

# HOW SALES AND MARKETING RELATE

**Editor's Note:** This is the second of several installments of the new book "ProSelling: A Professional Approach to Selling in Agriculture and Other Industries." ProSelling builds on the book AgriSelling.

AgriSelling, premiered in this magazine many years ago and we are excited to present its sequel here now.

The following text is an excerpt from a chapter that discusses the relationship between sales and marketing.

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**M**any agribusinesses are struggling with this relationship right now. Consolidation has meant that many organizations who were built on sales are now recognizing that being market driven provides more opportunities than being sales driven.

Selling is the one-on-one interaction between buyer and seller, and remains critical, but marketing — a coordinated, longer term effort to deal with opportunities in the marketplace — is now playing a more important role for managers.

Sales and marketing are not interchangeable terms. The sales function is an important component of marketing, but it is only one component. Marketing looks at the big picture, the total marketplace, and identifies opportunities that fit the corporate strategy, then creates a variety of tools to effectively communicate the offer to customers.

Marketing is the system a company uses for identifying and satisfying customer needs and wants profitably. It is the process of anticipating the needs and wants of customers and satisfying them profitably: profitably for the company and the customer.

Marketing begins with a scan of the marketplace and the company's capabilities. Based on this analysis, marketers choose which customers it can best serve. These groups of customers that are targeted by the company are called segments. A

market segment is a group of customers that will respond similarly to a given offer.

The purpose of segmentation, as with all marketing, is to identify and act on opportunities. Once segments are identified and described, the company can choose which segments it wants to target as "high opportunity."

Targeting allows a company to channel its resources (time, energy, programs, etc.) into areas that are believed to be most profitable over the long term and get the most "bang for the buck." Targeting or prioritizing some segments does not mean that the general market is not important.

Indeed, the general market is important and will continue to generate important sales. But focusing some extra attention on selected market segments provides opportunities for making a bigger impact where it is most important.

When developing a marketing plan, marketers often refer to the five key components of the marketing mix (sometimes referred to as the "five P's" of marketing). These are the variables the marketing manager controls to accomplish the marketing objectives.

These decisions are made within the market environment the company serves — that could be a particular geography or a particular industry that the company's strategy suggests it should serve. The marketing plan is built around a targeted segment of customers and is surrounded by the market environment (which includes competitors, the market economy, technology, and the general public).

These rings of attention given by managers look a bit like a bullseye, with the customer at the center.



## THE BULLSEYE OF MARKETING

The manager's marketing mix decisions include selecting which products to emphasize, deciding what pricing strategies will work best, determining how best to get products to customers (place), and choosing what roles the staff in the organization should play in each of those processes.

Marketers also choose who to communicate or promote the company's offer to the marketplace. This is the category that sales falls under.

Although sales is only one part of the total marketing process in most companies, it is the focal point around which the total marketing program is built.

The "last three feet" between a company and its customers may be the most critical in the marketing process. Bridging this distance is the critical link to making marketing and sales programs successful. **AM**

"ProSelling: A Professional Approach to Selling in Agriculture and Other Industries" is authored by Scott Downey, David Downey, Mike Jackson, and Laura Downey and published by Agri Marketing magazine. It is available at [www.AgriMarketing.com](http://www.AgriMarketing.com) in the Bookstore. **AM**

