

# Is it time to hire an outside marketing firm?

How to select an agency that's right for you.

A BDN Aerospace Marketing White Paper

*An aerospace company starts small, succeeds, grows bigger, hires more engineers. One of the engineers has a camera and a handful of fonts. The next thing you know, they are creating ads and brochures — and it's cheap because they're already on the payroll. But is it really the way to build your brand?*

## "We need an ad."

*We've all heard it before, right? Perhaps from a frustrated salesperson who's not making his numbers...or an embarrassed CEO who thinks he's been outclassed by the competition.*



*Hiring an agency is part of building a team.*

What you do next will have far-reaching implications for your business and your brand.

### Who does what?

Too often, the Aerospace Marketing role is relegated to "doing stuff." Ads. Brochures. Trade Shows. Always at the last minute. Always in a panic. But a marketer's true value is in delivering outcomes, not outputs...in understanding business strategies and then recommending projects to achieve the company's objectives. This is where an outside firm can help.

You probably have the capability to produce an ad, in-house, quickly. Someone is sure to have product photos, and there's a guy in engineering who knows Photo-shop. You'll grab some text from a presentation, pull it all together, and everyone will be happy, right? Sure, if you just want to produce an ad.

But if you want to elevate your role in the organization and produce an effective ad that will build your brand, distinguish you from the competition and drive customer

preference, then it's time to consider an alternative approach.

### Maybe it's time to hire a professional.

Marketing agencies are well equipped to provide the expertise, competence and service to ensure your messages are on target and delivered in the most effective way possible.

### Selecting an agency

It's important to be realistic about whether an outside firm is for you. If you wish to do the work of the people you are hiring — writing copy that sells, selecting typefaces that grab attention, designing the artwork or graphic element and determining the publications where the ad will appear — you may be better off not spending your money on an agency. The marketing team you are forming

## Choose Wisely

Some facts to consider...

Selecting a marketing firm is a big decision that can pay big dividends. A recent survey by the Chief Marketing Officers Council concluded that 2008 marketing budgets are remaining stable or increasing.

Forty-three percent of CMOs say budgets have grown between 5 and 10 percent.

The majority of global marketers (52.6 percent) had budgets that equaled less than four percent of revenue. Thirty-five percent said their spend was between four and 10 percent of revenue. The average \$10 million company, for example, is spending between \$400,000 and \$1 million on marketing.

The bottom line is that organizations are increasing the emphasis on marketing — and they are expecting something in return.

Working with a qualified outside resource is one way to meet objectives and maximize the return on your marketing investment.

For more information about BDN Aerospace Marketing, or to see other industry-specific White Papers, visit [www.bdnaerospace.com](http://www.bdnaerospace.com)

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*“The marketing team will be more effective if you define your requirements in advance.”*

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will be more effective if you define your requirements in advance and allow the agency to do its work.

Marketing agencies consist of experts in every area of conceiving, creating, producing, placing and testing your marketing message. Client personnel most often are experts in engineering, customer service, product development or other areas congruent with their product. It's best that everyone works to his or her respective strengths.

Allow the agency to challenge your thinking and to float new ideas and concepts not familiar to you.

### Expectations

Here are some agency selection criteria you should consider:

- ~ **Is the agency familiar with your industry?** If not, expect a learning curve while agency personnel catch up.
- ~ **What are the strengths exhibited by the agency and its track record?** The agency should show a consistent record of quality and performance.
- ~ **Become familiar with the agency's work for other clients.** Do you see elements of that work that attract your attention? Is the work memorable? Is it credible within your industry? Does the design and layout support the message, or is it design for the sake of design? What do other clients say about the agency?
- ~ **Meet the account manager who will be your advocate within the agency.** You are forming a team

that should bring positive results for your business. Does that person actively listen to your ideas and respond in such a way that you feel there is a strong understanding of your requirements?

- ~ **When you discuss pricing, do you feel you are being low-balled just to win your business?** This smacks of desperation.
- ~ **Do the agency's invoices reveal a nickel-and-dime policy** with charges for every phone call and fax, or are these activities considered routine to your work?
- ~ **Who is the agency principal?** What is his/her background and reputation?
- ~ **Is the agency qualified for the work you require?** Some specialize in just advertising while others specialize only in ad placement, public relations or the production of marketing collateral material such as brochures, video presentations or event planning. You may wish to have an agency capable of integrating each of these elements, including news releases. Such full-service agencies will be capable of assisting you in the development of your marketing plans and strategies.

### Expectations

Once you have selected an agency, there are expectations that both partners should seek. First, the customer should expect:

- ~ Full-service marketing approach to your products or services

As reported in the Creative Business newsletter  
[www.creativebusiness.com](http://www.creativebusiness.com)...

## THE TRUE COST OF CREATIVITY

Except for the very smallest of jobs, creative fees are always a small fraction of total costs (printing, media, etc.). As reported in the Creative Business newsletter ([www.creativebusiness.com](http://www.creativebusiness.com)), the incremental difference between having professional, outside support or not will typically only increase costs from 5 to 10% on a small brochure or ad, and less than 1% on an annual report or multi-page web site. When the true costs of internal preparation — salaries, overhead, lost productivity — are added up, outside services nearly always cost less, not more. What's more, external specialists likely have more refined skills than internal resources. Viewed from the bottom-line perspective, a small additional investment in design and writing quality produces an ROI that is sure to warm the heart of even the toughest CFO. 📈

- ~ Complete adherence to deadlines for product delivery and activity reports
- ~ Consistent delivery of good work products
- ~ Up-front pricing with no billing surprises
- ~ Respect
- ~ Honest delivery of advice and expertise
- ~ Follow-through to support directions, inputs, criticisms and comments
- ~ An integrated approach to managing all elements of your account
- ~ Prompt response to queries

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*“A marketer’s true value  
is in delivering outcomes,  
not outputs.”*

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- ~ Proactive approach to anticipate needs and offer ideas and fresh thinking
- ~ Compliance with budget guidelines
- ~ Clear explanation of project timelines and deliverables
- ~ Complete ethical and confidentiality behavior
- ~ Respect that its staff are marketing specialists capable of planning, strategic guidance, unique ideas and integrated solutions
- ~ Respect for its intellectual property
- ~ Open discussion of issues, questions and concerns
- ~ The opportunity to present alternative solutions
- ~ On-time payment of invoices.

The agency should expect:

- ~ Clear and established goals and objectives with adequate budget for their accomplishment
- ~ A dedicated project manager committed to participating in the creative process by being available to provide information and approvals to meet deadlines (group discussions and decisions by committee are known to weaken the message)

**Is it time?**

If you’re even asking this question, it’s probably time to seriously consider an agency. Evaluate your situation carefully and decide if moving your brand out of the hands of engineering or your secretary is the right course of action. If it is, choose wisely and you can expect good things to happen. 🍀