetaCom approach to branding

Part II: Resource Allocation & The Marketing Wedge



Q: You have to run ads and support a sales force... but you can always cut corners when it comes to strategy, message development and creative execution. Right?

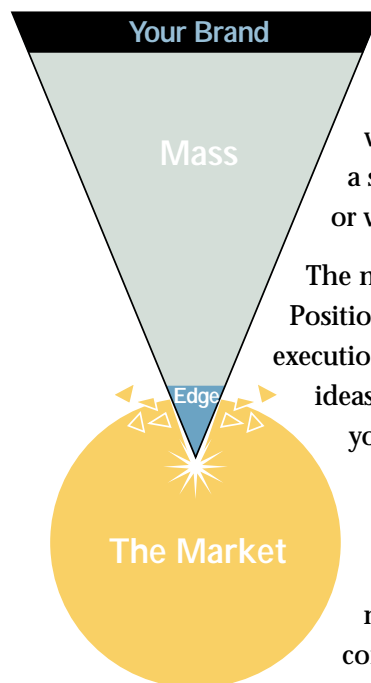
A: Wrong. Unless you enjoy solving the same problems over and over. Or, your budget can withstand re-dos, inefficient media placements and the like. If not, you may want to consider allocating your resources differently. By paying upfront attention to the strategic intangibles of your brand, you can develop a sharper, better focused message in the short term. Plus, allow your marketing dollars to work harder year after year. In short, you gain branding power.

The key to branding power comes from building an effective marketing “wedge”: a tool to drive your brand into the market.

Spending adequate time and budget on your strategy, position and message infuses your brand with two key characteristics: sharpness, for a concise and memorable message; and durability, for messages to resonate and continue to work hard over time.

The Marketing Wedge

A conceptual tool to better deploy your marketing resources



Think of your brand as a marketing wedge... a tool to drive your brand into the market. Any wedge—an axe, for example—has two attributes which make it work: an edge and the mass. Initial penetration requires a sharp edge. Propelling the edge deeper requires mass, or weight, behind the edge.

The marketing wedge works on the same principle. Positioning, strategy, message development and creative execution make the edge sharp. With all sorts of marketing ideas competing for attention, only a sharp edge can get you the attention, awareness and preference you want.

Once you have a sharp edge, mass gives the wedge power and momentum. Mass in the marketing wedge equates to frequency and consistency. A brand message must be conveyed consistently to enter a prospect's consciousness in a persuasive way, and communicated with enough frequency to make it stick. When you build-in consistency and frequency to your communications, you're putting on the weight you need to drive your branding effort forward with power.

The true cost of a dull edge

Some marketers believe paying attention to the “edge” of the wedge is optional—that they’re better off putting all the money into the mass. Just as a dull axe will split logs when you put more weight behind it, a “dull” marketing wedge can do the job when you put more mass behind it. But it’s far more costly—the cost of the extra mass can easily exceed the cost of sharpening the edge.

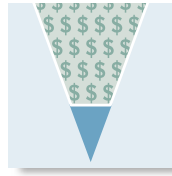
Powerful brand creation, the 5MetaCom way

5MetaCom’s proprietary approach to branding incorporates the Marketing Wedge with a branding philosophy consisting of three key components: *positioning*, *frequency* and *consistency*; and an integrated, five-step process of:

- **Brand Discovery**—understanding where you are and where you’re trying to go to drive brand development.
- **Brand Envisioning**—building your brand structure and creating the brand nucleus.
- **Brand Expression**—articulating your brand’s personality and essence.
- **Brand Mobilization**—delivering your brand to your target audiences.
- **Brand Stewardship**—ensuring the consistency of all brand messages.

For more detailed information about the branding process, ask us for a copy of *The 5MetaCom Approach to Branding, Part I*.

The power behind the edge



The wedge’s mass represents the bulk of your marketing budget. The more mass the better, right? Not necessarily. The mass has cost... a cost to develop tactics and a cost for delivery. Tactics include: ads, direct mail, sales tools, Web presence and others. With the Marketing Wedge approach, you get more from less; thus, such an approach can play an important role in your marketing success. To do so, requires creating the ideal edge.

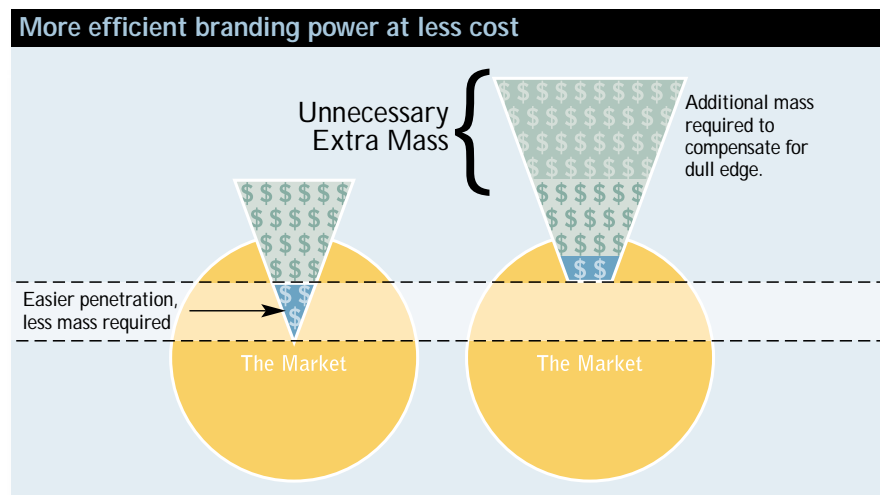
Creating the ideal edge



An ideal edge has two qualities: sharpness for cutting-power and durability for long-life. Creating a strong position for your brand through strategic development, message crafting and attention to excellent creative work gives your edge sharpness and durability.

Sharpness. A sharp edge comes from spending time, money and effort developing the intangible and tangible components of your brand. This is where the heavy thinking takes place, before the costly tactical execution and delivery begins. In other words, you need a sharp edge *before* you add the mass. Why? Because a sharp edge makes market penetration easier and requires less mass to be effective.

Durability. Creating an effective brand position gives your edge durability. Why is durability an issue in branding? A durable edge keeps you from continually reinventing your position and your message. Resources can be better allocated to allow you to solve new problems and move on to new opportunities.



Creating a sharp marketing wedge for your brand makes market penetration easier and eliminates unnecessary spending.

Conclusion

An effective marketing wedge gives you the right balance to drive your brand into the market. The Marketing Wedge approach does not advocate spending more marketing dollars—it suggests you spend dollars differently... for more branding power.

The Marketing Wedge

A conceptual tool to better deploy your marketing resources

Mass Equals:

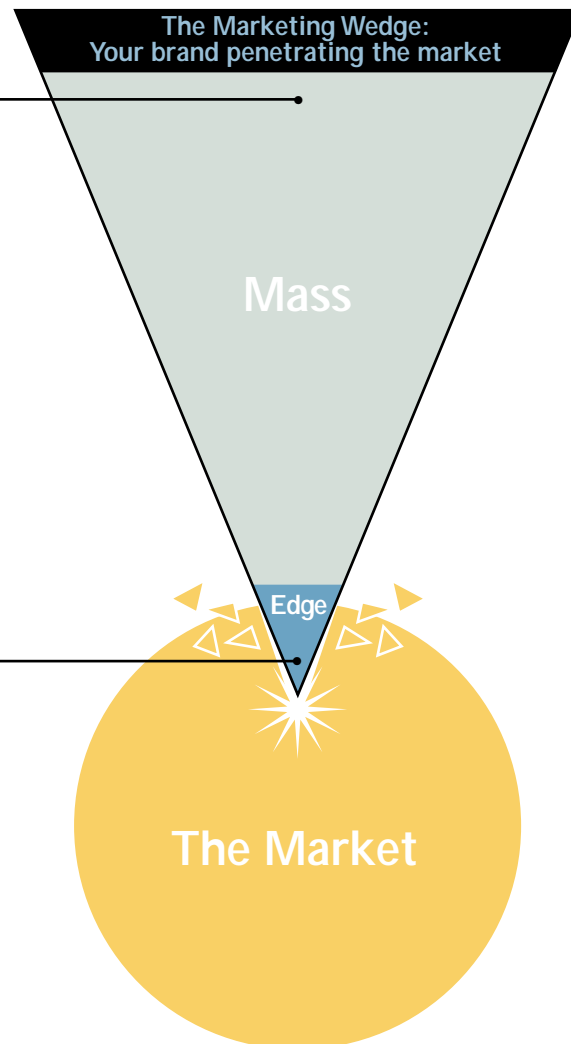
Frequency and Consistency

- Brand Mobilization
 - Delivering the brand message through sales and media channels:
 - Advertising
 - Public Relations
 - Promotions
 - Direct Mail/ Database/One-To-One
 - Sales Calls
 - Website
- Brand Stewardship
 - Protecting the brand's value through consistent messaging

Edge Equals:

Positioning

- Brand Discovery
 - Understanding where you are and where you are trying to go
- Brand Envisioning
 - Developing the brand's foundational structure
- Brand Expression
 - Creating the brand's tangible elements



An effective marketing wedge gives you the right balance to drive your brand into the market.

Executive Summary

- Spending adequate time and budget on your strategy, position and message infuses your marketing wedge with two key characteristics: sharpness, for a concise and memorable message; and durability, for messages to resonate and continue to work hard over time.
- The Marketing Wedge approach does not advocate spending more marketing dollars—it suggests you spend your resources differently. For example, reallocating dollars for more branding power and improved efficiency.