

Where You Stand Depends on Where You Sit:

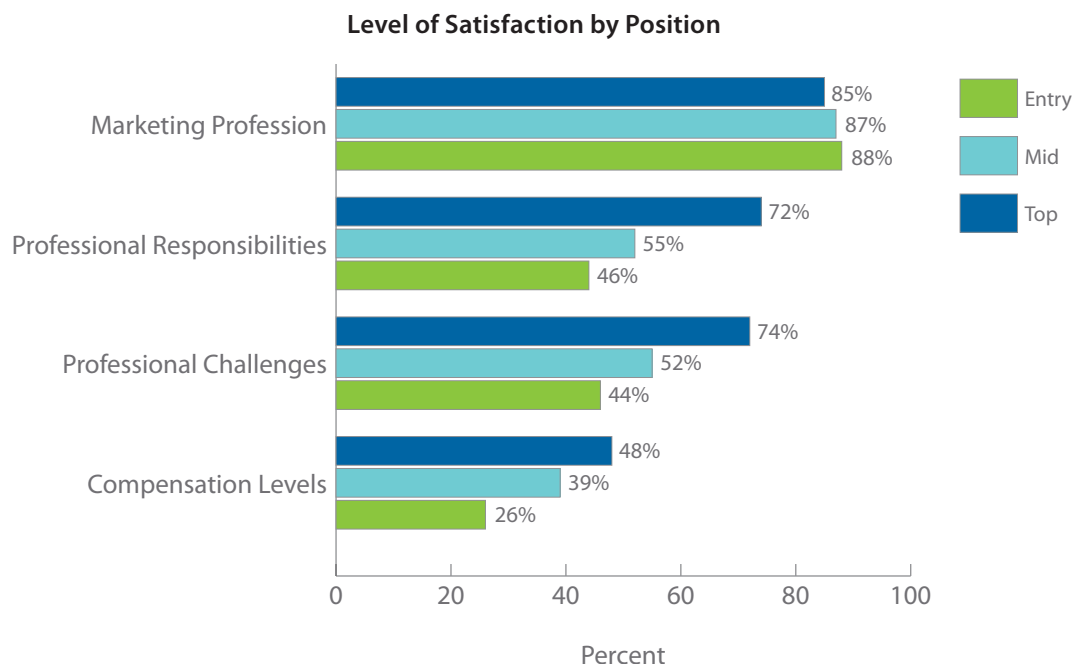
A Contextual Assessment of Marketing Challenges, Compensation, and Job Satisfaction

by The Dihedral Group

It's not easy being in marketing management today. A dramatic shift in the marketing landscape—increased globalization, multiple media platforms, an explosion of market segments—has coincided with an uncertain economy and shifting organizational dynamics. Marketers at all levels of the organization are faced with enormous strategic and tactical challenges, but their views of these challenges are colored by where they are within the marketing profession hierarchy. Not surprisingly, marketing professionals' sense of personal satisfaction with their jobs and their ensuing compensation align directly with their level of achievement and tenure in the profession.

Satisfaction

In 2008, marketers at all levels of the organization were overwhelmingly satisfied with the profession of marketing: 85.6% positive, with another 10.7% on the fence. Entry- and mid-level managers, who have yet to make their mark on an organization and have less control over their job functions, were largely less than satisfied with their own current responsibilities and the challenges afforded them through their work.



Clearly, senior-level marketers have had time to shape their professional landscape, which has led to increased job satisfaction over the years, while entry-level marketers may not yet know the full scope of the marketing opportunities available to them.

Marketing Challenges

While the correlations between compensation and satisfaction are expected, junior-level marketers need to understand the factors that drive their senior colleagues' perceptions of the marketing landscape and position themselves to respond accordingly.

Key Strategic Challenges (in the Aggregate)

The following strategic initiatives have been framed from the substance of thousands of annual and triennial marketing plans either directly or as an abstraction of related concepts. As noted in the chart below, “Quantifying and measuring the value of marketing programs/investments” ranked highest across the entire spectrum of survey respondents.



Key Strategic Challenges by Microsegment

Drilling into the data and dissecting these challenges by microsegment (such as by function, seniority/compensation levels, and size of organization) results in some statistically significant differences from the aggregate findings. Depending on where the marketer sits, there are significant differences in perspective relative to strategic challenges.

A Contextual View of Strategic Marketing Challenges (see Appendix I) compares these variances between what the respondents as a whole defined as strategic challenges for the coming year to those that were identified specifically by top-level marketers—or what the chart refers to as the segment leaders.

For example, across four broad marketing functions—advertising and marcom, corporate communications, product and brand management, and marketing leadership—and across nearly all organizational sizes, marketers on average ranked “Quantifying and measuring the value of marketing programs/investments” as the highest priority, while the segment leaders ranked other choices as their primary strategic challenge for the year.

How Should Entry- and Mid-Level Marketers Respond to This Variance?

Entry- and mid-level marketers should understand that organizational leaders will look to them to not only manage the issues most appropriate for their current set of responsibilities, but also to see the bigger picture and help senior management execute the broader organizational mission. For marketers to professionally grow and increase work-related satisfaction (and yes, compensation), they should pay attention to how the most successful marketers not only react to their current professional circumstances, but also proactively anticipate their organizational leaders’ needs and their customers’ and clients’ wants in the context of their own professional aspirations.

APPENDIX I: A Contextual View of Strategic Marketing Challenges

To better understand how marketing strategies differ based on a marketer's functional orientation level of seniority/compensation and organizational size, the following model, composed of 24 subsegments, was developed. Industry sectors and a few other firmographic/demographic variables were examined for influence on this model and were subsequently deemed insignificant.

The resulting model compares the individual segment variances between the most common top-ranked challenges (Segment Average) and those challenges considered of greatest importance to the most senior (and highest-earning) marketers (Segment Leaders).

A Comparison of Strategic Marketing Challenges Between Segment Average and Leaders

MARKETING FUNCTIONS	VERY SMALL- AND SMALL-SIZED ORGANIZATIONS		MEDIUM-SIZED ORGANIZATIONS		LARGE- AND VERY LARGE-SIZED ORGANIZATIONS	
	Segment Average	Segment Leaders	Segment Average	Segment Leaders	Segment Average	Segment Leaders
Advertising & Marcom	A	B	A	C	A	D
Corporate Communications	A	A	A	E	A	E
Product/Brand Management	A	E	A	C	A	B
Marketing Leadership	A	F	A	F	A	E
Interactive Marketing	G	G	A	A	A	A
Marketing (Other)	A	E	A	A	A	A
Marketing Research			G	G	G	G
R&D/NPD/Innovation					G	G

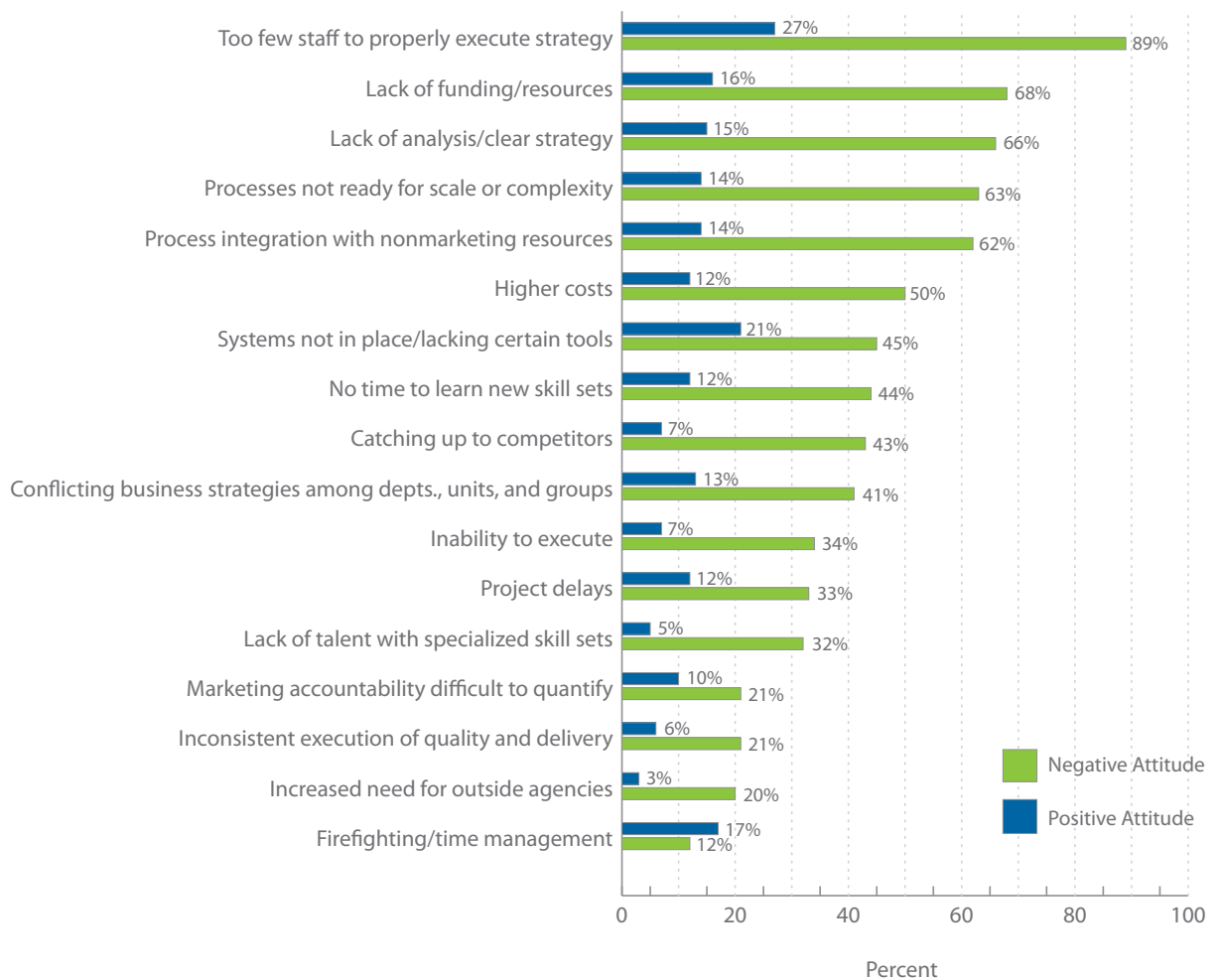
Top-Ranked Marketing Challenges

- A** Quantifying and measuring the value of marketing programs/investments
- B** Getting buy-in from relevant stakeholders
- C** Testing and measuring message branding or marketing's impact
- D** Upgrading the efficiency and effectiveness of marketing groups
- E** Developing cross-channel, cross-market, or new market opportunities
- F** Maintaining or enhancing customer satisfaction, experience, and/or loyalty
- G** Growing customer knowledge, insight, and conversations

APPENDIX II:**Defining Marketing Challenges: Tactical Problems**

Beyond the strategic marketing challenges, The Dihedral Group examined marketers' tactical challenges while also keeping an eye out for the influence that these severe daily problems have on marketers' attitudes toward their places of work.

Note that nearly 90% of marketers who said they had a negative attitude toward their organization also articulated having a severe problem due to "too few staff to properly execute strategy." For perspective, this was the case for only 27% of those marketers who indicated a positive attitude toward their organizations.

Severe Tactical Problems at Work Relative to Expressed Organizational Attitudes

About The Dihedral Group (TDG)

Throughout 125 countries around the world, The Dihedral Group (TDG) has been pioneering conversations on behalf of its clients and collecting insights about their communities. These discussions have led to refined segmentation strategies, sophisticated marketing road maps, focused product portfolios, and highly engaged customers and employees.

The available channels for insights may change as our technologies advance, but the scientific rigor, ethical conduct, and attention to highly satisfied clients remain steadfast. TDG has a team of consultants with broad industry backgrounds accompanied by highly specialized and very current skill sets. Clients have retained TDG's services on contracts ranging from satisfaction research to psychographics profiling, consumer anticipation studies, statistical modeling/segmentation, independent marketing audits, multifaceted interactive campaigns, and strategic planning consultations.

To find out more about how TDG can help build stronger ties between your organization and your targeted audience, go to www.FindTDG.com.

About Aquent

Aquent is the talent agency for marketing and design professionals. Every agent is focused on a single marketing or design discipline, ensuring both talent and clients a dedicated resource that speaks their language and specializes in their area of expertise.

For more than 20 years, Aquent has helped individuals and organizations increase their marketing potential through flexible staffing solutions and customized consulting services. Committed to the advancement of both fields, Aquent offers monthly webcasts hosted by field experts on topics ranging from marketing trends to web design tips.

Aquent's strong presence in the marketing and design communities has led to lasting partnerships with industry leaders and organizations around the world. All Aquent offices participate in local chapter events with groups including the AMA, AIGA, and DMI. Aquent's talent blog, Aquent Oracle, and *Inside Marketing* newsletter keep marketing and design professionals abreast of the latest industry news. Aquent's acclaimed Aquent | AMA 2009 Survey of Marketing Professionals: Compensation Calculator and the AIGA | Aquent Survey of Design Salaries 2008 are highly anticipated, well-respected resources relied on by industry professionals.

For information about Aquent or the Aquent | AMA 2009 Survey of Marketing Professionals, please visit aquent.com.

About the American Marketing Association (AMA)

The American Marketing Association (AMA) is the largest marketing association in North America. It is a professional association for individuals and organizations involved in the practice, teaching, and study of marketing worldwide. The AMA is a resource that marketers turn to every day to deepen their marketing expertise and achieve better results for their companies. AMA members are connected to a network of experienced marketers nearly 40,000 strong.

The AMA offers its highly acclaimed Training Series, professional conferences, and Hot Topic events focused on the immediate needs of marketers, as well as on trends shaping the future. AMA's web site, MarketingPower.com, is the everyday connection to marketing data, articles, case studies, best practices, and a career center. Additionally, the AMA is the source for the field's top magazines and journals, including *Marketing News*. Through local and collegiate chapters, AMA members are connected with the best people and the best practices.

The AMA is also the creator of Mplanet, the unparalleled industry event that brings together the world's most creative thinkers, including senior marketing executives, top academicians, and other thought leaders, to share fresh insights, new concepts, the latest research, and solutions for the most pressing marketing challenges and opportunities. Mplanet 2009 will take place in Orlando, Florida, on January 26–28, 2009.

For more information on the AMA or Mplanet 2009, please visit www.MarketingPower.com.