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## Marketing Professional Services: Forward-Thinking Strategies for Boosting Your Business, Your Image, and Your Profits, 2nd Edition

Philip Kotler, Thomas Hayes, and Paul N. Bloom (Prentice-Hall, Paramus, NJ; 2002; ISBN 0-73520179-X) \$40

REVIEWED BY DAVID H. MAISTER

The authors of this book spell out their goal clearly in the preface. The book, they write, “carefully explains how marketing concepts can be applied to the problems commonly faced by professional service organizations.” They add: “Rather than just writing a ‘how-to’ book . . . we attempt to give the professional a solid grounding in *usable* marketing principles and theories.” The emphasis here, clearly, is to start with marketing concepts and then apply them to the professional services context. This is not surprising, given that all three co-authors are professors of marketing (at Northwestern, Xavier, and UNC Chapel Hill, respectively).

The approach is broad, rather than deep. Among the numerous topics covered are the seven P’s of marketing, how to hire a marketing director, how to do a marketing audit, developing marketing information, the elements of a strategic

planning process, the Boston Consulting Group growth-share matrix, how to segment consumer markets, organizational buying behavior, the service life-cycle (the S-curve), fee setting, where to locate your office, effective marketing communications (including sales promotions), online services, managing customer relationships, and many, many more subjects.

Even at 416 pages, the breadth of coverage means that no one topic is dealt with in more than a handful of pages. What is presented is concise, clear, and helpful, but will serve as no more than the briefest of introductions to the topics handled. While many references are provided (often to interesting trade press articles), there is not a great deal of guidance on where to turn if the reader wants to dig deeper on any individual subject. For example, on the topic of relationship-building there is no reference to such useful works as Sheth and Sobell’s *Clients for Life* or Ross Dawson’s *Developing Knowledge-Based Client Relationships*. Guidance to further reading on each of the topics discussed would have greatly enhanced the book’s value to the practitioner.

What’s new here since Kotler and Bloom’s first (1984) edition, apart from gaining an additional co-author and noting that each co-author has a Ph.D.? Actually, the book covers much the same territory; this edition does not represent

a major overhaul or rethinking. Added is a chapter on on-line marketing. Surprisingly, the material on personal selling has been reduced to a minimum. The prior edition organized its chapters into three sections: Organizing and Planning for Marketing; Researching and Targeting the Market; and Managing the Marketing Program. That helpful structure has been abandoned here.

The order in which topics are now presented is not explained and leads to some curious placement. For example, suggestions on a job description for a marketing director and on making services accessible (such as choosing office location), appear well before the chapter on building client relationships, which is, curiously, the last chapter before the summary.

The book does not make a significant new contribution. It is a survey text for the novice. Even though it is written in reader-friendly prose (not formal or academic), it has the feel of a textbook for an advanced undergraduate or business-school course on marketing professional services—perhaps especially an executive-education rather than an MBA course.

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