



Oblique is one of Retail World's longest standing contributors. It has a strong, established reputation within the industry for being leaders in Shopper Marketing, Shopper Insights and Category Management; It was – and still is – the pioneers of all things shopper and category within Australia. As preferred shopper partner for many of the top FMCG players within the industry, it is known for its leading edge, relevant and actionable solutions. Its recommendations are proven and most importantly, have delivered significant sales growth for retailers, brands and categories alike.

In this series of articles on Shopper Marketing, Oblique draws upon its extensive shopper experience, as well their huge shopper database – Shopperpedia – to bring you understanding, real life Australian case studies and a global perspective on what it means to go beyond the surface of shopper.

Series:

- Part 1: Shopper Marketing: Latest craze or simply the next phase? [Published June 23 issue]
- Part 2: Shopper Marketing: The critical 5 degrees of separation. [Published August 4 issue]
- Part 3: Shopper Marketing: Making it happen.
- Part 4: Shopper Marketing: Brands or world of sameness?
- Part 5: Shopper Marketing Forum: Your opportunity to have your say. Please contact us to post your view. Entries will be anonymous: info@oblique.com.au
- Part 6: Shopper Marketing: New Year resolutions and predictions for 2009.

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Author Overview:

Amanda is a top level industry thought leader and is known for her considerable strategic outlook as well as her ability to deliver day-to-day practical solutions. She works with many of the key FMCG players as a management consultant and is a business coach for some of the highest level sales and marketing executives within the Asia Pacific region.

Part 3: Shopper Marketing: Making it

Aligning business teams is essential for delivering effective P2P. Oblique discusses getting out of a function-based company

Due to a number of requests on how to make shopper marketing happen, I have delayed the publication of 'Brands or world of sameness', in order to go into this in more detail. 'Brands or world of sameness' will now become Part 4 of this series.

Just to recap where we are up to therefore, in Part 1, we introduced the concept of shopper marketing before exploring the Path to Purchase (P2P) in Part 2. In this third article of the series, we will discuss how to align business teams to deliver a more effective P2P. I have included the P2P diagram again in figure 1.

The three key areas that we will cover in order to explain how to deliver a more effective P2P are:

- First, why we need to get out of a function-based company structure;
- Second, how to structure your departments in order to make P2P happen, and;
- Third, ensuring alignment between teams throughout the P2P.

Most FMCG businesses within Australia today are misaligned to the needs of the market. Functional definitions such as sales, marketing and category may be common, but they do little to actually describe what the departments – and more importantly the people within them – actually do.

Picture the scene, you're at a barbecue and after the introductions, you get asked the dreaded question, 'what work do you do?' How many of us struggle to explain it in one sentence? More importantly, how many of the people we talk to actually understand it? Think about the response that you would get if you asked Brett Lee or Libby Trickett the same question. Take as many wickets as possible and swim as fast as possible would be two very succinct, easy-to-understand responses. The point of using these as examples is to illustrate that whether in sport or business, the one thing that sets the best apart is firstly their ability to understand the critical goal and secondly, to execute it with excellence every single day. In FMCG, as long as we struggle to even articulate what we do, we have little hope of delivering greatness consistently. So unless Brett Lee starts cutting the grass at the SCG, let's apply the same thinking to the way in which we go to market. This means getting out of a function-based mentality and taking a more focused approach. In a nutshell, it means

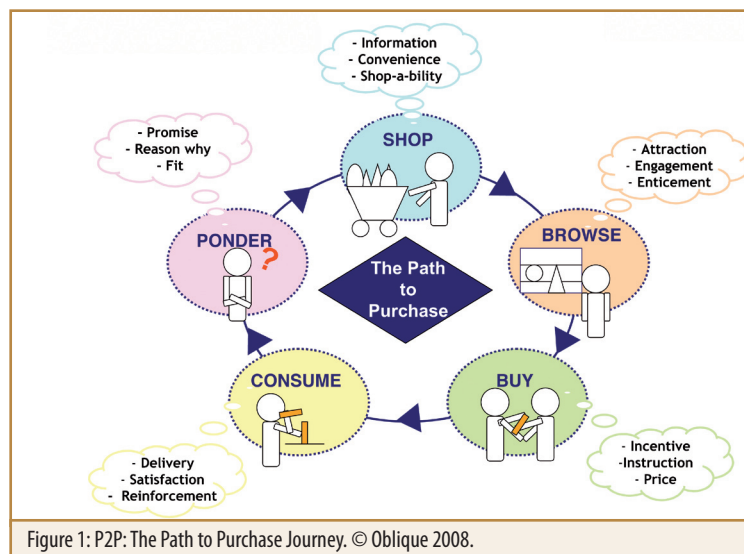


Figure 1: P2P: The Path to Purchase Journey. © Oblique 2008.

aligning the organisational structure to the P2P. The good news is that making P2P happen doesn't mean additional head count.

The other good news is that there are three very clear target areas:

- The consumer
- The customer
- The shopper.

The not so good news however – depending on how you look at it – is that it will probably mean a restructure for most of us. Figure 2 illustrates this in detail.

“The good news is that making P2P happen doesn't mean additional head count.”

I can imagine what you are now thinking ... so consumer is like the current brand team. Customer is like the current sales team. So really all that this is saying is to replace the title of 'category' with 'shopper' and away we go, right? Wrong.

The first thing that is different about the P2P structure is that category responsibility is integrated across all front-facing teams. It should no longer be standalone. It should never have been standalone. The only reason it was standalone in the first place was to ensure that someone in the organisation actually gave some thought to the category. I remember many years ago – when I hadn't been in Australia very long – one rather persistent barbecue guest finally understood what I did, (category management), only to then say, 'but shouldn't that be part of the brand/account manager's job already?'

Thankfully, that's exactly what the P2P structure represents.

The second big difference between the P2P team and the current functional structure is that it achieves both integration and delineation. In a functional structure, there is still much confusion between where one team's responsibility stops and the other one starts. For example, if your company achieves 100 per cent distribution of a new line, who is awarded the credit?

The brand manager for creating such a great product in the first place, the category manager for identifying the category need for such a great product or the account manager for selling it in better than other great products on offer? Conversely, is it really the brand manager's 'fault'

for NPDP failure when the account manager has failed to forecast sufficiently or if R&D couldn't produce en masse the recipe that was tested with consumers? The bottom line is that when Brett Lee takes a wicket, Australia benefits, but it's his average that improves and not anyone else's. Questions such as: what is the category team actually responsible for; when specifically is it appropriate to actually talk about the brand, and; just how much should be shared with the customer, demonstrate the fundamental blurring of responsibilities that currently exists between functional teams in our industry and underlines a lack of clear delineation.

The P2P overcomes this because it focuses on the common goal; the implementation of the vision and its supporting strategies and tactics at every single P2P touch point.

