

**THE INTERACTION BETWEEN PUBLIC RELATIONS AND MARKETING WITHIN
SELECTED COMPANIES IN THE GREATER DURBAN AREA**

PAULENE NAIDOO

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Dr J Govender

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Dr R Rampersad

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DECLARATION

I Paulene Naidoo hereby declare that:

- The work in this dissertation is my own work both in conception and execution; and
- All sources used have been acknowledged.

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation is a qualitative examination into a debatable view of the interaction between public relations and marketing in which one supports the other leading to an interactional outcome. Public relations is different from marketing in several ways. Their boundaries, however, often overlap, for example, both deal with an organisation's relationships and employ similar communication tools to reach the public. Both functions have an ultimate purpose which is ensuring an organisation's success and economic survival. Public relations and marketing, however, approach this task from somewhat different perspectives, or world views. In some instances public relations is seen as a separate entity when compared to marketing.

The study investigates the current trends with the main objective of investigating the interaction/synergy between the public relations and marketing departments of seven major companies in the greater Durban area. These companies were interviewed based on their location and willingness to participate in the study. The seven companies researched for the purpose of the study were ABI Coke, Toyota, Sentec, ABSA, Sanlam, Natal Sharks Rugby Union and Lifestyle Communication: Chatsworth Centre.

This study provides literature review on both public relations and marketing and their interdependence as well as examining systems theory. The study further examines the past and current practices of public relations and marketing departments by comparing the responses from the seven companies in relation to the systems model. Systems theory states that all open systems operate effectively if each department or subsystem is inevitably interdependent on others for the overall success of an organisation.

The methodology for this study incorporated a literature study which was followed by a survey. The survey was conducted through the administration of questionnaires. Data was collected by face-to-face semi-structured interviews with the respective respondents. The data obtained provided a wealth of insightful information.

The main results yielded from the study indicated that the current trend is for public relations and marketing departments to share a synergistic relationship thereby supporting the theoretical underpinning of the open systems theory. This theory states that all open systems operate effectively if each department or subsystem is interdependent on the other thereby ensuring the overall success of an organisation.

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CHAPTER ONE

1. Introduction

1.1 Preamble

Public relations and marketing have traditionally functioned separately in the South African corporate sector. However, recently the positioning of the two functions has become a subject for debate. Organisations are now combining the two departments into one department for example the Durban University of Technology, Natal Sharks Rugby Union and Gateway Shopping Centre. As a result a fine line exists between the public relations and marketing functions.

This distorted relationship thus created an arguable view of the interaction between public relations and marketing. Hart (1995: 8) asserts that there is “a somewhat debatable view of the relationship between public relations and marketing in which one supports the other leading to a synergistic outcome” and further argues that publicity is a sub-set of both marketing and public relations. Similarly, advertising is yet another sub-set of each, and is no more important, but it is a very expensive channel of communication.

Over the years, marketing managers have equated the function of what they called ‘public relations’ in the marketing mix with securing free editorial publicity about products and services. However, from the very outset, the Institute of Public Relation’s definition of public relations focuses on the management, through communication of perceptions and strategic relationships between an organisation and its internal and external publics. This definition stresses public relations as a communication and management function with the goal of attaining and maintaining positive behaviour among social groups on which an organisation depends in order to achieve its mission (Wilcox *et al*, 1995: 17).

According to (Skinner, 2000: 100) some organisations view marketing as the basic function paying attention only to those non-customer relationships seen as important

to the marketing effort and view public relations as an inferior function to marketing. On the other hand other companies put “customer relations” under public relations, making it responsible for the non-marketing concerns of customers such as complaints, instructions for product use, safety information and repair service.

The above mentioned observations together with informal discussions with public relations and marketing managers in industry indicate that the interaction between public relations and marketing management does exist. The research therefore focuses on selected companies within the Durban area and their perceptions of the interaction between public relations and marketing management within their companies. This chapter will examine the:

- awareness of the problem;
- contributions to the field of study;
- problem statement;
- objectives of the study;
- research methodology;
- definition of concepts;
- limitations to the study; and
- the summary and division of chapters.

1.2 Awareness of the problem

Public relations practitioners maintain that on the organisational charts, marketing is seen as a part of a larger public relations function (Skinner, 2000: 100). On the other hand, in support of the marketing function, public relations is used to achieve a number of objectives. The most important objectives are to raise awareness, to educate, to gain understanding, to build trust, and to create a climate of consumer acceptance (Wilcox *et al*, 1995: 18). Some organisations even view public relations as a part of their marketing mix. Within the promotional aspect of the marketing mix, publicity, also known as public relations, is a function promoting the organisation to all the target audiences (Strydom *et al*, 2004: 142). In contrast, Jefkins (1993: 233) affirms that public relations is not part of the marketing mix. He maintains that public

relations is concerned with the overall organisation, therefore every element of the marketing mix has public relations implications. Feedback which may influence product design, naming and branding, labelling and packaging, pricing, instructions, customer relations, market education, selling, advertising, sales promotion and after-sales service have incorporated aspects of public relations.

Evident in the above data are the overlapping of boundaries between public relations and marketing. Public relations firms incorporate marketing communication under their function. According to Mooney (2004) marketing communication is the transmission from a sender to a receiver of messages thereby achieving the organisations long term goals. Marketing departments on the other hand, offer public relations services to customers. The power struggle continues as Grunig & Grunig (1991: 262) add that “there is a genuine need to develop a new paradigm under which marketing and public relations can function effectively in the best interest of the organisation and the publics it serves”.

The relationship between public relations and marketing is becoming more confusing as initial scanning of the environment has revealed that certain companies in Durban have merged public relations and marketing into one department, whilst other companies maintain two separate departments.

It is therefore evident that the boundaries between public relations and marketing are very blurred. This blurred relationship creates a debatable view of the interaction between public relations and marketing. This debate has therefore prompted the study to focus on the relationship between the public relations and marketing departments and to observe current practices within selected sectors of industry.

1.3 Contributions to the field of study

The results of the study are applicable to both profit and non-profit organisations in the greater Durban area. The specific contributions that relate to the public relations and marketing disciplines are as follows:

- X The trends of marketing and public relations departments will assist educational institutions in re-curriculating the syllabi to suit certain industries.
- X This study is of importance as it addresses the compatibility and relationship between public relations and marketing management. Therefore the findings from this study can be utilised within the public relations and marketing departments within companies in the greater Durban area.
- X The study provides a holistic empirically based theory describing public relations and marketing and how their interaction can assist an organisation. Organisations can use this study as a guideline in assessing in-house public relations and marketing departments in the interest of productivity and the overall success of the organisation.

- X Future research can be undertaken in the following areas.
 - X To investigate whether educational institutions are fully equipping public relations and marketing graduates with the necessary interrelated skills required in industry.
 - X To examine the management levels of public relations and marketing within industry.
 - X To examine the value of merged or integrated public relations and marketing departments.
 - X To investigate budget implications between organisations that have separate public relations and marketing departments as compared to organisations that have merged public relations and marketing departments.

1.4 Problem statement

According to Skinner (2000: 100) some companies treat exchange relationships with customers as only one of many organisational relationships. In their organisational structures, they view marketing as part of the larger public relations function. Other companies view marketing as an integral part of their organisational chart, paying

attention to the non-customers relationships. In these companies, public relations is subordinate to marketing. However, other companies put customer relations under public relations making it responsible for non-marketing customer concerns such as complaints, safety information and repairs. In many companies public relations and marketing are seen as separate management functions.

However some companies have merged the two functions with the intention of managing communication. The task of administering communication between an organisation on the one hand and the general public and consumers on the other, was defined by the public relations and marketing functions. Through socio-economic developments and the need to coordinate and merge communication disciplines, functions previously falling under marketing and public relations have increasingly been integrated into the corporate communication function (Cornelissen, 2004: 32).

Corporate communication focuses on the communication of the organisation as a whole (it does not focus only on sales of products) paying attention to the different target population. It is primarily concerned with creating and maintaining a positive image of the organisation as this is important to sell products and services (Rustema & Herle', 2005: 97).

Whilst one company may view public relations as a separate entity as opposed to marketing, others see these two functions as falling under a common umbrella. The combining of public relations and marketing departments results from their common communication function with internal and external publics.

Marketing and public relations are increasingly important disciplines and are practised in companies throughout the world. Although research has been carried out overseas on the relationship between public relations and marketing, very little information exists within the South African context. This study therefore constitutes an investigation into the interaction between public relations and marketing within selected companies in the greater Durban area.

1.5 Objectives

This study is divided into primary and secondary objectives.

1.5.1 Primary objective

The objective of the study is to determine the level of interaction between marketing and public relations management.

1.5.2 Secondary objectives of the study (in relation to the selected companies) are:

- 1.5.2.1 To determine how the role of public relations and marketing have changed over the years,
- 1.5.2.2 To analyse the role of public relations within the marketing field,
- 1.5.2.3 To investigate the communication functions performed by public relations and marketing practitioners,
- 1.5.2.4 To examine whether public relations and marketing are both seen as management functions,
- 1.5.2.5 To determine the current trends pertaining to marketing and public relations.
- 1.5.2.6 To determine whether tertiary institutions are equipping both public relations and marketing graduates with the necessary skills required by industry.

1.6 Empirical research and study population

An empirical study was conducted using questionnaires. Seven questionnaires were administered to seven selected companies in the greater Durban area.

The target population selected for the investigation was based on the following business sectors: manufacturing, financial services, beverages, retail, communication and sport. The companies represented the above business sectors and were selected based on the size of the company, and their willingness to participate within the research.

Name of Company	-	Business Sector
X Absa	-	Financial Services
X ABI/Coke	-	Beverages
X Lifestyle Communication: Chatsworth Centre	-	Retail
X Natal Sharks Rugby Union	-	Sport
X Sanlam	-	Financial Services
X Toyota SA	-	Motor Manufacturing
X Sentech	-	Communication

The researcher has chosen companies that represent different industries. This choice assisted in identifying current trends among these companies as well as different perspectives on the interaction between public relations and marketing.

Persons responsible for public relations and marketing were contacted telephonically to set up interviews. A structured questionnaire was administered by means of a personal interview. This was considered appropriate to the study as it consisted of a series of open and close ended questions. As observed by past researchers a personal survey, even though time consuming and expensive, was seen to be more effective.

1.7 Limitations of the study

The study was limited to seven companies. These companies confirmed their willingness to participate in the study, while other companies were not willing to be a part of this study. Companies that indicated non-willingness to participate did so as a result of time constraints and concerns about confidentiality of information. Although the companies were assured that any information made available to the researcher would be confidential, certain companies were not willing to take that risk.

1.8 Division of chapters

The dissertation is further divided into four chapters.

Chapter Two: Literature review

Chapter Two presents a literature review and the historical development of public relations and marketing. Both functions are discussed in detail, and emphasis is placed on the relationship between marketing and public relations.

The past and present roles of both public relations and marketing are also examined. The strategies, objectives, and programmes of both public relations and marketing are discussed, using examples of major companies within South Africa.

Chapter Three: Research methodology

Chapter Three examines the research methods adopted. The nature of the study, the survey method and the sample selection process is addressed in this chapter.

Chapter Four: Analysis and discussions

Chapter Four provides the data analysis, findings, and discussions of the findings. The results from the companies within the sample are examined.

Chapter Five: Conclusions and recommendations

Chapter Five provides an overview of the preceding chapters. Conclusions are drawn based on the findings of the study and recommendations are offered pertaining to the current practices of public relations and marketing.

CHAPTER TWO

Literature review

2.1 Introduction

Public relations and marketing are the two functions that are most often confused, with public relations typically being subsumed under the larger more powerful marketing function. The confusion between the two functions exists for a number of reasons. For example, in many small organisations, as a result of budget constraints, the same person performs both functions. Other organisations on the other hand may integrate marketing and public relations activities in order to achieve the best possible communication impact for the organisation and its products, with external audiences (Cornelissen, 2004: 41).

This chapter will therefore include a detailed review of the literature on the historical development of public relations and marketing. The chapter also focuses on the management function and the current relationships between these disciplines. The aspect of communication within organisations will also be examined. The theoretical approach of the systems model is also investigated as well as its application to public relations and marketing within selected organisations. The systems model is significant to this study as it provides a detailed explanation as to how all parts of an open system need to work together for the overall success of the system. Although organisations have properties of their own they share other properties that are common with different types of open systems as indicated in this chapter. The definitions of selected terminologies which are applied in this chapter are set out in section 2.3. Section 2.4 focuses on public relations and section 2.5 focuses on the various aspects of marketing. The following section investigates the current relationship between marketing and public relations and section 2.7 and 2.8 discusses the concept of communication and systems theory respectively.

2.2 Definitions

2.2.1 Communication

Communication is the dynamic reciprocal sharing process in which meaning is negotiated through the exchange of messages (Steinberg, 1997: 13).

2.2.2 Cross-functional

The term “cross-functional” refers to the quality of different functional areas working together for the accomplishment of organisational tasks (Webber, 2002: 201).

2.2.3 Interdependence

According to the Holistic Education Network (2003) the term interdependence refers to the function of each part of a system as being mutually dependent on the functioning of other parts and the system as a whole.

2.2.4 Marketing

Lamb *et al* (2005: 6) define marketing as the process of planning and executing the conception, pricing, promotion, and distribution of ideas, goods, and services to create exchanges that satisfy individual and organisational goals. The concept of marketing is defined extensively in sections 2.5.1 and 2.5.2.

2.2.5 Marketing mix

Zikmund & Amico (2001: 20) discuss the marketing mix as planning and executing the conception, pricing, promotion, and distribution of ideas, goods, and services. The interrelated and interdependent activities are performed to encourage exchange, and build relationships between an organisation and its target audiences.

2.2.6 Public relations

Public relations refers to the management, through communication, of perceptions and strategic relationships between an organisation and its internal and external publics (PRISA, 1998: 1). The concept of public relations is defined further in sections 2.4.1 and 2.4.3.

2.2.7 Synergy

According to UTA TDPRS (2003) synergy refers to a state where the total system output is greater than the sum of the outputs of all sub-systems. Teamwork, rather than individual opportunism, is considered synergistic.

2.2.8 Systems theory

The concept of systems embodies the notion of a collection of elements connected together to form a whole. Systems practice employs systems ideas to design and manage complex processes for the benefit of individuals, organisations, and society (Ragsdell *et al*, 2002: 313). Systems theory is important to this study as it provides a framework from which all communication theories could be better understood (Gregory, 1999: 266).

2.3 Public relations

This section presents an overview of public relations. The concepts, evolution, functions and current practices of public relations are examined.

2.3.1 The concept of public relations

Public relations is about reputation, that is, the result of what you do, what you say and what others say about you. Public relations practice focuses on reputation with the aim of earning understanding and support, and influencing opinion and

behaviour. A public relations practitioner serves as an intermediary between the organisation he or she represents and all the publics that exist in the organisation (Newsom *et al*, 1996: 4).

Theaker (2004:6) adds that public relations is a discipline concerned with the reputation of organisations (or products, services or individuals) with the aim of creating understanding and support. Consequently, the public relations practitioner has responsibilities both to the institution and to its various publics. He or she distributes information that enables the institution's public to understand its policies.

2.3.2 Defining public relations

According to Dibb & Simkin (2001: 269), "public relations is the planned and sustained effort to establish and maintain goodwill and mutual understanding between an organisation and its publics". The International Public Relations Association (IPRA), defines public relations as "the art and social science of analysing trends, predicting their consequences, counselling organisation's leaders, and implementing planned programmes of action which will serve both the organisation and the public interest" (Skinner *et al*, 2004: 4).

Johnston & Zawawi (2004: 6) contribute to the definition of public relations "as the ethical and strategic management of communication and relationships in order to build and develop coalitions and policy, identify and manage issues and create direct messages to achieve sound outcomes within a socially responsible framework".

Focussing specifically on the South African context, PRISA (2005) asserts that "Public relations is the management, through communication, of perceptions and strategic relationships between an organisation and its internal and external stakeholders" (PRISA, 1998: 1).

Public relations activities differ among corporate, government, associations, education and non-profit public relations. Koekemoer *et al* (1998: 5) argue that the

public relations problems an individual practitioner addresses depend on his or her organisation's public relations activities. Therefore, if an organisation's activity has an impact on a group, that group becomes a public for the organisation. Conversely, if a group can affect an organisation, it is a public for that organisation. When one does something that affects the other, the organisation and the publics must communicate with one another. Management delegates this function to the public relations practitioner. This person communicates with management for two reasons: to be able to explain management decisions to the public, and to explain public opinion to management. He or she also communicates with the public for two reasons: that is, to be able to explain public opinion to management and to explain management decisions to the public. Although this is what public relations practice should be, it does not always work that way. Much can be done to improve organisation with the aid of public relations and communication. However, it is unfortunate that public relations is often undertaken as "window dressing" in many organisations, but this should not be the case as public relations should be viewed as a pro-active management function as opposed to a "window dressing" (Engel, 2000:77).

The various definitions of public relations are important as they are indicative of the rapidly changing roles of public relations. The following section discusses the functions of public relations.

2.3.3 The functions of public relations

The functions and roles of public relations are important as they indicate the responsibilities of a public relations practitioner. The functions and roles of public relations are further discussed.

- **Research:** This involves the gathering of information about public opinion, trends, emerging issues, political climate, media coverage, concerns of consumer and environmental special-interest groups, etc, in order to plan programmes responsive to problem situations. It also includes monitoring programmes

implementation and assessing its impact to evaluate effectiveness (Skinner *et al*, 2001: 10).

- Planning and advising: This involves planning and implementing the organisation's efforts to influence or change public policy. Essentially public relations collaborates with management or clients in a problem-solving process (Wlicox *et al*, 1995: 7).
- Media relations and placement: This is one of the key functions in which practitioners may be engaged. It involves contacting the news media, magazines, freelance writers and trade publications with the intention of getting them to publish or broadcast news and features about the organisation. It may also involve responding to media requests for information acting as a spokesperson for the organisation. Finally, it may mean arranging for the production, booking and placement or broadcasting of corporate advertisements used as part of a public relations programme. Media relations is one of the best-known elements of public relations because the outcomes can be seen everyday in the media (Johnston & Zawawi, 2004: 259).
- Organisation: The public relations practitioner could handle a variety of functions ranging from media conferences, conventions and exhibitions, to open-house days, anniversary celebrations, fund-raising events, contests, awards programmes and sponsorships (Skinner *et al*, 2001: 10).
- Writing: Another function of public relations is to communicate to both internal and external publics via written communication. The public relations practitioner should be adept at writing news releases, newsletters, correspondence, reports, booklets, text, radio and television copy, film scripts, trade papers and magazine articles, corporate advertisements, product information and technical material. Public relations writing in particular is well grounded in rhetorical, communication, organisational, behaviour and attitude change theory. Public relations writing and persuasion theories provide the basis for effective communication on behalf of

the organisation (Treadwell, 2005: 7).

- Editing: In addition to researching and writing special features, practitioners could be involved in editing special publications, employee newsletters, shareholders reports and other communication directed at internal and external groups (Skinner, 2000: 12)
- Production: Production is multifaceted and very challenging. It involves creating communication using multimedia knowledge and skills including art, photography and design of brochures, booklets, reports, corporate advertisements and occasional publications; recording and editing audio and videotapes; and preparing audio-visual presentations (Koekemoer *et al*, 1998: 351).
- Speaking: According to Kelly (1997:386) speaking and speechmaking are fundamental tools in the field of public relations. This involves the practitioner in either speaking at meetings or arranging for others to address meetings. The process of gathering information enables organisations to plan programmes in response to public and problem situations, monitor their effectiveness during implementation and evaluate their overall impact (Kelly, 1997: 386).
- Training: This involves working with executives and other organisational representative to prepare them for dealing with the media and for presentations and other public appearances. Practitioners could also assist with in-service staff development (Skinner *et al*, 2001: 10).
- Management: Another very important function is the management of the public relations function with regard to personnel, budget and action programmes. In the workplace, public relations practitioners often find themselves functioning in both technical and managerial roles. However, the current environment, and more specifically the future, calls for greater skills on the management side of communication. The job of strategic communication planning calls for four particular skills: (1) understanding research and planning, (2) knowing how to

make strategic choices, (3) making selections from an expanding inventory of tactical choices and (4) completing the process by evaluating program effectiveness (Smith, 2002: 1).

The researcher supports the above discussion as the functions discussed are necessary in the field of public relations. These functions of public relations are incorporated into the other definitions of public relations as examined in the previous section.

2.3.4 A brief historical overview of public relations

In this section the history of public relations is discussed firstly from an American perspective as the roots of public relations emerge from the United States. Secondly public relations within the South African perspective is discussed since the study focused on South African companies. The history of public relations is important to this study as it indicates the transformation of public relations from inception to current practices. Public relations is further discussed within the South African context.

According to Ravindran (2000: 3) efforts to communicate with others and to deal with the forces of opinion go back to antiquity. The rulers of the ancient kingdoms instinctively resorted to various forms of communication with the intention of maintaining their hold over their kingdom and the people of that kingdom. In ancient Egypt the Pharaohs also proclaimed their achievements through word-pictures on impressive monuments, and at certain times of the year staged elaborate festivals and parades. While these actions mainly had a religious significance, they served, at the same time, to impress and entertain the people and so win their support for the ruling class. The leaders of Greece showed a thorough understanding of the value of word-of-mouth communication to persuade people to adopt a certain line of action. In their city-states, political democracy was born and the male population fiercely debated matters of the day.

The concept of propaganda was born in the Catholic Church in the 17th century when the church set up its Congregation de Propaganda to propagate faith (Caywood, 1997: 15). The Roman Empire laid on free shows and parades to win support. During the early days of Christianity, St Paul was one of the apostles to communicate successfully through the written word. However, it was only the invention of the printing press by Gutenberg and later, the use of steam printing presses that turned the written word into a medium for communicating news. Modern day public relations, as we know it, originated in the United States (Skinner & von Essen, 1995: 18).

Bates (2002), explains that American colonies created public relations experts who used public speaking, newspapers, meetings, committees, pamphlets, and correspondence to win people to their cause. Paul Revere, Benjamin Franklin, John Peter Zenger, Samuel Adams, Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay Adams were called the great press agents of the American Revolution for moulding the machinery of political change. Bates (2002) further states that the other great documents produced by the founders of the United States—the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights—may all be seen as masterpieces of public relations. These documents, helped establish the United States as the breeding ground for pursuing public relations as a profession that represented the diverse interests of democracy and free enterprise.

Table 2.1 (p. 19) indicates the five stage development of public relations in the United States.

In Table 2.1 it is noted that the utilisation of publicity and press agency to promote causes, tout land ventures, and raise funds is older than the nation itself (Caywood, 1997: 16). Press agency was so successful that it became an essential undertaking for companies that depended on the public's attention. Manipulating the press was so extensive that, to this day, the media still harbors doubts toward anything that suggests commercial promotion (Bates, 2002).

Table 2.1 – The history of public relations in the United States

<p>In the United States the development of public relations has gone through five distinct stages:</p>	<p>These stages of evolution are marked by particular periods in United States history, which fall into the following divisions:</p>
<p>1. <i>Preliminary period</i> - an era of development of the channels of communication and exercise of public relations tactics (publicity, promotion and press agency)</p>	<p>1600-1799 Initial Colonization American Revolution</p>
<p>2. <i>Communicating/initiating</i> - a time primarily of publicists, press agents, promoters and propagandists</p>	<p>1800-1899 Civil War Western Expansion Industrial Revolution</p>
<p>3. <i>Reacting/responding</i> - a period of writers hired to be spokespeople for special interests</p>	<p>1900-1939 Progressive Era/Muckrakers World War 1 Roaring Twenties Depression</p>
<p>4. <i>Planning/preventing</i> - a maturing of public relations as it began to be incorporated into the management function</p>	<p>1940-1979 World War 11 Cold War of the 1950s Consumer Movement</p>
<p>5. <i>Professionalism</i> - an effort by public relations practitioners to control public relations development, use and practice on an international level</p>	<p>1980-Present Global Communication</p>

Source: Newsom *et al* (1996:36)

During the several decades following World War II the concept evolved to include the concept of two-way communication: reciprocity and relationships. Koekemoer (1998: 347) believes that the basic function “is to reconcile or adjust in the public interest those aspects of our personal and corporate behaviour which have a social significance”. Koekemoer (1998: 347) further highlights a significant development which occurred in the late 1930s when the American Harwood L Childs, is of the opinion that public relations helps organisations adjust to their environments. The organisational adjustment concept suggests a management-level, policy-influencing role. Reflecting Childs’ notions, the International Public Relations Association (IPRA) definition (adopted in 1978) includes “counselling organisations’ leaders” and “implementing planned programmes of action”.

In summary, therefore, the one-way concept of public relations leads to propaganda or persuasive communication, the two-way concept emphasises communication exchange and mutual understanding and the organisational adjustment concept puts the function in the role of counselling management on corrective actions. In practice contemporary public relations reflects a mix of all these concepts.

The evolution of the concept and the numerous descriptions of the practice lead us to the following conceptual definition, “Public relations is the management function that establishes and maintains mutually beneficial relationships between an organisation and the publics on whom its success or future depends” (Cutlip *et al*, 1994: 10).

Public relations came into being in South Africa after World War II. The first step toward the establishment of a public relations function was taken by the government in 1937 when an information bureau was founded with the purpose of spreading official information. The first public relations practitioner in South Africa was appointed by the South African Railways in 1943, while the first public relations consultancy opened in Johannesburg in 1948. The Public Relations Institute of Southern Africa (PRISA) was established in Johannesburg in 1957. PRISA’s vision is “to be the professional body for the practice and development of public relations in

Southern Africa” and its mission is “to serve the interests of the public relations profession” (Skinner *et al*, 2004: 23).

The definition adopted by PRISA states that, “public relations is the management, through communication, of perceptions and strategic relationships between an organisation and its internal and external stakeholders” (PRISA, 1998: 1). Thus, despite an individual’s and organisation’s own perception of their image, it is the marketplace and the public’s perception which is most important, which can be based on fact or fiction.

Public relations has a key role to play in developing understanding and support for a particular cause or event. Essentially public relations helps to define and explain relationships of mutual benefit between organisations and their key stakeholders both amongst their employees and their customers or clients. These must be managed rather than be allowed to develop haphazardly, so that a fair, balanced and positive image can be created. Public relations is now one of the newest areas of the management disciplines, and is considered a rather late arrival on the stage of the present day industry (Ravindran, 2000: 2)

Consumers are demanding greater accountability from all institutions as well as higher standards of ethical conduct. In the face of these changes, it is understandable that management today is giving greater attention than ever before to the public’s opinions of its organisations and to public relations practitioners who can help deal with these opinions. Public relations is seen as conducting research into public opinion prior to developing and launching public relations campaigns (Kotler & Mindak, 1978: 16).

Koekemoer *et al*, (1998: 392) suggest that the scope of public relations is broad and expanding fast. Today the profession in South Africa, like other management disciplines, has to include both specialists and generalists and should be able to advise on internal and external communication challenges. In terms of various disciplines within public relations it is anticipated that employee relations and

community relations will become increasingly more important in the marketing communication mix followed by corporate public relations, marketing public relations, investor relations, issue management and public affairs. Lobbying, community networking, industrial theatre, the innovative use of visual media and social marketing are all new activities and realities in the communication mix. However, the media remain an important channel and target audience for companies. The present deregulation of the airwaves provides communicators with many new opportunities for targeting audiences with carefully tailored messages on a broad front. South Africa's new role in Africa and in the world provides opportunities for further communication exchanges and diplomatic initiatives.

In support of the above the researcher affirms that developing and maintaining relationships of mutual benefit between organisations and their key publics is essential. The management of this relationship will determine the overall success of the organisation. It is therefore evident that management today is giving greater attention to the public's opinions of its organisations and to public relations practitioners who can help deal with these opinions. Public relations should therefore be given equal status as the other functions at management level within the organisation.

The above also justifies the study by highlighting the current practices of public relations departments within South African organisations and indicates the importance of public relations as a management function.

2.3.5 Public relations as a management function

The role of public relations in strategic management within organisations is viewed in terms of four areas, namely: the environment, strategy, organisation and people.

- *The environment:* The conventional perception of public relations is that it is concerned primarily with communicating with the organisation's external publics and involves a more or less one-way flow of information from the organisation to

the world outside. As management's communication arm, public relations has a major role to play in acquiring information of relevance from outside, and analysing and interpreting it (Lubbe & Puth, 1994: 20).

- *Strategy:* Without public relations input of information about trends and developments in the environment, no meaningful strategies can be constructed. An important belief of present day strategising is that those who do not have "ownership" of the plan are least likely to implement the plan effectively. Since modern business plans go beyond financial forecasts, incorporating strategies that deal with the way in which an organisation ought to interact with its stakeholders, public relations must inevitably be part of the strategic process. Public relations must help to define the target audiences to be reached by the organisation and to devise and implement the communication plans to reach those audiences. For many public relations professionals, a sign of having 'arrived' is obtaining a 'strategic' role signified by being a part of management. Participating in strategic management provides the integrating link for public relations in enhancing organisational success (Grunig & Grunig, 1998: 141).
- *Organisation:* Public relations interprets and transfers environmental information into the organisation. Public relations focus on disseminating the corporate message to its external audiences. This function falls under public relations' external functions, which range extensively from research and planning, to dealing with identified "publics". However, public relations' external communication functions can be relevant only in an environment where management recognises the public relations role in environmental analysis and strategic planning. Public relations is a vital tool for strategic management in building and maintaining the reputation of an organisation (Theaker, 2004: 48).

- *People*: “Employees are one of the four critical success areas in terms of which management effectiveness may be evaluated. Public relations’ role is confined strictly to communicating with staff in its capacity as one of the target audiences that the organisation is attempting to reach as part of its overall public relations strategy”(Lubbe & Puth 1994: 24).

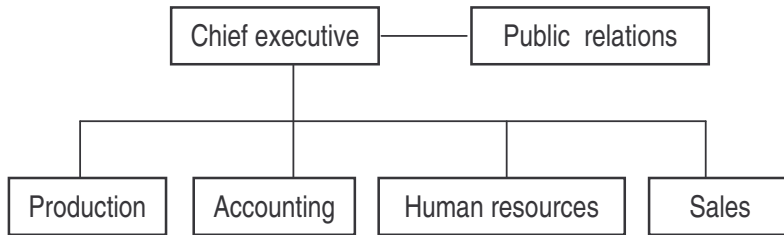
Skinner *et al* (2004: 6) support this view by stating that as a management function, public relations is in a position to evaluate internal and external opinions, attitudes, and needs on an ongoing basis, to advise management regarding their possible effect, and to act as an instrument in bringing about policy changes and directing new courses of action. These actions are aimed at maintaining a harmonious and balanced relationship between the organisation and its different target publics and, ultimately, between the organisation and its environment.

The Public Relations Institute of Southern Africa (PRISA) further states, that from the organisation’s business plan and subsequent marketing plan, the public relations practitioner devises the communication plan to support the corporate mission, policy, and goals. In order to become involved in strategic planning, the public relations practitioner should operate at the highest level of organisational management and have access to the most senior information and decision-making systems (PRISA, 2005).

In order for the various departments to co-operate effectively, Skinner *et al* (2004: 7) propose that the public relations manager needs to be positioned at management level so that he or she is responsible to top management and serves all departments of the organisation. Ideally, the public relations manager should have board of director status, as this happens in the world’s most successful companies, as depicted in Figure 2.2 (p. 25).

The following organograms (Figure 2.1 and 2.2) of a corporate management organisation describes the position occupied by public relations.

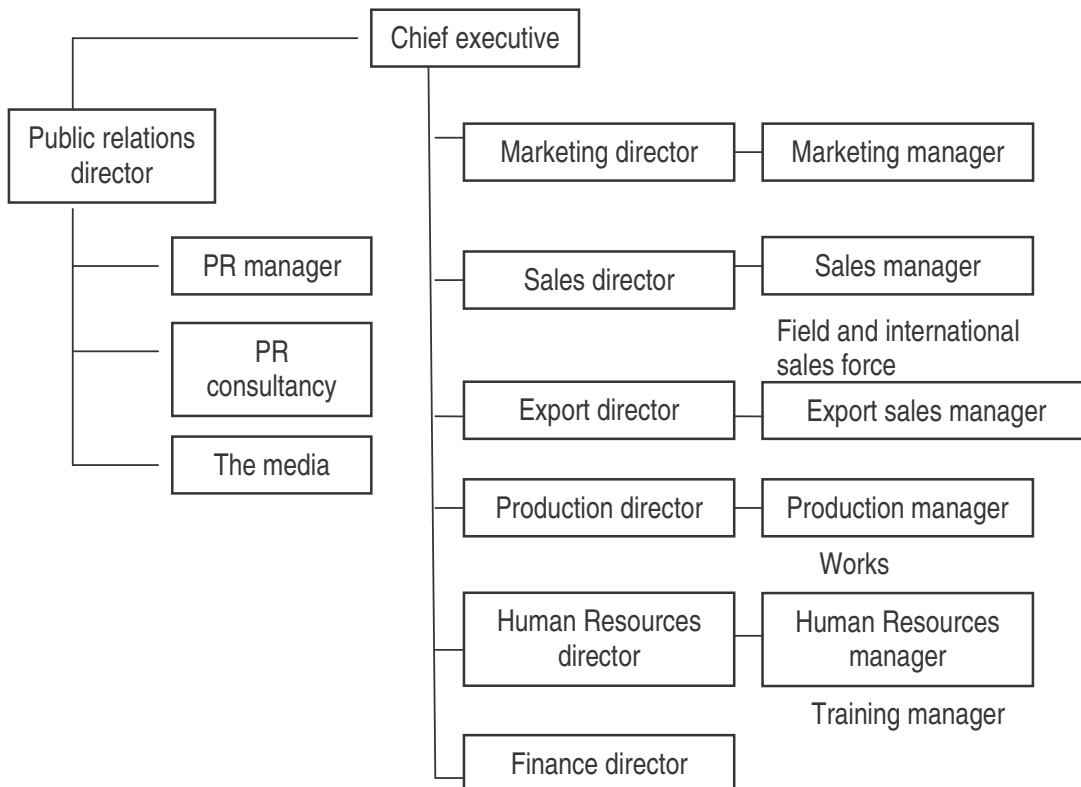
FIGURE 2.1 The organogram of a corporate management organisation



Source: Wilcox *et al* (1995: 5)

Figure 2.1 and 2.2 indicate that public relations is a management function. Public relations helps the organisation by assisting the complex, pluralistic society to reach decisions and function more effectively by contributing to mutual understanding between the organisation and their surrounding society.

FIGURE 2.2 The organogram of a corporate management organisation reflecting public relations as a director status



Source: Jefkins (1998: 22)

The management of institutions therefore need to understand the attitudes and values of their publics in order to achieve institutional goals. The goals themselves are shaped by the external environment. The public relations practitioner therefore acts as a counselor to management and as a mediator, helping translate private aims into reasonable, publicly acceptable policy and action (Skinner *et al*, 2004: 7). The empowerment of public relations as a management function is also stressed by Grunig *et al* (2002: 143) in that the post modern view of strategic management disciplines (such as marketing, finance, human resources and public relations) affirms their disciplinary identities.

In light of Figure 2.2 (p. 25) it is vital that the public relations practitioner is at management level as he/she uses a variety of professional communication skills and plays an integrative role both within the organisation and between the organisation and the external environment. It is evident that public relations adds value to this perspective because it brings a different set of problems and possible solutions into the strategic management arena. In particular, public relations brings the problems of stakeholders into the decision making as well as the publics who make up the target environment. An effective communication, or public relations plan for an organisation is developed to communicate to an audience (whether internal or external); a message that coincides with organisational goals and seeks to benefit mutual interests, whenever possible. Therefore the professional skills of a public relations practitioner is essential in every organisation as it impacts on the overall success of the organisation.

2.3.6 The future of public relations

Public relations will either become recognised as an indispensable key to all organisations' viability or it will be regulated to merely carrying out a range of useful techniques. There is evidence that since 1980, while the field has grown greatly in the number of practitioners. The majority of additions have been at the tactical level. On one hand, the ability of individuals and organisations to communicate has never been more important. The mergers, consolidations, takeovers and downsizing that

have ravaged America and the world have taken a heavy toll on the ranks of public relations professionals. The challenge, then, for all who practise public relations in the years ahead is to seize the tremendous opportunities that accompany the emerging issues of the day (Koekemoer *et al*, 1998: 391).

Institutions today operate in a volatile environment and must keep several steps ahead of the rapid pace of social, economic and political change. The environment is being shaped by the following factors:

- *Economic globalisation*: This affects all organisations, even non-multinational companies. Competition will increase and so will communication, making it easier to communicate internationally but much more difficult to be heard as public relations has become a growth industry around the world (Seitel, 2003: 468).
- *Shifting public opinion*: Impulsive shifts in public opinion are being ignited by instantaneous communication, challenging the ability of communicators to react to fast-moving events. An organisation must realise that it has to engage through communication with the publics in its environment, including the general public and consumer marketing, to remain afloat economically (Cornelissen, 2004: 32).
- *Ageing of society*: Households headed by people over fifty-five are the fastest growing segment of the consumer market in America and this group controls an increasing percentage of all personal income (Seitel, 2003: 468).
- *Downsizing*: With downsizing, companies are continuing to reduce overheads and trim staff to become more competitive. However, the effect on business and employee morale is profound and the need for good internal communication is critical. The concept of downsizing transpires the merging of departments with overlapping functions in order to operate under tighter budgets (Theaker, 2004: 9).

- *Corporate responsibility*: This is the umbrella term used for a positive relationship between an organisation and the societies in which it operates (Gregory, 2003: 159). This is becoming of critical importance as organisations eliminate jobs and as legal and ethical questions develop on issues ranging from AIDS to corporate democracy to treatment of the environment (Koekemoer *et al*, 1998: 392).
- *Technology*: Public relations professionals will be continually experiencing an invasion of technological tools to cope with the emerging “information superhighway” that will link television, telephones and databases. Public relations practitioners can help consumers navigate through the many electronic offerings. In addition, the emergence of online data sources, the Internet, facts on demand, computer software programmes and CD-ROM is revolutionising the way public relations practitioners target their messages. Public relations practitioners are being challenged with a new range of computer-mediated communication (CMC) tools (Alexander, 2004).

This section highlights that public relations has undergone dynamic changes since its inception. The trends confirm that public relations is becoming more involved in steering the success of the organisation by scanning the environment and identifying strategic stakeholders. Due to downsizing of organisations it may be envisaged that public relations may be involved or merged with communication and marketing related departments.

The above therefore, indicates that public relations is changing to adapt to the surrounding environment and in doing so, incorporating communication and marketing related functions.

2.3.7 Public relations as a cross-functional activity

The scholarly literature concerning public relations as relationship management is integrative, drawing concepts from the disciplines of mass media, interpersonal communication, inter-organisational behaviour, social psychology concepts, marketing and management (Ledingham & Bruning, 2000: 56).

Public relations, like other communication functions, has evolved to be a far more central role in an organisation's planning process. Public relations and other communication programmes actively contribute to an organisation's broad, strategic goal of reaching out to its consumers (Caywood, 1997: 140). Therefore, a key element in building and sustaining cross-functional public relations co-ordination is for public relations practitioners to establish strong working relationships with non-public relations departments.

Austin & Pinkleton (2001: 5) add that public relations have a role of always being in the middle-pivoted between the organisation and their clients and employees. They further maintain that public relations must be familiar with organisational needs as well as the dynamics and needs of internal and external publics.

This view has led the researcher to believe that the public relations activities cannot work in a vacuum, isolated from other company activities. Public relations managers must integrate and co-ordinate marketing functions with other corporate functions so that they are all directed toward achieving the same organisational goals and objectives.

It is therefore important for public relations to engage in cross-functional activities as the overall success of the organisation is ultimately dependent on the synchronization of departments within the organisation.

2.4 Marketing

This section presents an overview of specific aspects of marketing. The concepts, evolution, functions and current practices of marketing are examined.

2.4.1 The concept of marketing

According to Lamb *et al* (1998: 4) marketing is often viewed as either personal selling or advertising. There is still the belief that marketing involves making products available in stores, arranging displays, and maintaining inventories of products for future sales. Actually, marketing includes all of these activities and more. Marketing has two facets. First, it is a philosophy, an attitude, a perspective, or a management orientation that stresses customer satisfaction. Second, marketing is a set of activities used to implement this philosophy (Lamb *et al*, 1998: 4).

Armstrong and Kotler (2000: 14) indicate that more than any other business function, marketing deals with customers. They further maintain that creating customer value and satisfaction is the heart of modern marketing thinking and practice. Marketing is the delivery of customer satisfaction at a profit. The two-fold goal of marketing is to attract new customers by promising superior value and to keep current customers by delivering satisfaction. Sound marketing is critical to the success of every organisation be it large or small, profit or non-profit, domestic or global.

Ludicke (2006: 3) adds that marketing is an organisational function with a set of processes for creating, communicating, and delivering value to customers. Marketing also manages customer relations in ways that benefits the organisation and its stakeholders.

The information stated above represents an understanding of the concept of marketing, however, this may be encapsulated into formal definitions.

2.4.2 The definition of marketing

The UK's Chartered Institute for Marketing (CIM) views marketing as the management process responsible for identifying, anticipating and satisfying customer requirements profitably. Marketing consists of individual and organisational activities that facilitate and expedite satisfying exchange relationships in a dynamic environment through the creation, serving, distribution, promotion and pricing of goods, services and ideas (Dibb & Simkin, 2001: 191).

Armstrong and Kotler (2000: 4) define marketing as “a social and managerial process by which individuals and groups obtain what they need and want through creating and exchanging products and value with others”.

Cant *et al* (2006: 19) define marketing “as a combination of management tasks and decisions aimed at meeting opportunities and threats in a dynamic environment in such a way that its market offerings lead to the satisfaction of consumers' needs and wants so that the objectives of the enterprise, the consumer and society are achieved”.

The various definitions of marketing are important as they are indicative of the management role of marketing. Evident in the definitions is the changing role of marketing from being product based to focusing on consumer satisfaction. The proceeding section discusses the origination of marketing and the development into a professional body.

2.4.3 A brief historical overview of marketing

It is a widely held belief that marketing has evolved, growing up in the 1960s in America, led by major consumer goods businesses.

Many business authors present a sequence of years through which commercial activity passed as the twentieth century unfolded, they are as follows:

- *Production era: 1850s to 1920s*
The Industrial Revolution occurred, followed by mass production and rigidly structured jobs. Products were developed with little thought for finding customers or creating an edge over rival propositions. There were few products to risk and little competition (Dibb & Simkin, 2001: 192).
- *Sales era: 1920s to 1950s*
The focus for businesses was on personal selling and advertising. Products were handed over to the sales department who persuaded customers to want these products. Competition heightened as competing sales forces fought for customers who formerly were the domain of manufacturers in their particular region. Sales were seen as the major means for increasing profits (Berkowitz, 1996: 13).
- *Marketing era: 1950s to present*
A customer orientation replaced the sales-led era as companies determined the needs and wants of customers before introducing their products or services. The sales era continued until 1950. Sales were growing rapidly in most areas of the economy and consumers developed more sophisticated needs and their financial positions afforded them to satisfy these needs (Strydom *et al*, 2004: 9).
- *Relationship marketing era: 1990s*
Some business experts believe that the marketing era has recently shifted from being transaction-based to focus on relationships. The argument is that marketing's focus used to be on attracting new customers or orders, but that businesses have now recognised it is just as important to hang on to such new customers so that they become long-term loyal customers. Therefore, marketers devote their attention to winning new customers and building

positive on-going relationships to maintain their loyalty and customer-relationship marketing. At start of the twentieth century, products were developed by inventors and then sold into the marketplace (Dibb & Simkin, 2001: 193).

As more companies entered the growing markets, the level of competition placed greater emphasis on forceful selling. As customers became more sophisticated, businesses turned to marketing to properly identify and anticipate customer needs. This was the birth of marketing. Relationship marketing is a logical development in the gradual evolution of marketing. The main focus on relationship marketing is to maintain long-term relationships between the organisation and its internal and external publics (Cant *et al*, 2006: 15).

The history of marketing is important as it indicates the transformation of marketing from inception to current practices. The above analysis highlights the changes of marketing from being product or transaction based to being relationship based. The concept of relationship marketing ensures a great degree of consumer satisfaction through long-term and sustainable, mutually beneficial relationships (Cant *et al*, 2006: 15).

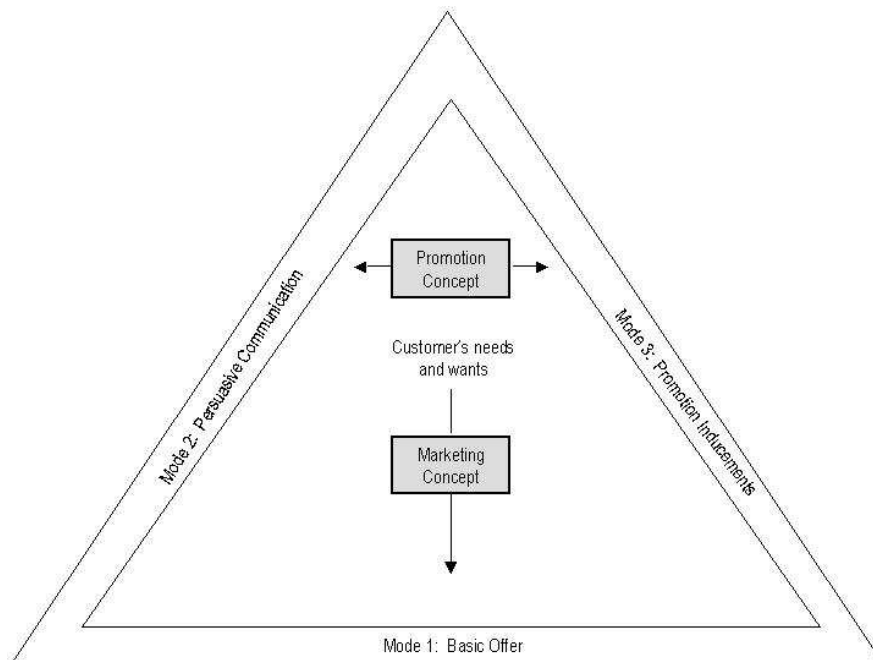
With regards to the development of marketing and public relations, the researcher noted that building and maintaining relationships with the external environment is of vital importance. In support of this contention Jefkins *et al* (2003: 39) maintain that marketing and public relations seem to have a great deal in common. They add that both involve human relations and require strong communication and interpersonal skills. The following section highlights the different functions of marketing.

2.4.4 The marketing function

Koekemoer (1998: 12) identifies the marketing function which consists of three overlapping sets of activities, or modes, whereby marketers seek to manage the demand for their offerings. The three modes are indicated in Figure 2.3.

Mode 1: The basic offer consists of the regular, usual and even additional benefits that the marketer offers to their targets as possible solutions to a certain problem. The basic offer has two areas of specification: (1) the product and (2) associated terms of sale such as price, credit terms, warranties, availability and delivery promises. The role of the basic offer is to satisfy customers' needs and offer superior value. The production concept maintains that consumers will favour products that are available and affordable, whilst the sales concept holds that consumers will not purchase enough products unless the marketer undertakes a large-scale selling and promotional effort (Strydom *et al*, 2004: 9).

FIGURE 2.3 The three modes of marketing



Source: Koekemoer (1998: 12)

Mode 2: According to Marketing Education (2003) persuasive communication comprises various forms of marketing communication messages designed to enhance customers' impressions of the basic offer. Concepts and actions needed to determine client needs and wants are determined through planned, personalised communication that influences purchase decisions and enhances future business opportunities.

Mode 3: Promotional inducements are extra benefits, beyond the benefits of the basic offer, intended to motivate particular customer actions. "Promotional inducements" is a descriptive word for sales promotion. Marketers can use three forms of promotional inducements: those representing the character of the basic offer (e.g. free samples, trial usage or extra goods at the same price), price related inducements (e.g. discounts, money-off coupons, and trade allowances for dealers) and inducements that are external to the basic offer (e.g. premiums, contests, and trading stamps). Promotional planning refers to the planned application of marketing resources to achieve sales promotion objectives. With the onset of globalisation and the rise of competitive markets, the market is an increasingly hostile environment, and therefore only those businesses that keep ahead of the rest are able to survive and grow. One of the ways to keep ahead of the rest is promotional planning (Gelder & Woodcock, 2003: 4).

Koekemoer *et al*, (1998: 12), believe that the role of promotional inducements is to motivate retailers and consumers to adopt the marketer's plan of action. In the case of retailers, this means stocking more of the marketer's product, providing better display space and promoting the marketer's product more aggressively. In the case of consumers, this means buying more of the marketer's product sooner than originally planned. Marketers induce these actions by providing retailers and consumers with some form of reward.

The researcher notes that two of the three modes (namely, basic offer and promotional inducements) are common in public relations activities, as discussed in section 2.6. In light of the various overlapping functions of marketing, marketing is

certain to engage in cross-functional activities (including public relations and communication). The following section identifies marketing as a cross-functional activity.

2.4.5 Marketing as a cross-functional activity

Zikmund & Amico (2001: 20), explain that “marketing personnel do not work in a vacuum, isolated from other company activities”. Rather, the work of marketers affects other departments within an organisation. Managers must integrate and coordinate marketing functions with other corporate functions so that they are all directed toward achieving the same objectives. A key element in building and sustaining cross-functional marketing co-ordination is for marketing specialists to establish strong working relationships with non-marketing personnel (Shipley, 1994). The researcher believes that the non-marketing personnel could include public relations personnel.

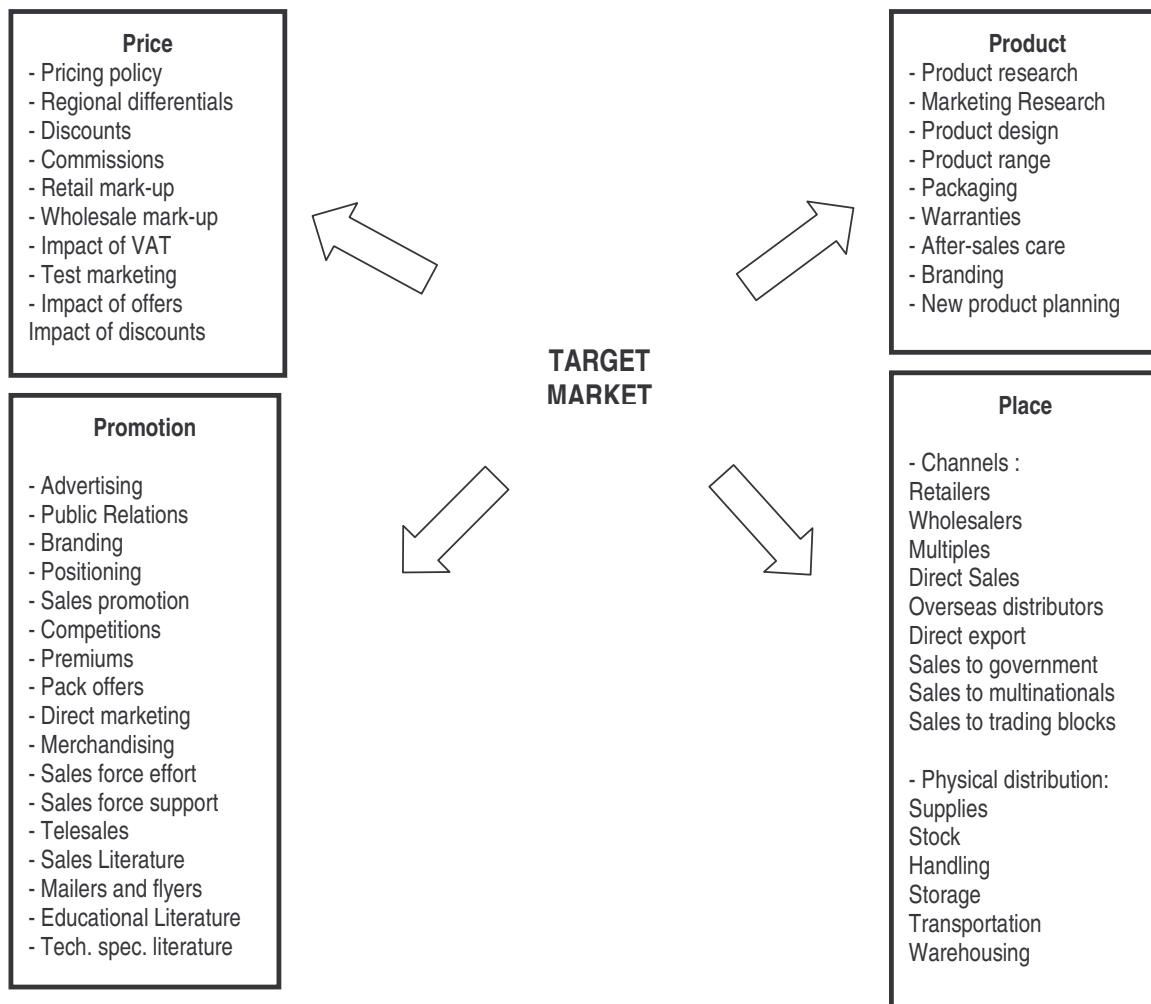
However, problems are almost certain to develop unless an integrated, company-wide marketing effort is maintained. Difficulties may arise when a focus on consumer needs is viewed as the sole responsibility of the enterprise’s marketing department. To say that marketing is a cross-functional activity is to say that people with many different job titles and functions within and outside the organisation have an impact on the goals set by marketing executives (Zikmund & Amico, 2001: 20).

It is therefore important for marketing to engage in cross-functional activities as the overall success of the organisation is ultimately dependent on the synchronization of departments within the organisation (including public relations and communication departments). The marketing mix encapsulates the interrelated and interdependent marketing activities as discussed below.

2.4.6 The marketing mix

Sandhusen (2000: 319) identifies four components of the marketing mix, viz. product, price, promotion and place (distribution). Marketers combine these components to achieve company objectives by satisfying market needs.

FIGURE 2.4 Marketing mix



Source: Jefkins (1998: 10)

The interrelated and interdependent activities are performed to encourage exchange and build relationships. The term marketing mix describes the result of management's creative efforts to combine these activities. Faced with a wide choice

of product features, messages, prices, distribution methods, and other marketing variables, the marketing manager must select and combine ingredients to create a marketing mix that will achieve organisational objectives. Since every possible marketing activity can be placed in one of the categories within the marketing mix, the following four Ps constitute a framework that can be used to develop plans for marketing efforts.

- *Product*: According to Strydom *et al* (2004: 105) a product refers to the goods, service, or idea that the company offers. The product offers tangible and intangible attributes that satisfy the consumers. Strategies are needed for deciding what products to offer, to manage existing products and eliminating failed products. Strategic decisions are also required for branding, packaging and other product features such as warranties (Etzel *et al*, 2001:17)
- *Place*: Place is also known as distribution. It is the element of the marketing mix that encompasses all aspects of getting products to the consumer in the right location at the right time. Organisations must not expect customers to shop around too much in order to find a particular product. It should be available a place convenient to customers (Wilmshurst & Mackay, 2002: 110).
- *Price*: Price refers to the amount of money or other consideration that is of value, given in exchange for a product. Setting the price for a product is a marketing decision. Other strategies pertaining to price include, changing price, terms of sale and possible discounts. However, the most challenging decision is selecting the price for a new product (Etzel *et al*, 2001: 17).
- *Promotion*: Promotion is the means by which marketers “talk to” existing customers and potential buyers. Promotion may convey a message about the organisation, a product, or some other element of the marketing mix, such as the new low price being offered during a sale period (Zikmund & Amico, 2001: 20).

According to Cant *et al* (2006: 300) public relations falls under promotion within the marketing mix. A number of public relations tools (press conferences, exhibitions, conferences, annual reports, brochures and crisis management) can be used to build and maintain relationships and improve the image of the organisation. Wilmshurst & Mackay (2002: 220) add that press relations being a function of public relations, is an importance method of promotion, especially in the case of new products. New products, especially if they involve new technologies or achieve things that could not be accomplished before (such as a new drug) are often newsworthy and therefore could feature in the editorial columns of the press, or in radio and TV programmes.

In the discussion on the marketing mix it is evident that public relations tools are essential for promotion as well as marketing the product. Therefore the marketing mix is significant to this study as it indicates that public relations is a tool within the marketing mix thereby highlighting a relationship between public relations and marketing. To attain organisational goals and objectives, it is essential for marketing to function at a management level with equal status as the other management functions. The following section discusses marketing as a management function.

2.4.7 Marketing as a management function

Cutlip *et al* (2000: 8) believes that marketing operates as a line management function, turning organisations inputs into outputs of value to others. According to Zikmund & Amico (2001: 30) managers develop rules, principles, and ways of thinking and acting that allow the organisation to attain its goals and objectives. Corporate managers are the executives responsible for the entire organisation. Top managers, with titles such as chief executive officer (CEO) and executive vice president, recognise that at the corporate level, marketing is a business philosophy rather than a series of activities. An important part of their job is to ensure that all business functions work together to achieve marketing success. Managers at the middle levels of the organisation are responsible for the management of marketing efforts for goods and services in the organisation's business unit.

Cant (2004: 25), explains that marketing management is the process of planning, organising, leading and controlling marketing activities. This process is implemented to attain marketing goals and objectives effectively and efficiently. Today's marketing managers must be flexible and versatile to deal with changes that come more quickly and are more dramatic, complex, and unpredictable than ever before. Because marketing managers must deal with change, the marketing management process is a continuous one: planning, execution, and control are ongoing and repetitive activities.

It is therefore evident that both marketing and public relations are management functions, which involve a process that is implemented to attain organisational goals and objectives. One of the main areas in attaining organisational goals and objectives is developing relationships with the organisation and its internal and external publics. The following section discusses relationship marketing.

2.4.8 Relationship marketing

Previously the field of marketing centred on the concept of a market-based transaction. The sale was the objective and the end result of the marketing effort. However, the main focus area has shifted from one-time transactions to ongoing relationships where the sale is not the end but the beginning of a relationship between the seller and the buyer. The purpose of relationship marketing is to maintain long-term relationships between the organisation and their publics (Strydom, 2004: 13). The emphasis of the relationship marketing is moving from a transaction focus to a relationship focus. Table 2.2 (p. 41) highlights the differences between transactional focus and a relationship focus (Peck *et al*, 1999: 44).

Table 2.2: The differences between transactional focus and a relationship focus

Characteristics	Transaction focus	Relationship focus
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objective new customers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer retention
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orientation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service features 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer value
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timescale 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Little emphasis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High emphasis
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer commitment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer contact 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An operations based 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The concern of all

Source: Peck *et al*, (1999: 44)

Transactional marketing focus on winning customers, with importance given to the value of an individual sale. Table 2.2 highlights the shift from transactional to relationship marketing. The transactional approach is seen to be impersonal, rule orientated and directed to short-term customer satisfaction. Transactions lack history and memory and do not get sentimental. Relationship marketing on the other hand focuses on long-term relationship building with emphasis given to customer loyalty (Gummesson, 2000: 11). Relationship marketing recognises that different marketing strategies are required for acquiring and retaining customers (Peck *et al*, 1999: 44).

It is evident that theoretically marketing has shifted from being transactional-based to relationship-based. This is pertinent to the study as the new focus on marketing is based on building personal long-term bonds with customers so that customers and the organisations benefit and meet their respective objectives (Strydom, 2004: 13).

Public relations also centres on building and maintaining relationships between an organisation and its internal and external publics. This highlights one of the reasons for integrating public relations and marketing as both are aimed at developing long-term relationships with customers.

2.5 The relationship between marketing and public relations

Marketing and public relations are two major functions of an organisation. Both functions start their analysis and planning from the point of satisfying targeted publics. The following section discusses the different relationships that exist between marketing and public relations.

2.5.1 The role of public relations within the marketing field

According to Armstrong & Kotler (2000: 429), public relations is a major mass-promotion tool building good relations with the company's various publics by obtaining favourable publicity, building up a good corporate image, and handling unfavourable rumours, stories, and events. Public relations is used to promote products, people, places, ideas, activities, organisations, and even nations. Despite the potential strengths of public relations, it is often described as a marketing stepchild.

Armstrong & Kotler (2000: 430-432) indicate that there are major public relations tools used in the marketing process. Public relations creates favourable news about the company and its products or people. Speeches can also create product and company publicity. Another common public relations tool is special events, ranging from news conferences, press tours, grand openings, and fireworks displays to laser shows and educational programmes designed to reach and interest target publics. Public relations practitioners also prepare written materials to reach and influence their target markets. These materials include annual reports, brochures, articles, and company newsletters and magazines. Audio visual materials are also increasingly used as communication tools. Corporate identity materials also help

create a corporate identity that the public immediately recognises. A company's website is yet another good public relations vehicle.

Johnston & Zawawi (2004: 385) add that specialised tools such as publicity, special events, launches, sponsorships, endorsements and printwork (brochures, booklets, etc) are used extensively in marketing, often by public relations practitioners working with, or attached to marketing departments. As with other promotion tools, in considering when and how to use product public relations, management should set public relations objectives, choose the public relations messages and vehicles, implement the public relations plan, and evaluate the results. The company's public relations function should be blended smoothly with other promotion activities within the organisation's overall integrated marketing communication effort. Many companies now want their public relations departments to manage all their activities with a view toward marketing the company and improving the bottom line. Some companies are setting up special units called marketing public relations to support corporate and product promotion and image making directly.

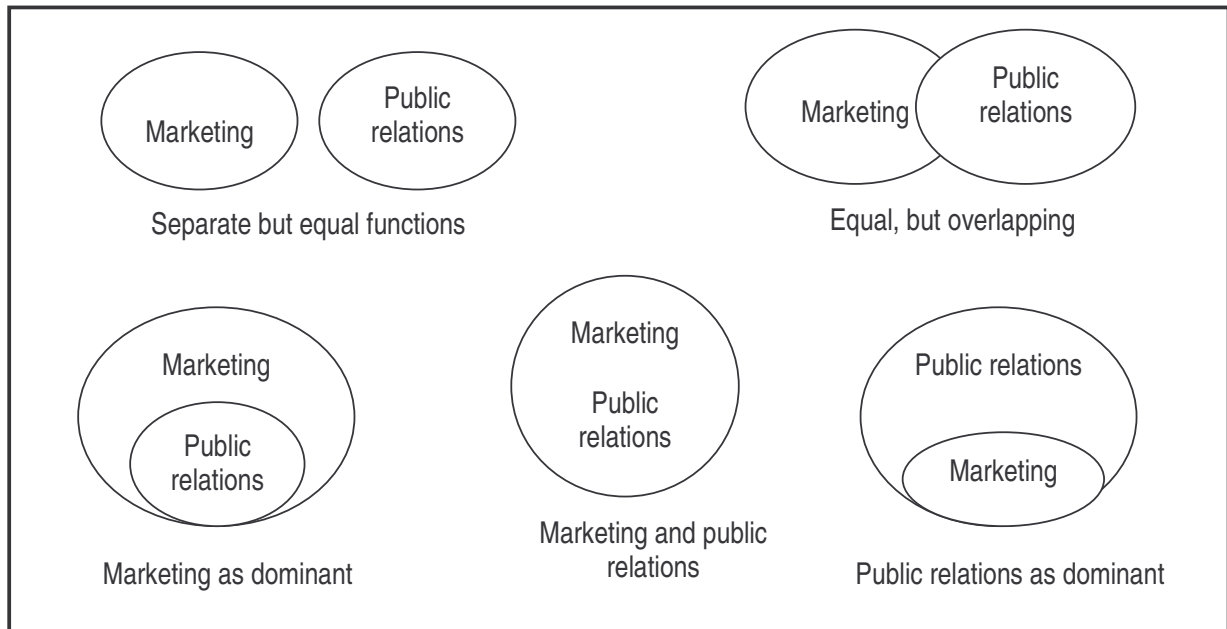
2.5.2 The possible relationships between public relations and marketing

Skinner *et al* (2001: 102) identify marketing and public relations as major external functions of a company. Both functions start their analysis and planning from the point of view of satisfying one or more of the publics that have already been identified. Skinner focuses on the possible relationships between public relations and marketing in Figure 2.5 (p.44).

Skinner *et al* (2001:102) claim that some organisations treat exchange relationships with customers as only one of many organisational relationships. On their organisational charts, marketing is part of the larger public relations function. Other organisations view marketing as the basic function paying attention only to those "non-customer relationships" seen as important to the marketing effort. Public relations is subordinate to marketing in these organisations. Other companies put "customer relations" under public relations making it responsible for non-marketing

concerns of customers such as complaints, instructions for product use, safety information and repair services.

FIGURE 2.5 Possible relationships between public relations and marketing



Source: Skinner *et al* (2004: 46)

In many other organisations, marketing and public relations are viewed as separate management functions with different but complementary roles. White (1991:99) agrees that public relations and marketing should be understood as separate yet complementary functions. Depending on the nature of the organisation public relations may serve as either a complement or a counterbalance to marketing activities. However, subsuming public relations within marketing deprives public relations of the ability to fulfil its role.

Figure 2.5 highlights the relationships that exist between public relations and marketing. Although public relations and marketing are seen as different functions in certain organisations they are inevitably interrelated as a result of one of their common functions being communication. The following section discusses

communication as well as the role of communication within the fields of public relations and marketing.

2.5.3 Marketing and public relations curricula offered at Higher Educational Institutions in KZN

The yearly handbooks at higher educational institutions specifically the universities of technology in KZN indicate that public relations and marketing operate as separate academic departments within the Faculty of Commerce. However, introductory courses of marketing are offered in public relations (at 1st year level) to students at these institutions. The marketing department on the other hand does not offer any public relations courses to their students. According to Macleay College (2000) this seems to be a problem as research conducted at the college confirmed that there is a major growth for employer demand for a business course in public relations and marketing. The offering of this type of combination qualification is in short supply. According to Macleay College (2000) the courses offered at universities should be re-curriculated taking into account the need for adequate overlap as far as public relations and marketing are concerned. Whether public relations and marketing departments adequately meet the needs of industry still needs to be investigated.

2.6 Communication

Communication is an important aspect in every organisation and both public relations and marketing play an important role in carrying out the communication function. According to Lubbe & Puth (1994: 7) a communication function is to send and receive messages between the organisation and its different publics. Communication is a management function that aims to create mutual two-way communication between an organisation and its publics. It entails the management of all communication problems and issues in the organisation's environment.

Stroh & Jaatinen (2001: 156) maintain that communication management helps the organisation achieve its goals by identifying and building healthy relationships with

the strategic constituencies, and it facilitates interaction. The quality of these relationships determines the effectiveness of the public relations function in the organisation. Horizontal communication across departments and organisational borders is necessary to achieve creativity and innovation.

According to Cillers (2003: 9) corporate communication works as an interface model approach which specifically focuses on how communication unfolds in practice and complements the public relations and marketing function. Argenti & Forman (2002: 4) refer to corporate communication as the corporation's voice and the images it projects of itself to the public. Cillers (2003: 25) states that the relational approach to corporate communication is significant because it situates building relationships as the central corporate communication activity. Mutually beneficial relationships are also evident in the definition of Cutlip *et al* (1994: 2), who define corporate communication as "... the management function that establishes and maintains mutually beneficial relationships between an organisation and the publics on whom its success and failures depend".

2.6.1 Public relations and communication

According to Baines *et al*, (2004: 27) the purpose of public relations is simply to create understanding by imparting knowledge and information. Communication is part of the learning process, and public relations is about informing, educating and creating understanding. Ace (2001: 122) adds that public relations is more than an executive-level tool. As with all communication tools it must be planned for and integrated into the corporate communication programme at the highest level. One of the unique aspects of public relations is that it is a two-way communication process with the aim to improve employee relations, customer relations and to educate and inform the general public about an organisation.

2.6.2 Marketing and communication

According to Kimmel (2005: 1) communication represents an essential aspect of the

marketing process. Modern marketers require more than the development of good and useful product. The process also requires that marketers communicate information about their products and services. In recent years, marketing communication has begun to develop into something much more complex and far-reaching. It gives marketers an evolving and wider range of possible communication channels and technologies for getting messages across to their publics and for stimulating direct responses from their target audiences.

It is therefore evident that all organisations should have communication departments which are essential to communicate to the internal and external publics. The researcher is therefore led to believe that marketing is a management function that aims to create mutual two-way communication between an organisation and its customers which is of vital importance to any organisation. Communication being a major common function between public relations and marketing adds to their interdependency on each other. These interrelated functions are highlighted further by reviewing the systems model approach which specifically focuses on how this theory unfolds in practice and complements the public relations and marketing functions.

2.7 Systems theory

A theory commonly used to define the manner in which an organisation works or functions is systems theory. A close examination of this theory reveals that it operates within and across different departments within an organisation. The following explains and illustrates how systems theory unfolds at both the organisational level and how it is carried through to the various departments. It further illustrates that this theory helps the marketing and public relations function to co-exist and share a synergistic relationship. This section unfolds according to the following structure:

- Background to systems theory
- The definition of systems theory

- Systems hierarchy
- Types of systems
- Components of a system
- Public relations and systems theory
- Marketing and systems theory
- Communication and systems theory

2.7.1 Background to systems theory

The traditional scientific approach and causal thinking aimed to study the interplay of complex variables through reduction to a small number of elementary variables that can be investigated in isolation (Irving, 1999). Systems theory, however has its origins from the work of a German biologist Von Bertalanffy who understood the limitations of the above traditional approach; hence he saw a need to create a revised approach called systems theory. Systems theory developed as an approach which set out to:

- view the whole as opposed to the parts,
- understand the interactions and inter-relationships of the parts within a system, with other systems and with the surrounding environments,
- deal with an increased number of variables and complexity that exists (Irving, 1999).

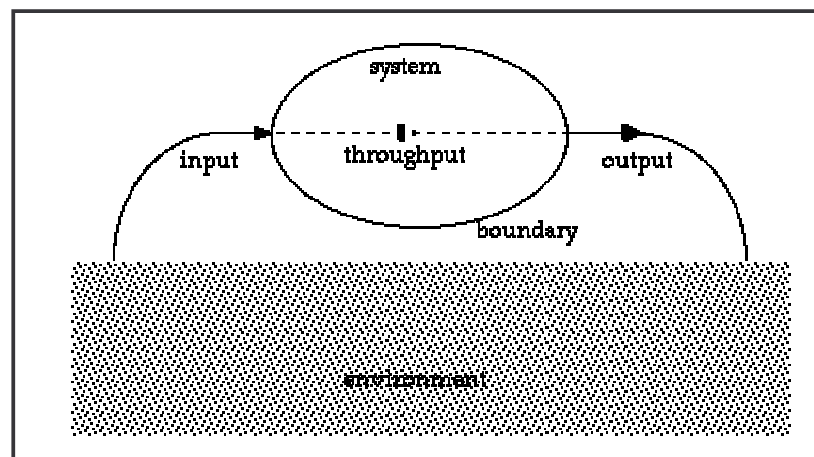
2.7.2 The definition of systems theory

Systems theory comes from the biology based General Systems Theory posited by Ludwig von Bertalanffy in 1968. Littlejohn (1996: 29) defines a system as, “a set of objects or entities that interrelate with one another to form a whole”. Systems can either be closed or open. A closed system has no exchange with its environment. In contrast, an open system exchanges matter and energy with its environment. Most physical systems are considered closed - they do not exchange energy with the environment and they eventually die.

On the other hand most biological and social systems are referred to as open systems (Flint, 1997).

Heylighen (2000) provides an example of systems theory, by explaining that if a living organism is separated from its surroundings it will die shortly because of lack of oxygen, water and food. Organisms are open systems: they cannot survive without continuously exchanging matter and energy with their environment. The peculiarity of open systems is that they interact with other systems outside of themselves. This interaction has two components: input, that which enters the system from the outside, and output, that which leaves the system for the environment. In order to speak about the inside and the outside of a system, we need to be able to distinguish between the system itself and its environment.

Figure 2.6: A system in interaction with its environment



Source: Heylighen (2000)

Systems and environments are in general separated by a boundary. For example, for living systems the skin plays the role of the boundary. The output of a system is in general a direct or indirect result from the input. What comes out needs to have got in first. However, the output is in general quite different from the input: the system is not just a passive tube, but an active processor. For example, the food, drink and oxygen we take in, leave our body as urine, excrement and carbon dioxide. The transformation of input into output by the system is usually called

throughput. Figure 2.6 (p. 49) indicates all the basic components of a system as it is understood in systems theory (Heylighen, 2000).

In view of Figure 2.6 (p. 49) an example can be linked to public relations and marketing within an organisation. The organisation is seen as the system, the public relations department (*the boundary*) being the first of contact in most organisation's. Public relations also involves environmental scanning and provides the results received from the environment to the organisation (*input*). Environmental scanning refers to the scanning for information about events and relationships in an organisation's outside environment, the knowledge of which would assist top management in planning the organisation's future course of action (Steyn & Puth, 2000: 165).

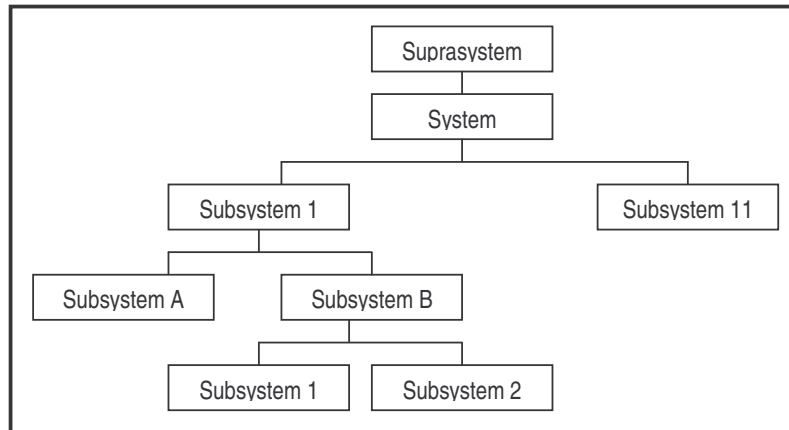
The marketing department transforms the information received from the environment (*throughput*) into some product form. The exporting of that product into the environment is referred to as the output. Broom (2004) adds that public relations' structure and processes are functions of the organisation's sensitivity to its internal publics and the external environment. The public relations function is that of information input about the environment. This information is channeled into organisational decision making (Broom, 2004). Marketing on the other hand, takes the input from public relations and designs a particular product that services and influences the needs of the environment. However, systems tend to be embedded within one another. In other words, one system is part of a higher system. The next section explains the hierarchy of a system.

2.7.3 Systems hierarchy

As explained earlier an organisation is referred to as a system. Within each system are subsystems (departments) that work together for the system (organisation) to function effectively. Littlejohn (1996: 42) highlights in Figure 2.7 (p. 51) the hierarchy of a system.

A system can be a series of levels of increasing complexity. The larger system of which a system is part is called the suprasystem, and the smaller system contained within a system is called the subsystem.

Figure 2.7 Systems hierarchy



Source: Littlejohn (1996: 42)

An example to better explain Figure 2.7 is that of a family. The suprasystem is the extended family, which is part of a larger system of society. Nuclear family units are part of the extended family, and each family unit may have subsystems such as spouses, children, and parent-child units (Littlejohn, 1996: 42). Similarly an organisation is a system with departments (sub-systems). Together with other departments, public relations and marketing are examples of such subsystems. For an organisation to function effectively each department (sub-system) needs to work in harmony with the others.

2.7.4 Types of systems

The rational system and the natural system tend to view the organisation as a closed system, that is, separate from the environment. In contrast to closed systems, in the open system organisation is open to and dependent on the environment, especially, connections with external and internal components (Hong *et al*, n/d).

2.7.4.1 Closed Systems:

Closed systems are systems that are independent of environmental influences. A closed system allows most of its problems to be analyzed with reference to its internal structure and without reference to its external environment. Closed systems focus on internal components such as variables of size, technology, location, ownership, managerial strategies, and leadership style. Therefore, this approach can be applied at the technical level of the organization because it is necessary to reduce uncertainty. A closed system indicates that the organisation is sealed off from all external influencing factors (Johnston & Zawawi, 2004: 46).

2.7.4.2 Open Systems:

All systems are characterised by a combination of parts whose relations make them interdependent. However, the combination of parts making up a system also suggests the bases for the differences among them. Open systems refer to a set of interacting units that endures through time within an established boundary by responding and adjusting to changes from the environment to achieve and maintain goals (Cutlip *et al*, 2000: 229). In this system there is interdependence between several organised units but this interdependence has degrees.

An open system can therefore, be defined as a system of interdependent activities. That is systems are neither a formal structure nor an organic entity. An open system interacts with the environment trading energy and raw materials for goods and services produced by the system. The prominent characteristic of an open system is self-maintenance based on resources from the environment and interaction with the environment (Begley, 1999). Therefore an organisation is an open system and its sub-systems (departments) like public relations, marketing and communication interact with the outside environment in order to trade goods and services produced by the system. Public relations, marketing and communication departments scan the environment, conduct the necessary research and feed it back to the organisation.

2.7.5 Components of a system

The components of a system are the factors or elements that are involved in the processes of a system. They can affect the system and may be affected by it. A component of a system may be a part of the process of more than one subsystem, e.g. structures in an organization, the skin in a living creature, etc. (Levine and Fitzgerald, 1992: 2). Sub-systems or parts of a system are systems at the level below the one of which they are parts. Each part of a living system's subsystem, like the system as a whole, keeps a number of variables in a steady state (Levine and Fitzgerald, 1992:2). A system's function and structure may be studied, analyzed and described through basic subsystems. The following section is an outline of subsystems that developed and integrated with genetic functions.

- Production and technical subsystem. This subsystem is concerned with converting inputs into outputs. It produces the products or services of the organisation (Theaker, 2004: 49).
- Supportive subsystem. Two major functions of concern here are: (a) procuring input and disposing output; and (b) promoting and maintaining good relationships with the between the organization and its environment (for example, public relations, getting a school bond approved, and educating the public to a new curriculum project) (Tanner and Williams, 1981: 20).
- Maintenance subsystem. Activities of this subsystem deal with personnel in the organisation in all facets (e.g. role, arrangements, recruiting, selecting, motivating, disciplining, and socializing). The focus is on maintaining stability of the organization. It is activities that work across the organisation, acting effectively as the organisation's glue, encouraging employees to work together (Theaker, 2004: 49).
- Adaptive subsystem. The functions of this subsystem are designed to insure that the organization can meet the changing needs of the environment (e.g. research, planning, development and so on). Adaptive organizations may include educational organizations that are responsible for the development and testing of theories, the creation of knowledge and for applying information in a limited extent to problems (Tanner and Williams, 1981: 20).

- Managerial subsystem. The function of this subsystem is to coordinate the functions of the other subsystems, settle conflicts among them and hierarchical levels, and relate the total organization to its environment. This subsystem, cuts across all subsystems of the organization in its goal to encourage all the subsystems to obtain a concerted effort to achieve the highest level of functioning of the total system (Levine and Fitzgerald, 1992: 33).

The above discussion therefore proves that all open systems operate effectively if each department or subsystem is inevitably interdependent on the others for the overall success of the organisation. Smith (2002) confirms that a system is a set of organised parts (subsystems). Each sub-system affects other subsystems within an organisation. An example of a boundary sub-system within an organisation is public relations and its interaction with the output subsystem is known as the marketing, sales and distribution departments.

Therefore whether marketing and public relations function independently or not according to systems theory, they are interdependent on each other and therefore have common goals and functions that overlap. Hence, public relations and marketing, although they may be seen as independent departments, they are actually interdependent on each other to meet the overall goals of the organisation.

2.7.6 Public relations and systems theory

The systems approach provides the framework from which the working of all communication theories could be better understood. According to Gregory (1999: 266) one of the principal lines of thinking supporting public relations is systems theory. An open system receives input from its environment that impacts on its desired goals and objectives. In response, feedback within the system causes adjustments in the system's structure and process. Externally, outputs could maintain or change the environment. Within organisation systems the objective is survival and that necessitates adjustments to maintain balance within themselves and their environment. This system has deep roots with cybernetic research and

places emphasis on the role of adaptive feedback that is actively sought in order to change purposefully. The focus is on exploring the system's own changes. The open system model makes use of a two-way symmetrical approach that means that communication occurs in both directions and information changes occur on both sides of the organisation-public relationship. Interaction between the organisation and its environment is not mechanical, but rather an ongoing process where the development of shared meaning and mutual understanding is vital.

Moncur (2006: 95-99) adds that by comparing an organisation to a living organism, which exists both within the system and an environment, a framework can be developed through which to describe and analyse a variety of situations and behaviours, which typically confront public relations practitioners. Based on the notion of interdependency, the systems approach can also be used by practitioners to highlight the role of public relations in positioning an organisation vis-à-vis its stakeholders and its environment, and in managing the various interfaces which arise by focusing on underlying principles.

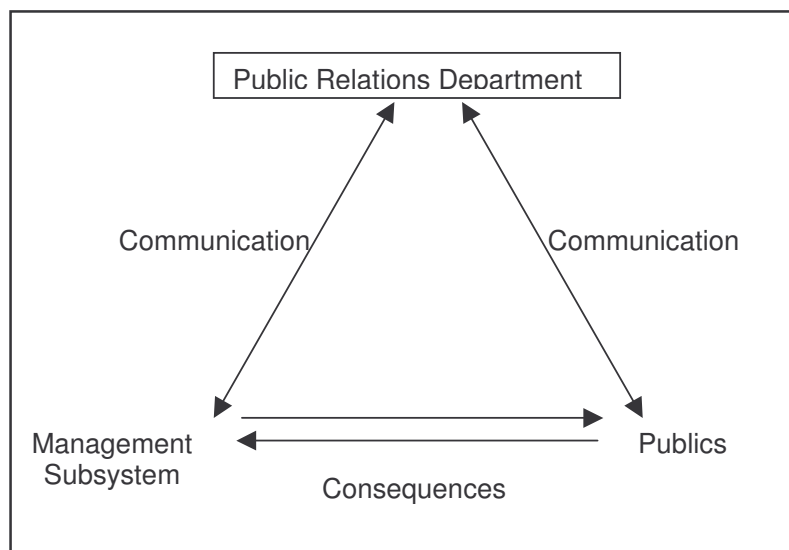
According to Cutlip *et al*, (1994: 206) the systems approach can be applied to public relations because communal, dependent relationships are formed and maintained between organisations and their stakeholders. In public relations the set of interactive units (systems) includes the organisation and the publics with whom it has relationships or with whom it wants to establish relationships. Figure 2.8 (p. 56) highlights the function of public relations within an organisation from a systems view.

From a systems view, public relations professionals are seen as having a 'boundary-spanning' role. Public relations straddles the edges of an organisation liaising between the organisation and its internal subsystems and external environment containing the various publics. In this strategic role, public relations is usually seen to be part of the management subsystem (Theaker, 2004: 50).

This section is of relevance to the study as it emphasises the importance of the public relations function within an organisation according to systems theory. It highlights the fact that implementation of a two-way communication process between

an organisation and its publics is of vital importance for the success of the organisation. The inputs (feedback mechanisms) received by the organisation enable homeostasis in that it provides information required by the organisation to adjust accordingly to the environment. Without inputs, most systems become dysfunctional and eventually cease to output (Jacobs, 2005: 40).

Figure 2.8 The public relations function in an organisation from a systems view



Source: Theaker (2004: 49)

2.7.7 Marketing and systems theory

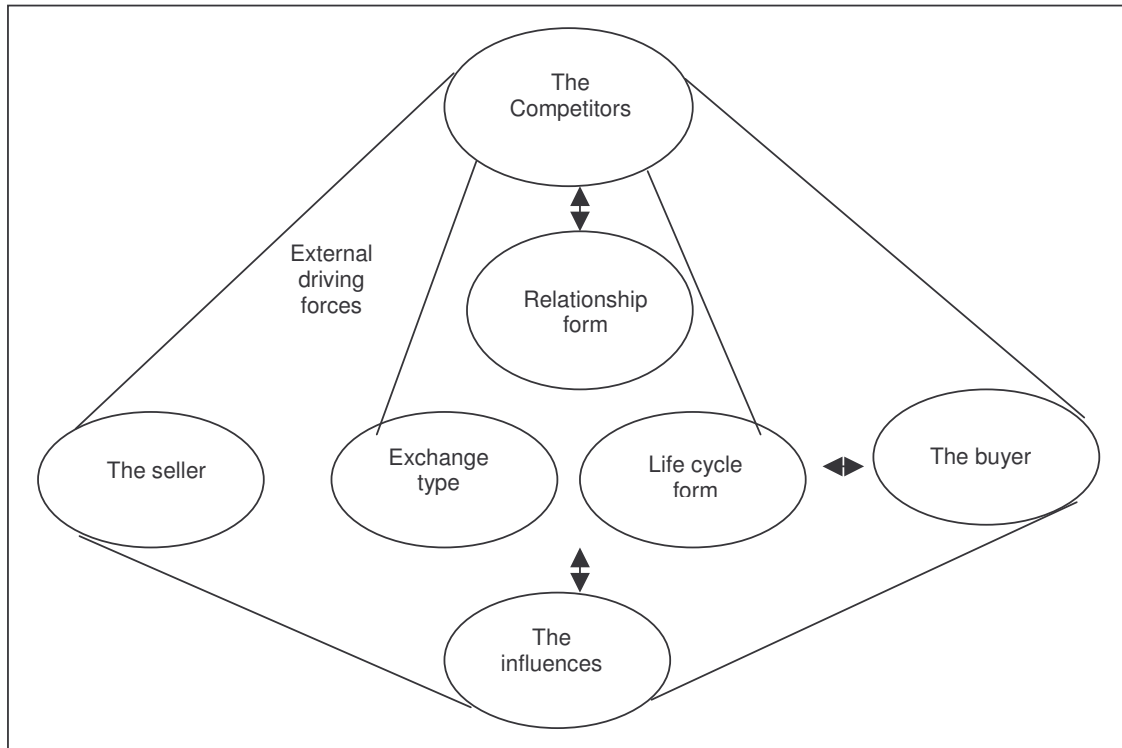
Etzel *et al*, (2001: 13) affirm that marketers have long recognised that identifying the needs of customers and satisfying them can be profitable. However, it is only recently that organisations have made a concerted effort at building relationships. This was the dawn of the new marketing thinking - 'relationship marketing'. The demand for a relationship based marketing framework is growing. The market for customer relationship management (CRM) systems and concepts is among the fastest growing industries. Relationships are becoming the backbone of any competitive business and are the key to market success.

Hougaard & Bjerre (2002: 52) support the idea of marketing as a system of exchanges encompassing width and depth at the same time. Relationship marketing places emphasis on the maintenance of long-term relationships between the organisation, the government, the public, the suppliers of raw material, the employees, and current and potential customers (Cant *et al*, 2006: 15).

Customer relationships do not exist in a vacuum. They are exposed to various influences from within the relationship as well as from the outside of the relationship. This forms a dynamic influence system that stems from internal and external actors who are the motivating forces of the relationship and who determine its structure, stability and economic strength (Hougaard & Bjerre, 2002: 141). Figure 2.9 (p. 58) identifies the categories of driving forces behind all customer relationships.

According to Hougaard & Bjerre (2002: 142) the external driving forces are the influences on the relationship that emanate from publics who either participate in the relationship or have a vested interest in affecting it. The internal driving forces are the factors that influence the basic characteristics of the relationship by either strengthening or weakening it. The driving forces comprise four distinct participant categories: (1) the direct participants (seller and buyer), (2) third parties in the form of competitors and influences, (3) the structure of exchange (public relations, communication and marketing departments), (4) the exchange variables in terms of the relationship formed and the customer life cycle (output and feedback received from the customer).

Figure 2.9 Driving forces behind customer relationships



Source: Hougaard & Bjerre (2002: 142)

Ludicke (2006: 53) adds that the main focus of marketing is based on relationships. According to the American Marketing Association (2004) marketing is now seen as an organisational function and as a set of process for creating, communicating and delivering value to customers and for managing customer relationships in ways that benefit the organisation and its stakeholders.

Systems theory confirms that in order for customer relations to be successful, marketing is required to identify the driving forces (internal and external) behind customer relationships as discussed by Hougaard & Bjerre (2002: 142). For this to be accomplished it is vital for marketing to work closely with public relations since public relations also involves building and maintaining relationships between an organisation and its publics. The researcher is therefore led to believe that the concept of relationship marketing ties in with the aims and goals of public relations

which is to build and maintain relationships. This is yet another factor that contributes to the interdependency of both public relations and marketing.

2.7.8 Communication and systems theory

According to Thayer (1987: 105) the communication system consists of the individual together with that which is currently learned from the environment or from another individual or organisation. There are two characteristics of human communication systems: (1) the components of communication systems are interdependent and (2) human communication systems are historical. Therefore the components of a specific human communication are never the same in other communication systems.

According to Jansen & Steinberg (1991: 41) the systems approach offers the most complete description of communication from a process perspective. Griffin (1997:6) states that systems theory refuses to treat any conversation as an isolated event. Therefore, according to the systems model a human communication system is seen as a set of interdependent people who work together to adapt to a changing environment.

Jacobs (2005: 33) believes that an open system approach model makes use of a two-way symmetric approach, highlighting that communication occurs in both directions and information changes can occur on both sides (organisation-public relationship). He adds that the interaction between the organisation and its environment is not mechanical but rather an ongoing process where the development of shared meaning and mutual understanding is important. This follows a cyclical process where information is given meaning by each participant in the communication process.

Based on the above discussion the researcher believes that all communication functions (communication, marketing and public relations) should work closely together for a successful communication process between the organisation and its publics (internal and external). Organisations are represented by personnel from

various departments. Such personnel (especially within the communication, marketing and public relations departments) interact with the outside environment, and provide the necessary information to the organisation in order for the organisation to adapt to the changing environment.

2.8 Conclusion

The relationship between the public relations and marketing functions has always been an ambiguous and controversial one. Chapter two highlighted the separate and integrated roles of public relations and marketing management.

The definitions of both public relations and marketing convey the essence of mutual accommodation, rather than one-sided imposition of a viewpoint. The main focus of both functions is to maintain and build harmonious relationships with the organisations and their publics (both internal and external).

The literature review revealed that although public relations and marketing may be seen as two disciplines that work best when they are treated as distinct functions, they can achieve synergy when working together as equals towards the same goal as highlighted in systems theory. It is however evident that despite the disputes on the relationship between public relations and marketing, they are interdependent on each other as a result of their overlapping functions and the need for their close working relationship for successful organisational communication to occur. The systems theory refuses to treat any conversation as an isolation event. Therefore, according to the systems model a human communication system is seen as a set of interdependent people who work together to adapt to a changing environment.

Systems theory defines the manner in which a department works or functions within an organisation. A close examination of this theory revealed that all departments within an organisation have to work together in order to fulfil the overall goals of the organisation. Therefore, intimate contact between the two disciplines is necessary for communication in an organisation to be achieved effectively. Public relations and

marketing may be understood as separate yet complementary functions. Depending on the nature of the organisation, public relations may serve as either a complement or a counterbalance to marketing activities.

The literature review also revealed the empowerment of public relations and marketing as a management function. Grunig *et al* (2002: 143) believes that the post modern view of strategic management disciplines (such as marketing, finance, human resources and public relations) affirms their disciplinary identities. Public relations and marketing both add value in this perspective because they bring a different set of problems and possible solutions into the strategic management arena. Marketing management is viewed as a process of planning, organising, leading and controlling marketing activities. This process is implemented to attain marketing goals and objectives effectively and efficiently.

Relationship marketing is yet another factor that contributes to the close working relationship between public relations and marketing. It is evident that the new focus on marketing is based on building personal long-term bonds with customers so that customers and the organisations benefit and meet their respective objectives. However, customer relationships do not exist in a vacuum. They are exposed to various influences from within the relationship as well as from the outside of the relationship. This exposure forms a dynamic influence system that stems from internal and external actors who are the motivating forces of the relationship and who determine its structure, stability and economic strength. However, public relations also centre on building and maintaining relationships between an organisation and its internal and external publics. From a systems view, public relations practitioners are also seen as having a boundary role liaising between the organisation and its internal subsystems and external environment containing the various publics. This highlights yet another reason for the synergistic relationship between public relations and marketing as they seem to share common aims and objectives.

Evident in the literature review was the aspect of marketing and public relations being cross-functional activities. The role of public relations has always been middle-pivoted between the organisation and its clients and employees. Public relations must therefore be familiar with organisational needs as well as the dynamics and needs of internal and external publics. Zikmund & Amico (2001: 20), explain that “marketing personnel do not work in a vacuum, isolated from other company activities”. Rather, the work of marketers affects other departments within an organisation. Managers must integrate and coordinate marketing functions with other corporate functions so that they are all directed toward achieving the same objectives. Rensburg & Cant (2003:116) add that a shift towards integrated communication (public relations, marketing and communication functions) is also driven by downsizing and re-engineering through the consolidation of departments and staff reductions. In view of the research it is therefore evident that public relations and marketing do not exist in a vacuum, instead they both are cross-functional activities that function with other departments within the organisation in order to achieve overall organisational goals and objectives.

Having discussed the role of public relations within the marketing field, it is significant that the tools of public relations add value to marketing and are used extensively in the marketing field. The literature has also indicated that many companies now want their public relations departments to manage all their activities with a view to marketing the company and improving the bottom line. Some companies are setting up special units called *marketing public relations* to support corporate and product promotion, and image making, directly. This is yet another development that allows public relations and marketing to be interdependent on each other. Although public relations and marketing may be viewed as different functions within the organisation, their overlapping activities allow these functions to be housed under a common department. With effective and successful communication being the essential function of every organisation it is vital for public relations and marketing to work closely in order to ensure the overall success of the organisation.

Chapter three presents the research methodology adopted in this study.

CHAPTER THREE

Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the research methodology employed in this study. It explains the necessary research steps, the instruments used to gather data and the procedures followed in the administration and co-ordination of the research instrument.

3.2 Type of research conducted

According to Leedy & Ormrod (2001: 101), quantitative research is used to answer questions about relationships among measured variables with the purpose of explaining, predicting, and controlling phenomena. This approach is also called the traditional, experimental, or positivist approach. On the other hand, qualitative research is typically used to answer questions about the complex nature of phenomena, with the purpose of describing and understanding the phenomena from the participants' point of view. The qualitative approach is also known as the interpretative, constructivist, or postpositivist approach.

Qualitative research studies serve one or more of the following purposes:

- Description: They can reveal the nature of certain situations, settings, processes, relationships, systems, or people.
- Interpretation: They enable a researcher to (a) gain insights about the nature of a particular phenomenon, (b) develop new concepts or theoretical perspectives about the phenomenon, and/or (c) discover the problems that exist within the phenomenon.

- Verification: They allow a researcher to test the validity of certain assumptions, claims, theories, or generalizations within real-world contexts (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001: 148).

According to Melville *et al* (1996: 4) descriptive research is where a specific situation is studied either to see if it gives rise to any general theories or to see if existing theories are borne out by the specific situation. This study is conducted using qualitative research techniques and the descriptive survey method is used. However, specific aspects of the questionnaire have been presented quantitatively to facilitate the ease of obtaining results.

A brief overview of various research techniques is provided in the following paragraphs.

3.3 Data collection methods

Data collection involves applying the measuring instrument to the sample selected for the investigation. On the basis of visual, auditory and tactile observations and perceptions, responses of people, actions and events are classified. However, research aspires to truthful representations of the social world and observations need to be augmented by more reliable and valid measuring instruments such as scales, questionnaires and observation schedules. If properly constructed and validated over time, such instruments assist in collecting data that are more likely to be reliable (Mouton, 2002: 67). Researchers often use multiple forms of data in any single study. Following are some of the forms of data collection methods that will be used in this study.

3.3.1 Interviews

Interviews can provide a great deal of useful information. According to Leedy & Ormrod (2001: 159), a researcher can ask questions related to any of the following:

- Facts (e.g., biographical information)
- People's beliefs about the facts
- Feelings
- Motives
- Present and past behaviours
- Standards for behaviour (i.e., what people think should be done in a particular situation)
- Conscious reasons for actions or feelings (e.g., why people think that engaging in a particular behaviour is desirable or undesirable)

The interviews in a qualitative study are rarely as structured as interviews conducted in a quantitative study. Interviews in qualitative study are either open-ended or semi-structured, in the latter case revolving around a few central questions. Unstructured interviews are more flexible and more likely to yield information that the researcher had not planned to ask for (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001: 159).

Johnson & Christensen (2003: 184) further identify the three types of qualitative interviews as:

- informal conversational: that is spontaneous and loosely structured,
- interview guide approach: an approach that is a more structured type of interview including an interview protocol listing the open-ended questions, the questions can be asked in any order by the interviewer and the wording of questions can be changed by the interviewer if necessary,
- standardized open-ended: these questions are written on an interview protocol, and are asked in exact order, and the wording of the questions cannot be changed.

The College of Professional Studies (n/d), elaborates on the advantages and disadvantages of the interviews.

Advantages

- Flexible in that it permits in-depth questioning
- Allows for clarification of confusion/misunderstanding by both respondent and researcher
- Allows for information about the context in which the respondent answered
- Provides access to people who can't complete a questionnaire
- High response rate

Disadvantages

- Time consuming and expensive
- Necessity of training of interviewers
- Hard to tabulate responses
- Respondents have less anonymity

3.1.1.1 Face to face and telephone interviews

Face-to-face interviews have the distinct advantage of enabling the researcher to establish rapport with potential participants and therefore gain their cooperation. Such interviews yield the highest response rates in survey research. Personal interviews also allow the researcher to clarify ambiguous answers and seek follow-up information. Such interviews, although time consuming and expensive, are the most valuable and effective way of collecting informative (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001: 197).

3.3.2 Questionnaire

A questionnaire is a data collection instrument that is completed by the research participants. Data sometimes lie buried deep within the minds or within the attitudes, feelings, or reactions of men and women. As with oil beneath the sea, the first problem

is to devise a tool to explore below the surface. A commonplace instrument for observing data beyond the physical reach of the observer is the questionnaire (Leedy, 1993: 187). These questions are either open-ended or closed-ended questions. The open-ended questions method allows respondents to answer these types of questions in their own words, no alternatives are given. The respondents are free to express their feelings and thoughts and provide reasons for their answers. The disadvantage with these types of questions is that they are difficult to interpret, tabulate and summarise in a research report. The closed-ended questions method is easier for the respondent to answer, as alternatives are provided. The most common closed-ended question is the Yes/No option. The disadvantage here is that it limits the respondents as it confines people to the question.

Closely allied to the questionnaire is the structured interview. Interviews should be considered as professional situations that demand equally professional planning and conduct on the part of the interviewer. The questionnaire however, demands considerable thought and planning for its effective administration. Equally careful planning is necessary for the interview (Leedy, 1993: 192).

The above discussion has motivated the researcher to choose face-to-face interviews and a well structured questionnaire using both open-ended and closed-ended questions as the most effective way to collect data.

3.4 Pilot testing

Pilot testing involves trying out a questionnaire or other research on a small group of individuals. Before using a questionnaire for substantive research, it is essential to obtain information by pilot testing the questionnaire on persons similar to those who will be asked to complete it as part of the substantive research (Schwab, 1998: 63).

A questionnaire was designed and a pilot test was administered to two marketing and two public relations managers.

3.4.1 Results of pilot test

The results of the test were as follows:

- X One respondent felt that there should be consistency with certain words to avoid misunderstanding;
- X A respondent felt that some questions were vague and needed more clarification;
- X To include more closed-ended questions as respondents indicated these were easier to answer and were less time consuming.

The researcher ensured that all the suggestions were included when the final questionnaire was formulated.

3.5 The sample

According to Leedy (1993: 187). One of the important characteristics of a descriptive survey is the population for the study. The population must be carefully chosen, clearly defined, and specifically delimited in order to set precise parameters for ensuring discreteness of the population. The results of the survey are no more trustworthy than the quality of the population or the representatives of the sample. Sampling procedures are of paramount importance and become critical factors in the success of the study (Leedy, 1993: 188). A certain kind of social entity, namely: individuals, groups, organisations, social objects, social actions, interventions and social events, needs to be identified. This process does not identify the actual population of entities in the real world, however a representation of the population is selected as a 'unit of analysis' (Mouton, 2002: 67).

According to Neuman (2000:196), qualitative researchers focus less on a sample's representatives for drawing a probability sample. Instead qualitative research focuses on how the sample or small collection of cases, units, or activities will enhance what other researchers learn about the processes of social life in a specific context. Qualitative research tends to collect a second type of sampling known as non-probability sampling. Table 3.1 (p. 69) highlights the different types of non-probability samples viz.

haphazard, quota, purposive, snowball, deviant case, sequential and theoretical.

Table 3.1 Types of non-probability samples

Type of Sample	Principle
Haphazard	Get any cases in any manner that is convenient.
Quota	Get a present number of cases in each of several predetermined categories that will reflect the diversity of the population, using haphazard methods.
Purposive	Get all possible cases that fit particular criteria, using various methods.
Snowball	Get cases using referrals from one or a few cases, and then referrals from those cases, and so forth.
Deviant Case	Get cases that substantially differ from the dominant pattern (a special type of purposive sample)
Sequential	Get cases until there is no additional information or new characteristics (often used with other sampling methods).
Theoretical	Get cases that will help reveal features that are theoretically important about a particular setting/topic.

Source : Neuman (2000:196)

The research sample chosen for this study was purposive, as all the respondents were selected by the researcher according to the size of the company, their status in society, the existence of a public relations and marketing department , a representation of different sectors of industry and their willingness to participate in the study. Seven companies were chosen as the sample of this study. The target population selected for the investigation were based on the following business sectors: manufacturing, financial services, beverages, retail, communication and sport. The companies represented these sectors and were selected based on the size of the company, and their willingness to participate within the research.

The nature of this dissertation pertained to PR and marketing, therefore the researcher was led to choose only marketing and public relations managers as the unit of analysis for each company. The researcher found them to be directly involved with the respective areas as well as experts in their fields.

A profile of each company is presented below.

3.5.1 Amalgamated Beverage Industries Ltd (ABI)

Situated in Phoenix Industrial Park, Durban North, ABI is has been in existence for the past 25 years in the soft drink beverage industry and is committed to building better relationships by making positive contributions to communities, the environment and employees.

The company's core skills lie in the manufacture, trade marketing, sales and distribution of a variety of the world's leading soft drink brands, including carbonated soft drinks, sports and energy drinks, bottled water, fruit juices and iced tea.

Vision

To be a vibrant organisation where everyone believes that good enough is never good enough, where they challenge themselves to reach further knowing that together they achieve more.

Mission

- ABI is dedicated to fostering stronger relationships with ABI's partners.
- The company strives to surpass their audience's expectations in fresh and unexpected ways.
- ABI's deep local roots allow them to create closer bonds with their environment and the neighbouring communities (ABI Annual Report, 2005)

3.5.2 Toyota Motor Corporation

Located in Isipingo, Prospecton, Toyota Motor Corporation engages in the production and sale of automobiles worldwide. Its Automotive Operations segment includes the design, manufacture, assembly, and sale of subcompact and compact cars, minivehicles, hybrid, midsize, luxury, sports, and specialty cars; recreational and sport-utility vehicles; pickup trucks, minivans, trucks, and commercial vehicles; and related parts and accessories.

In addition to its automotive operations and financial services operations, Toyota is involved in other operations, such as information technology and telecommunication, including certain intelligent transport systems, Gazoo.com, and prefabricated housing. Intelligent transport systems include information technology-based systems encompassing car multimedia systems, onboard intelligent systems, advanced transportation systems and transportation infrastructure, and logistics systems.

Vision

- Prosperity for all stakeholders through world competitiveness and continuous growth.
- The company is also focused on innovation into the future; and a passion to create a better society.

Mission

- Toyota South Africa is a company dedicated and committed to ensuring that products are of outstanding quality, value for money and instill pride of ownership.
- The company is devoted to developing and maintaining a dealer network which will provide superior service and excellence in customer care.

- Fair and progressive employment practices and the development, in accordance with the Company's requirements, of the skills and potential of all its employees. Keeping abreast of international best practices relating to vehicle manufacturing, distribution and information technologies (www.toyota.co.za).

3.5.3 Sentech

Sentech began operations in 1992 under the auspices of the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC), as a signal distributor for all transmissions related to the SABC. This mandate included services provided to M-Net, Radio 702, Radio Ciskei, Transkei and Bophuthatswana Broadcasting Corporation.

In August 1995, the Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA) recommended that Sentech be split from the SABC and that Sentech become a public company, with all signal distribution facilities of the former TBVC states and staff also being transferred to Sentech. The IBA report was approved by Parliament in March 1996 and a Sentech Act to implement these measures was adopted by Parliament in November 1996.

Sentech now operates as a commercial state owned enterprise with its own board of directors. Sentech is a broadband network business accommodating narrowband functionality on a common platform, supplying communication solutions and services to wholesale and retail customers in chosen markets in South Africa and the rest of the continent.

Vision

- Sentech will be a leader in providing world-class broadband communication.

Mission

There are six imperatives that form the Sentech mission.

- Establish a unified next generation broadband digital platform to provide world-class communication solutions and services to our customers.
- Define our market niches in which we will be the recognised brand leader.
- Create and market innovative, value-adding products that satisfy the needs of our customers.
- Align our internal processes and systems to enable us to be customer-centric, taking cognisance of regulatory boundaries and fair accounting practices.
- Encourage innovation, superior performance and self-development of our staff, who should be shareholders in a learning and caring company.
- Earn market related returns and attract additional shareholders and investors to enable capital investment in order to grow the business (www.sentec.co.za).

3.5.4 Amalgamated Banks of South Africa Ltd (ABSA)

Founded in 1986 and first listed on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange in the same year, Amalgamated Banks of South Africa Ltd (ABSA) is the registered controlling company of a number of banks and an investment holding company in South Africa. Its main operating subsidiaries are ABSA Bank (formerly trading as Allied Bank, United Bank, Trust Bank, Volkskas Bank, Bankfin, ABSA Merchant and Corporate Bank Division and the Treasury and International Division); ABSA Trust; ABSA Insurance Brokers; ABSA Insurance Company; ABSA Life; ABSA Consultants and Actuaries; ABSA Fund Managers and ABSA Properties Holdings; and ABSA Growth Network.

ABSA is involved in the whole spectrum of domestic and overseas banking as well as long and short term insurance, property, retail and corporate finance. The Absa Group is one of South Africa's largest financial services organizations, serving personal, commercial, and corporate customers in South Africa, with offices in selected markets in

the United Kingdom, Germany, the United States, China, Singapore, Hong Kong, and elsewhere in Africa.

Vision

- To be a customer-focused financial services group in targeted market segments.

Mission

- Being the leading financial services group serving all our stakeholders (www.absa.co.za).

3.5.5 Sanlam Limited (SANLAM)

South African National Life Assurance Company (Sanlam) is an independent mutual life assurance company without shareholders. The organisation is one of the largest insurance companies in Africa. Although unlisted itself, it is a major shareholder of many of the listed companies on South Africa's only stock exchange, the Johannesburg Stock Exchange (JSE).

Vision

- To be the leader in wealth creation.
- The vision clearly defines the ultimate goal of Sanlam to be a group of businesses focused on building, preserving and growing wealth for all our clients.
- Building wealth is about providing our clients with access to savings and credit products.

- Preserving wealth is our traditional business of providing guaranteed products for investment market risks and contingency risks such as life, health, property, casualty and liability.
- Growing wealth comprises investment management through various investment vehicles.

Mission

Sanlam, is dedicated to:

- growing shareholder value through innovation and superior performance.
- leading with courage, serving with pride, respecting others and acting with integrity and accountability (www.sanlam.co.za).

3.5.6 Natal Sharks Rugby Union

Situated in Walter Gilbert Road, The Natal Rugby Union was formed in 1890. Their area of specialisation is sport entertainment and they are focused on maintaining the support of the stakeholders and supporters.

Vision

- To present a range of quality Sharkertainment programs and reach all communities who follow and support sport and rugby in particular .
- To use advanced communication technology and synergistic media applications to extend the brand globally.
- To be the sporting and apparel brand of choice.

Mission

- To encourage excellence, professionalism and sound business practice when dealing with all stakeholders.
- To develop world-class rugby players as role models throughout the communities that the brand serves.
- To continuously grow the loyal supporter base through relevant and appropriate match day content (Sweet, 1991: 2)

3.5.7 Chatsworth Centre

The Centre is situated on hilly terrain about 15 km from the centre of Durban and is bordered by the Umlaas River in the South and the Umhlatuzana River in the North. Chatsworth Centre is undoubtedly part of the rich and diverse fabric of Chatsworth, playing an active and productive role in the community.

The success of Chatsworth Centre is directly related to the successful leasing of retail space and the success of its tenants. Chatsworth Centre is supported by the local community, who are committed to community issues and its environment.

Mission

- To exceed tenant and shopper expectations by being responsive to their needs, and delivering carefully planned and rationalised communication and marketing strategies.

Objectives

- To increase tenant sales by implementing and incorporating relevant sales driven

activities within the promotion.

- To increase foot traffic in the centre and spend per head.
- To firmly position the centre and maintain “top of mind” awareness with shoppers.
- To develop a strong bond with the community.
- To maintain the centre’s position in the community as a “meeting place” (Chatsworth Centre Annual Report, 2004).

The researcher has excluded details of the respondents in order to maintain individual confidentiality. Table 3.2 (p. 78) is an indication of portfolios of the respondents as they were in a position to answer questions about public relations and marketing on behalf of the organisation. The researcher found the respondents to be directly involved with the respective field of study.

Table 3.2 Details of respondents

Name of	Portfolio of the respondents	Department
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company	interviewed	
Company 1	PR Manager	Marketing
Company 2	Communication Manager	Communication
Company 3	Director: PR and marketing	PR and marketing
Company 4	Manager: Communication	Group marketing and communication
Company 5	Manager: Group marketing	Group marketing
Company 6	General Manager: Marketing and communication	Marketing and Communication
Company 7	Marketing Manager	Marketing and Communication

3.6 Data collection procedure

Letters were sent out to PR and Marketing Managers of the seven companies highlighting the nature of the study and requesting permission for their organisation to participate in the research (see annexure 1). These letters were accompanied by a letter from the researcher's supervisors (see annexure 2). As soon as correspondence from the companies was received, each company was faxed and emailed with a questionnaire and appointments were set up to conduct face to face interviews (see annexure 3).

3.7 The pre-notification letter

The purpose of the pre-notification letter (annexure 1) was to inform the potential sample group about the nature of the research. According to Walonick (2004) using pre-notification letters are essential to establish the legitimacy of a survey, thereby affirming the respondent's trust. The pre-notification letter also builds an expectation and reduces the possibility that a potential respondent might disregard the survey when it arrives.

3.8 Structure of questionnaire design

The researcher felt that the questionnaire be specifically designed to elicit the information regarding the relationship between public relations and marketing. The intention of each question asked during the interview is discussed below.

Questions one and two were asked to determine the company's area of specialisation and the vision and mission of each company.

Question three was structured to determine whether the marketing and public relations departments function as departments dependent on other departments or as independent departments. Question three also determines the number of staff within these departments and attempts to ascertain the level at which these departments operate with management.

The purpose of questions four to eight was to establish whether the marketing and public relations departments within the companies are interdependent.

Questions nine and ten were likert type questions. This refers to a five-point scale used to determine an answer ranging from strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree to strongly disagree.

These questions were asked to get a broader understanding of the level at which the public relations and marketing functions may overlap. The question also helps determine the degree at which these functions should be integrated.

Questions eleven and twelve were open-ended questions with the intention of establishing if the structure of the marketing and public relations departments has changed over the past years. These questions also investigate if the public relations and marketing strategies and objectives differ from one another.

The intention of question thirteen was to ascertain the decision-making capacity the managers of both the public relations and marketing departments have in relation to top

level management.

Questions fourteen, fifteen and sixteen were posed to determine if public relations and marketing graduates going into industry are fully equipped with the necessary skills required for both public relations and marketing as a merged department. These questions also investigate the extent to which tertiary institutions can assist in equipping students with the necessary skills required by industry. Lastly, the questions were designed to establish if organisations provide any support or internal training to public relations and marketing practitioners to keep them abreast with the current trends and practices in their fields.

The objective of question seventeen was to establish an overview of the budget and to determine if it has affected the structure of the public relations and marketing departments over the past five years.

The above questions assisted in identifying pertinent issues related to the current relationship between public relations and marketing.

3.9 Problems encountered with the interviews

3.9.1 Time constraints: due to time constraints responses during the interviews were not always substantial. The researcher felt that repeat visits and / or telephonic interviews were necessary to obtain more substantive responses.

3.9.2 Difficulty in interviewing the right person: for example, an interview with the General Manager for marketing and public relations of company 5 was arranged in Johannesburg, but the General Manager could not attend the interview session. The PR manager was requested to attend the interview session and this limited the research process as it only provided the views of the PR manager.

3.10 Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to examine whether marketing and public relations departments share a synergistic relationship. Letters were sent out to public relations and marketing managers of the seven companies highlighting the nature of the study and requesting permission for their organization to participate in the research (see annexure 1). These letters were accompanied by a letter from the researcher's supervisors (see annexure 2). As soon as correspondence from the companies was received, each company was faxed and emailed with a questionnaire and appointments were set up to conduct face to face interviews (see annexure 3). The data received provided a discussion of the results, allowing the researcher to analyse the responses in the following chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

Analysis and Discussions

4.1 Introduction

The results of the study are presented in this chapter. The findings of the study are then compared to the literature review as well as the systems theory model to determine whether marketing and public relations functions have overlapping goals and functions.

4.2 Report and analysis of responses to questionnaire

4.2.1 The positioning of marketing within the hierarchy of the organisation

Question 3.1: How is the marketing function positioned in the hierarchy of your organisation? If interdependent, please explain.

Company 1 indicated that marketing is viewed as a department interdependent on sales, communication and public relations. The overall success of the department depends on communication and relationships built and maintained between the organisation and its target audiences. To maintain this it is essential for the departments influencing communication and having contact with target audiences, to work together. Therefore, the marketing department, made up of public relations, communication and marketing, reports to the general manager who reports to the marketing director. This places public relations and marketing at management level.

Company 2 pointed out that marketing is a function dependent on public relations and communication. Marketing, public relations and communication, complement each other as they share similar research techniques and communication tools. This leads to the integration of these functions, and as a result they fall under a common department. This department is known as the marketing and communication

department. The communication manager reports to the vice president of marketing who in turn reports to the chief executive officer (CEO).

Company 3 viewed marketing as a department interdependent on public relations and communication. Public relations and marketing play an important role within the communication department as both functions involve communication with target audiences. Therefore, these departments are compelled to work together in order to communicate efficiently and successfully to both internal and external publics. This merged department is known as the public relations and marketing department. The director of this department reports directly to the CEO of the organisation.

Company 4 explained that marketing is seen as an interdependent department within the company. The marketing, communication and public relations departments have merged resulting in combined resources, skills and facilities. This merged department is called group marketing and communication. The director of this department reports directly to the CEO.

Company 5 viewed marketing as an interdependent function, working with other departments within the organisation (for example, the finance department). Public relations and marketing are viewed as two major departments within the organisation that are distinct and work best when separated. The marketing department is known as group marketing. However, the organisation is currently undergoing restructuring and a decision to merge the marketing and the public relations departments, is being discussed. Although both departments may operate independently the managers of both the public relations and marketing department report to the director of group marketing and communication.

Company 6 viewed marketing as an interdependent department. Due to the overlapping of functions between marketing and public relations the decision has been taken to merge both departments into a marketing and communication department. This department reports directly to the CEO.

Company 7 viewed marketing as an interdependent department, incorporated with public relations and communication. Due to the overlapping of job functions of public relations, marketing and communication, the decision was taken that one person (the marketing officer) shares three functions (public relations, marketing and communication) resulting in combined resources, skills and facilities. The national marketing manager reports to the managing director who reports to the CEO of the organisation.

Summary

The majority of respondents (six out of seven companies) indicated that their marketing departments are interdependent on the public relations and/or communication department. This supports the view of Zikmund & Amico (2001: 20), who believe that managers must integrate and coordinate marketing functions with other corporate functions so that they are all directed towards achieving the same objectives. However, one company indicated that its marketing department is interdependent on other departments (excluding public relations). This organisation believes that both public relations and marketing are two important functions with an organisation and if joined, may not function to their maximum. However, although they may operate as separate departments they do fall under a common director overseeing marketing, public relations and communication. Inevitably these functions are looked at holistically by senior management to ensure that they are working towards the common goals of the organisation although they are operating independently. The results also indicated that five companies' marketing and public relations managers/directors report directly to the CEO of the organisation, while two companies indicated that their marketing and public relations managers report to the marketing director who represents public relations and marketing at senior management level.

4.2.2 The positioning of public relations within the hierarchy of the organisation

Question 3.2: How is the public relations function positioned in the hierarchy of your organisation? If interdependent, please explain.

Company 1 viewed public relations as an interdependent department incorporated within the marketing division. The overall success on the department depends of communication and the relationships built and maintained between the organisation and its target audiences. To maintain the above it is essential for the departments influencing communication and having contact with target audiences, to work together. Therefore, the public relations department is made up of the marketing and communication functions. This department reports to the general manager for marketing who reports to the marketing director. The marketing director sits on the board of directors. This affirms the representation of public relations and marketing at management level.

Company 2 has public relations as an interdependent department. It is a sub-division of the marketing division. Marketing, public relations and communication, complement each other as they share similar research techniques and communication tools. This leads to the integration of these functions, and as the result they fall under a common department. This department is known as the marketing department. The communication manager reports to the vice-president of marketing who in turn reports to the CEO.

Company 3 viewed public relations as interdependent on the marketing and communication departments. Public relations and marketing plays an important role within the communication department as both functions cultivate communication with target audiences. Therefore these departments are compelled to work together in order to communicate efficiently and successfully to both internal and external publics. This merged department is known as the public relations and marketing department. The director of this department reports directly to the CEO of the organisation.

Company 4 has merged the public relations, communication and marketing department resulting in combined resources, skills and facilities as a result of their interdependence on each other. This merged department is called group marketing and communication. The director of this department reports directly to the CEO.

Company 5 currently views public relations as an independent department. However, this could change as all departments are in the process of being restructured. The public relations and marketing are currently viewed as two major departments within the organisation that are distinct and work best when separated. The public relations functions currently fall under the communication department. However, the organisation is currently undergoing restructuring and the decision to merge marketing and public relations departments is under discussion. Although both departments may operate independently the managers of both the public relations/communication and marketing department report to the director of group marketing and communication.

Company 6 indicated that public relations is fully integrated with the marketing functions as a result of their interdependencies. For the successful functioning of the organisation with regard to communicating, building and maintaining relationships with the target audience it is necessary for both functions to be housed in one department, with a common manager. However, there are different people that carry out the respective marketing and public relations functions. Both functions are incorporated into the marketing and communication department. This department has a general manager who reports directly to the CEO.

Company 7 viewed public relations as an interdependent function, incorporated with marketing and communication as this is of vital importance for the overall success of the organisation. Due to the overlapping of job functions of public relations, marketing and communication, the decision was taken that public relations, marketing and communication be incorporated into one department resulting in combined resources, skills and facilities. This department is known as the marketing department. The national marketing manager of the organisation reports to the managing director who reports to the CEO of the organisation.

Summary

It emerged that the majority of the respondents (six) confirmed that the public relations department is interdependent of marketing and communication to ensure the overall success of the organisation. This is in support of Stroh & Jaatinen (2001: 156) who maintain that communication management helps the organisation achieve its goals by identifying and building healthy relationships with the strategic constituencies and it facilitates interaction. The quality of these relationships determines the effectiveness of the public relations and marketing functions in the organisation. Horizontal communication across departments and organisational borders is necessary to achieve creativity and innovation.

4.2.3 Staff complement within the department of public relations and marketing

Question 3.3: What is the staff complement within these departments?
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The specific results relating to the staff compliment within the public relations and marketing departments are set out in Annexure 4. It is clear that the number of staff working in either public relations or marketing departments varies in size depending on the organisation. The services of part-time employees, as well as sub-contractors are also called on in certain organisations. This, however, is dependent on the nature of the companies as well as the job descriptions of the public relations and marketing practitioners within the company. One company indicated that due to downsizing, one person shares two functions (public relations and marketing), while another company indicated that although public relations and marketing may be housed in the same department, there are different staff members carrying out the respective functions. However, these staff members report to a common manager/director.

4.2.4 The involvement of public relations within marketing campaigns

Question 4: Is public relations involved from the inception stage of any marketing campaign?

The majority of the respondents (five) indicated that the public relations department is involved from the inception stage of all marketing campaigns. This confirms the view of Armstrong & Kotler (2000: 430-432) who assert that many companies now want their public relations departments to manage all their activities with the purpose of marketing the company and improving the bottom line. However, two companies also indicated that public relations departments are not always involved in all marketing campaigns from the inception as a result of both departments operating independently. Although some companies may view public relations and marketing as joint entities, others view them as separate units. The perception here stems from the understanding that both public relations and marketing are vital departments in an organisation and if incorporated into one department, either function may be overshadowed by the other which could affect the overall performance of the department. On the other hand although they do operate as independent departments, the managers of both departments report to a common director, who ensures that the aims and objectives of both marketing and public relations are parallel to each other and in line with the overall aims and objectives of the organisation.

4.2.5 The liaison between public relations and marketing departments

Question 5: Is there constant liaison between the public relations and marketing departments?

In support of the view of Skinner *et al* (2004: 46), that marketing and public relations are complementary to each other, six companies confirmed that there is an ongoing relationship between the public relations and the marketing functions. Kimmel (2005: 1) adds that marketing communication has begun to develop into something

much more complex and far-reaching. It gives marketers an evolving and wider range of possible communication channels and technologies for getting messages across to their publics and for stimulating direct responses from their target audiences. Ace (2001: 122) also affirms that one of the unique aspects of public relations is that it is a two-way communication process with the aim to improve employee relations, customer relations and to educate and inform the general public about an organisation. The results from the above data indicate that both public relations and marketing are interdependent on each other and share overlapping functions with regard to communication. According to Cornelissen (2004: 40) the related understanding of public relations and marketing develops communication with target groups and they share similar research techniques and communication tools.

In support of the ongoing relationship between public relations and marketing Cutlip *et al* (1994: 206), are of the opinion that the systems approach can be applied to public relations because communal, dependent relationships are formed and maintained between organisations and their stakeholders. In public relations the set of interactive units (systems) includes the organisation and the publics with whom it has relationships or with whom it wants to establish relationships. Here the focus of public relations is based on building and maintaining relationships with target audiences, however to do this two-way communication is important.

At the same time, what is also interesting to note is the dawn of the new marketing thinking 'relationship marketing'. Etzel *et al* (2001: 13), believe that the demand for a relationship based marketing framework is growing. The market for customer relationship management (CRM) systems and concepts is among the fastest growing industries. Relationships are becoming the backbone of any competitive business and are the key to market success. Hougaard & Bjerre (2002:52) state that the exchange views inevitably support the idea of marketing as a system of exchanges encompassing width and depth at the same time. Relationship marketing places emphasis on the maintenance of long-term relationships between the organisation, the government, the public, the suppliers of raw material, the employees, and current and potential customers (Cant *et al*, 2006: 15).

However, one company also revealed that marketing and public relations may be seen as separate functions thereby not liaising directly with each other. Therefore, the ongoing relationship between public relations and marketing is dependent on relationship building as well as an organisation's focus on communication to internal and external publics.

4.2.6 Input from public relations to marketing related activities

Question 6: What input does the public relations person give to marketing related activities?

Company 1 saw public relations as a section of marketing that lays the platform for customer relations. The public relations practitioner conducts research that is fed to the marketing practitioner. In doing so public relations promotes two-way communication and focuses on building and maintaining relationships with our customers and stakeholders.

Company 2 did not respond to this question.

Company 3 indicated that public relations is involved in branding, media selection, provides press releases, copy for brochure, website management and update.

Company 4 indicated that public relations provides regional input on the needs of the province before initiating marketing campaigns, event co-ordination, media and publicity issues.

Company 5 indicated that the public relations department does not directly offer input into the marketing activities as it is currently seen as two separate departments.

Company 6 indicated that due to the merging of both departments, public relations inputs into all marketing related activities from the inception to the finish. Some

examples of the input that public relations has towards marketing are event co-ordination, branding, media selection, launches and sponsorships.

Company 7 highlighted the interchangeable input from both functions as they have merged to form one department. One person carries out both marketing and public relations functions.

Summary

From the responses received, five of the companies confirmed that public relations provides substantial input into all marketing related activities. It is therefore perceived that public relations practitioners substantially input into marketing related activities, for example customer relations, branding, media selection, providing press releases, copy for brochure, website management and update, initiating marketing campaigns, event co-ordination and publicity issues. It appears that the level of interchangeable and overlapping functions between the two disciplines has also led to the integration of both departments. Johnston & Zawawi (2004: 385) add that specialised tools such as publicity, special events, launches, sponsorships, endorsements and printwork (brochures, booklets, etc.) are used extensively in marketing, often by public relations practitioners working with, or attached to marketing departments. Therefore, an organisation's public relations function should be blended smoothly with marketing in order to achieve the organisation's overall marketing communication effort.

4.2.7 Public relations practitioners assist in recognising consumer needs

Question 7: How do public relations practitioners assist in recognising consumer needs?

Company 1 indicated that public relations is responsible for all consumer related needs, and they are the first point of contact within the organisation. The public relations practitioner conducts research about the target audiences. All queries,

complaints and comments (communication) from consumers are directed to the public relations person.

Company 2 indicated that the public relations practitioner is responsible for conducting market research and informing the organisation of the wants and needs of the market. The research conducted links consumers to the marketer of the organisation through information received.

Company 3 reported that public relations is the first point of contact via media monitoring, and direct contact with the public. The implementation of public relations programmes and campaigns informs decision makers within the organisation about the problems and/or opportunities being faced as well as the attitudes and opinions of the publics.

Company 4 indicated that market research is conducted at regional level. Public relations keeps top-level management informed and sensitive to public opinion.

Company 5 reported that public relations is not involved in recognising any consumer needs as it is currently incorporated within the marketing portfolio.

Company 6 reported that the general public has direct contact with the public relations practitioner, as it is the first point of contact within the company. All queries, comments, suggestions, special interests and specific needs of the target audiences are addressed by the public relations practitioner.

Company 7 indicated that they conduct market research, focus group meetings, and obtain general feedback from promotions. Public relations also emphasises the responsibility of the organisation to respect public interest.

Summary

Of the seven companies interviewed six companies reported that public relations largely assists in recognising consumer needs. They indicated that the public

relations practitioner/department is seen as the first point of contact for their consumers among other functions. This lays the foundation for the marketing function. The selected companies confirm Skinner's view (2000: 101) that both functions start their analysis and planning from the point of satisfying one or more of the publics. Another important aspect of recognising consumer needs is public relations research. According to Rensburg & Cant (2003:235) public relations research is a systematic enquiry aimed at providing information to solve public relations problems. Public relations is not only held accountable by its own organisations but also by the public at large. Based on the above research it is perceived that public relations research has become an increasingly important function in recognising consumer needs within many organisations.

4.2.8 Public relations contributions toward marketing functions

Table 4.1 (p. 93) focuses on public relations assisting in various marketing related activities such as packaging, customer education and advertising. The majority of the respondents (five) indicated that public relations assists with marketing functions such as advertising, customer education, launches, events and sponsorships, whilst Company 3 indicated that public relations also assists with packaging and Company 5 indicated that public relations does not assist with any marketing related function.

It is therefore evident that the responses of the selected companies confirmed the view of Cutlip *et al* (2000: 8) that both marketing and public relations deal with communication, persuasion, media, public opinion and the segmentation of audiences and customer education resulting in a greater level of interaction between both disciplines.

Table 4.1: Public relations assisting marketing in packaging, advertising, customer education and other areas of the marketing field.

Question 8: Does the public relations practitioner assist with marketing functions such as packaging, advertising and customer education?				
	Packaging	Advertising	Customer education	Other
Company 1	No	No	Yes	Launches
Company 2	No	Yes	Yes	Launches
Company 3	Yes	Yes	Yes	-
Company 4	No	Yes	Yes	Events & sponsors
Company 5	No	No	No	-
Company 6	n/a	Yes	Yes	-
Company 7	n/a	Yes	Yes	-

Rensburg & Cant (2003: 235) reaffirm this by indicating that the shift towards integrated communication (incorporating both public relations and marketing) commonalities in public relations and marketing is evident as both functions talk in terms of publics and markets, both realize the need for market segmentation, and both public relations and marketing acknowledge the importance of market attitude, perceptions and images in formulating programmes which inevitably impacts on packaging, customer education and advertising.

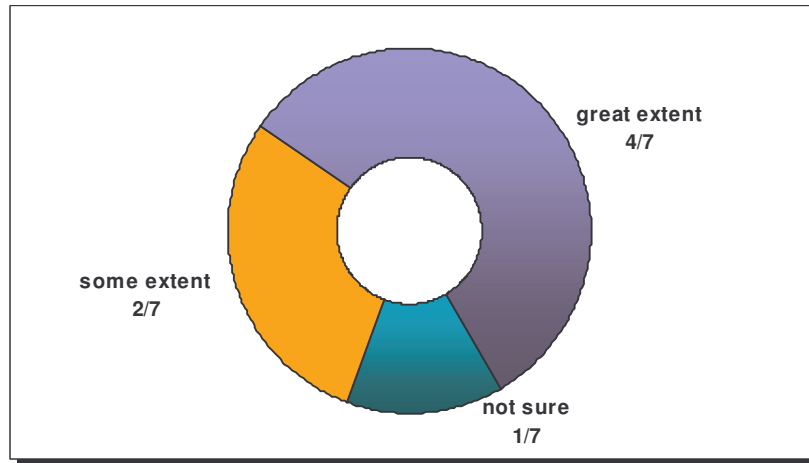
4.2.9 The overlapping job descriptions of public relations and marketing

Question 9: To what extent do you consider the job descriptions of the two functions overlap?

Figure 4.1 (p. 95), six out of seven respondents stated that the job descriptions of both public relations and marketing overlap due to the nature of their portfolios. Two out of seven respondents indicated that the job descriptions of public relations and marketing overlap to some extent while four respondents indicated that they overlap

to a great extent. On the other hand only one out of the seven respondents indicated that public relations and marketing currently do not overlap but may do so in the near future.

Figure 4.1: The level to which the job descriptions of the two functions overlap.



Due to this overlapping of functions, organisations therefore confirm that public relations and marketing do share a synergistic relationship. This supports Moriarty's (1994) affirmation that marketing communication is revised with the incorporation of public relations. "Something new and different is growing from the amalgamation of public relations and marketing. This new concept is becoming identifiable as a separate species with its own theories and practices". Rensburg & Cant (2003: 118) also confirm that the functions of public relations and marketing do overlap to a great extent as they both (1) talk in terms of publics and markets, (2) realize the need for market segmentation (3) acknowledge the importance of market attitudes, perceptions and images in formulating programmes, (4) acknowledge the primary tenets of a management process, namely analysis, planning, implementation and control.

4.2.10 The integration between the public relations and marketing Department

Question 10: Please indicate your opinion on the following statement: "The public relations department should be integrated with the marketing department"

Company 1 strongly agreed that both departments should be integrated into one department as their common goal to build and maintain the relationships is necessary for the survival of the organisation. To build and maintain these relationships, effective and open channels of communication between the organisation and its internal and external publics is essential. One of the main functions of public relations and marketing is communicating to the various publics. It is therefore important that public relations and marketing work close together so that similar information is communicated to the target audience.

Company 2 reported that both public relations and marketing pertain to building and maintaining relationships, conducting research about the target publics as well as communicating information, educating and creating understanding about the organisation and its products and services. Therefore both public relations and marketing should come together as a result of the functions overlapping to such great extent.

Company 3 stated that organisational goals and objectives can be accomplished through an integrated approach with regard to public relations and marketing departments. As a leader in the communication sector, an integrated communication approach from public relations and marketing is of vital importance.

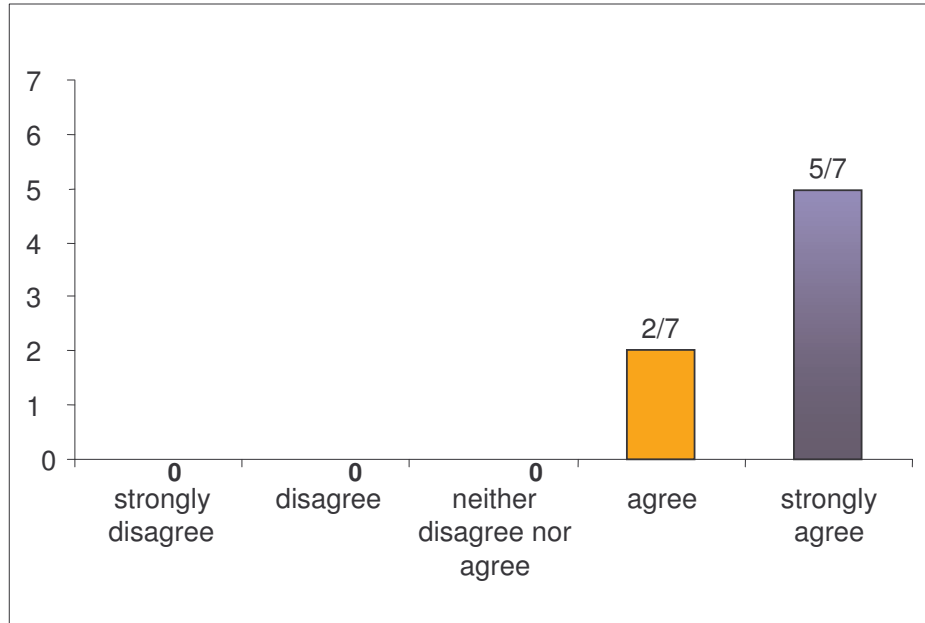
Company 4 strongly supported the integrated functioning of public relations and marketing as they share a synergistic relationship. The functions of both public relations and marketing overlap to such a great extent that the need to integrate these departments/functions into one department makes sense. Although both may operate as separate functions, they need to be housed under one department with one manager overseeing both functions.

Company 5 agreed that the public relations department should be integrated with the marketing department. This respondent added that although they should fall under one department, they should still operate as two functions so that their individual identity is still maintained. However this may not necessarily be applied in all organisation.

Company 6 strongly agreed to the merging of both disciplines given that both public relations and marketing manage the building and maintaining of long-term customer loyalty through service and two-way communication. In doing so both functions are interchangeable and share general characteristics.

Company 7 strongly agreed to marketing and public relations functions merging. One of the current reasons for the merging of the two disciplines is the downsizing and reengineering of organisations.

Figure 4.2: Public relations and marketing functions should be integrated



Summary

Figure 4.2 (p. 97) highlights that all of the respondents either agree or strongly agree to the integration of the public relations and marketing departments. Although Company 5 expressed that public relations and marketing should operate as two separate functions, they also indicated that they should be housed under one department. The consensus to merge the two functions was as a result of the overall success of the organisation which is ultimately dependent on the success of internal and external communication as well as building and maintaining relationships. According to Hong *et al* (n/d), general systems theorists believe that in spite of the obvious differences among the many kinds of living systems, they share very general characteristics.

Broom (2004) adds that the public relations structure and processors are functions of the organisation's sensitivity to its internal and external environment. The public relations function is that of information input about the environment. This information is channeled into organisational decision-making. Marketing on the other hand, takes the input from public relations and designs a particular product that services and influences the needs of the environment. This maintains that all open systems operate effectively if each department or sub-system is inevitably interdependent on others for the overall success of the organisation. In light of this view, all respondents agree that public relations and marketing functions should be integrated as they share general complementary characteristics and overlapping functions that meet the overall goals of the organisation. However, the integration of both departments may vary in different organisations depending on the focus of the organisation.

4.2.11 Changes within the public relations and marketing departments within the last five years

Question 11.1 & 11.2: Has the department managing the public relations and marketing function changed over the past five years? If yes, please indicate the changes that have taken place over the past five years under each of the following headings or if no, please indicate the future plans for the both functions within the organisation under the following headings (where relevant): Management, Structure, Staffing, Financing, Strategy, Objectives, Other.

Company 1

Management: Not applicable.

Structure: Not applicable.

Staffing: Increased over the past five years resulting from the growth of the company.

Financing: There has been growth in the budget allocation to the department.

Strategy/ objectives: This company is in the process of being taken over by another major company, thereby revisiting the public relations and marketing strategies and objectives.

Other: Corporate Social Investment (CSI): CSI is incorporated into the public relations function from inception.

Company 2

Management: Management has changed over the past five years resulting in the change of ownership. Instructions are now directed from a global perspective.

Structure: Not applicable

Staffing: The staff complement has been consistent over the past five years.

Financing: There has been a decrease in the budget allocation to the department.

Strategy/ objectives: Currently there are no changes in the company's strategy and objectives.

Company 3

Management: The organisation's public relations and marketing divisions have merged over the past five years and are therefore under one management.

Structure: Yes, it was only corporate communication and now it has also incorporated public relations and external communication.

Staffing: Has decreased over the past five years as certain functions are merged whilst other functions e.g., internal communication, are transferred to human resources (HR).

Financing: There have been incremental increases but nothing major.

Strategy/ objectives: The strategies and objectives have definitely changed from only a corporate focus to also incorporate promoting and communicating products and services.

Company 4

Management: Staff turnover specifically with regional managers within the organisation has been high. In the last 5 years, the public relations department has increased to five managers. This was attributed to internal transfers, retirement and more lucrative offers.

Structure: In the past five years the public relations department has undergone changes as follows:

(2000 – 2002) – The public relations department incorporated public relations activities and events, internal communication, customer service and quality, and community projects (CSI).

(2003 – 2004) – The public relations department underwent restructuring. The public relations practitioner was expected to perform all aspects of public relations functions (i.e., media, internal communication, events and communication strategies for a selected number of divisions therefore resulting in three communication consultants doing all facets of public relations. The public relations department also interacted with marketing when necessary and when initiated by head office.

(2004 – 2005) – Group communication and group marketing were merged and this allowed for much more resources and information being available to both departments.

Staffing: Over the past five years the number of staff decreased as job functions were either discontinued or merged, however, additional staff were appointed on an intern basis.

Financing: Budgets were previously centralized in the region. However, the merger meant a centralized accounts departments in Johannesburg with budgets being controlled at head office level.

Strategy/ objectives: Previously, the public relations strategy was determined within the department and implemented accordingly. However, since the last integration between marketing and public relations, the public relations and marketing strategy and objective are now aligned.

Company 5

Management: Yes, for the first time management of both public relations and marketing communicate with each other about projects involving the client. This communication was brought about to avoid duplication of sponsorships. Since November 2004, the marketing division is renamed as group marketing. This department oversees marketing and branding projects across many business units that operate independently.

Structure: No, public relations falls under corporate affairs which runs independently from group marketing and communication, however the hierarchy for marketing has changed due to the name change.

Staffing: Discussion is still in progress.

Financing: Discussion in progress.

Strategy/ objectives: Discussion is still in progress.

Company 6

Management: Yes, at this organisation the marketing director now oversees both the public relations and marketing portfolios.

Structure: Yes, the organisation is currently amalgamating job portfolios.

Staffing: Due to integrated and overlapping functions there has been a decrease in staffing.

Financing: No comment as this depends totally on sponsorships and donations every year.

Strategy/ objectives: No changes.

Company 7

Management: Yes, this department used to be administered in-house but is now under new management.

Structure: The hierarchy has changed, as there are more people to report to.

Staffing: Has increased since change of management.

Financing: Yes, there have been incremental increases.

Strategy/ objectives: The strategies and objectives have definitely changed. They are more formalized, structured and attainable.

Summary

Within the selected organisations (six companies) it is perceived that departments managing the public relations function may have changed over the past five years due to changes in management, structure, staffing, finance, strategy and objectives. However, Company 5 indicated that it is in the process of re-structuring departments. The majority of the respondents (six companies) indicated that one of the key reasons emerging from the analysis of the responses to the change over the past five years may be attributed to the growth of the company, the need to downsize, reduced overheads and the ambition to gain competitive advantage. According to Rensburg & Cant (2003:116) a shift towards integrated communication (public relations, marketing and communication functions) is driven by downsizing and re-engineering through the consolidation of departments and staff reductions. They further maintains that the rise of relationship marketing also called for the merging/close working relationship between public relations, marketing and communication.

4.2.12 The comparison between the public relations strategies and objectives as compared to that of the marketing strategies and objectives

Question 12.1 & 12.2: Please indicate how the public relations strategies and objectives differ from the marketing strategies and objectives in your company.

Company 1 indicated that there is a very thin line between public relations and marketing strategies and objectives. Public relations lay the foundation for marketing. Marketing leverages on the foundation of public relations.

Company 2 indicated that the strategies and objectives of both functions are related as they serve each other. Both public relations and marketing work towards the organisations overall strategies and objectives.

Company 3 indicated that although marketing and public relations are housed under a common department their strategies and objectives are specialised. Public relations is focused on the corporate aspect whilst marketing is product focused. However, both still maintain a close working relationship to achieve the organisation's strategies and objectives.

Company 4 gave no comment – as the company is undergoing restructuring.

Company 5 reported that the strategies and objectives between public relations and marketing differ as public relations pertains to crisis communication and corporate social responsibility projects whilst marketing focuses on advertising, media, seminar and the development of marketing strategies.

Company 6 reported that both public relations and marketing strategies and objectives are the same. As a result of the level of their overlapping functions a decision has been taken to merge these departments. Both public relations and marketing manage communication, media, public opinion and aim at achieving the organisation's overall goals and objectives.

Company 7 perceives the objectives and strategies of marketing and public relations as being interrelated. Both deal with research of the target markets and is focused on internal and external communication.

Summary

According to five companies it appears that the strategies and objectives of both functions are related as they serve each other. Both practices are seen to be research-based, focusing on communication, media, public opinion and achieving overall goals and objectives of the organisation. However, Company 3 also indicated that although public relations and marketing operate under one department, public relations focuses on the corporate aspect such as corporate social responsibility projects and communication while marketing is more product-focused.

The results indicate that a close relationship between the two departments seems to be of vital importance. Although messages sent by each department are not expected to be identical, each department should bear in mind that it exists within the same organisation and should work towards maintaining the overall company objective and ethos.

4.2.13 The level of participation between public relations and marketing managers in top-level decision making

Question 13.1 & 13.2: To what extent do the public relations and/or marketing managers participate in top-level decision making in your company?

Company 1 confirmed that marketing participates to a large extent at top-level decision making whilst public relations involvement is very minimal. The reason for the minimal involvement of public relations is as a result of public relations being housed under the marketing department.

Company 2 reported that marketing and public relations are most definitely involved in top-level decision making. Both public relations and marketing are represented at CEO level via the vice president of marketing. Public relations and marketing are and most definitely should be management functions and in a position to make decisions.

Company 3 indicated that marketing and public relations are to some extent involved in top-level decision making. Although public relations and marketing are represented at top-level management, final decisions are taken by the CEO of the organisation. However, the organisation needs to revisit the extent to which public relations and marketing are involved in top-level decision making as it impacts on the overall objectives and goals of the organisation.

Company 4 saw marketing and public relations engaging to some extent in top-level decision making. However, both public relations and marketing need to participate on a greater level at top-level decision making as the marketing and public relations aims and objectives should be in line with the organisation's overall aims and objectives.

Company 5 indicated that only marketing is significantly involved in top-level decision making. Public relations is to some extent involved in top-level decision making.

Company 6 reported that public relations and marketing are to a great extent involved in top-level decision making. Public relations and marketing are both in a position to evaluate internal and external opinions, attitudes, and needs on an ongoing basis, to advise management about policy changes and directing appropriate course of action based on information received. These actions are aimed at maintaining a harmonious and balanced relationship between the organisation and its different target publics and, ultimately, between the organisation and its environment. Therefore both public relations and marketing are and should be extensively involved in top-level decision making.

Company 7 indicated that the marketing manager (assuming public relations functions) is to some extent a participant in top-level decision making; however the marketing manager needs to become more involved in higher level decision making.

Summary

All respondents (seven companies) indicated that marketing managers participate in top-level decision-making. However, the level to which they participate in decision-making depends on the structure of the organisation. Respondents disclosed that certain public relations managers participate in top-level decision-making. However, the level of their contribution is questionable which is largely due to the organisation not giving appropriate acknowledgment to the role of public relations management. Although public relations and marketing may be management functions it is imperative that organisations acknowledge the importance of both public relations and marketing in top-level decision-making processes.

Cutlip *et al* (2000: 8) asserts that marketing operates as a line management function. PRISA (2005), states that from the organisation's business plan and subsequent marketing plan, the public relations practitioner devises the communication plan to support the corporate mission, policy, and goals. Cutlip *et al* (2000: 8) believe that in order to become involved in strategic planning, the public relations practitioner should operate at the highest level of organisational management and have access to the most senior information and decision-making systems.

4.2.14 The necessary skills required from public relations and marketing practitioners

Question 14.1 & 14.2: Please indicate your opinion on each of the following statements: Public relations practitioners in your company are fully equipped with marketing skills. Marketing practitioners in your company are fully equipped with public relations skills.

Figure 4.3: Public relations graduates equipped with marketing skills.

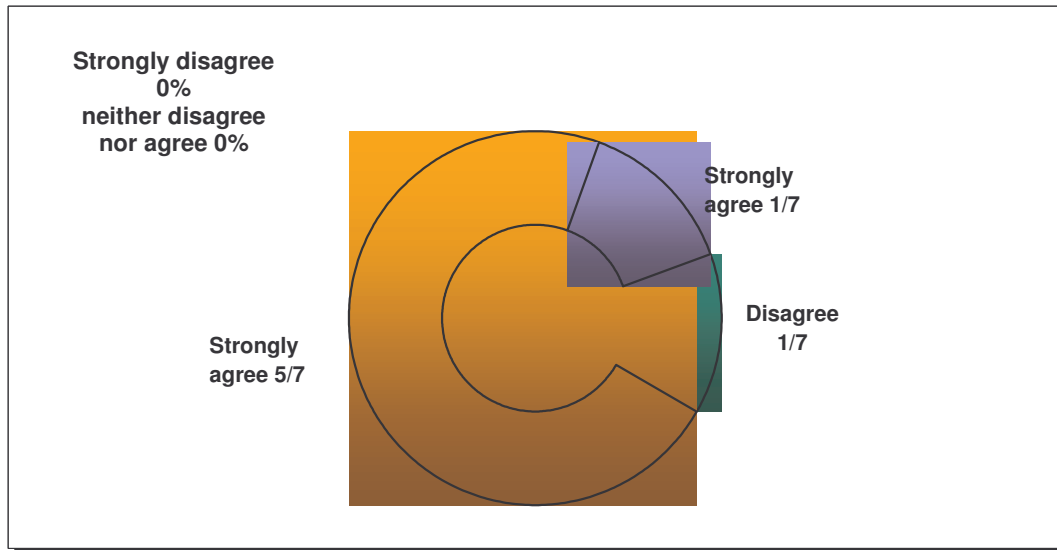
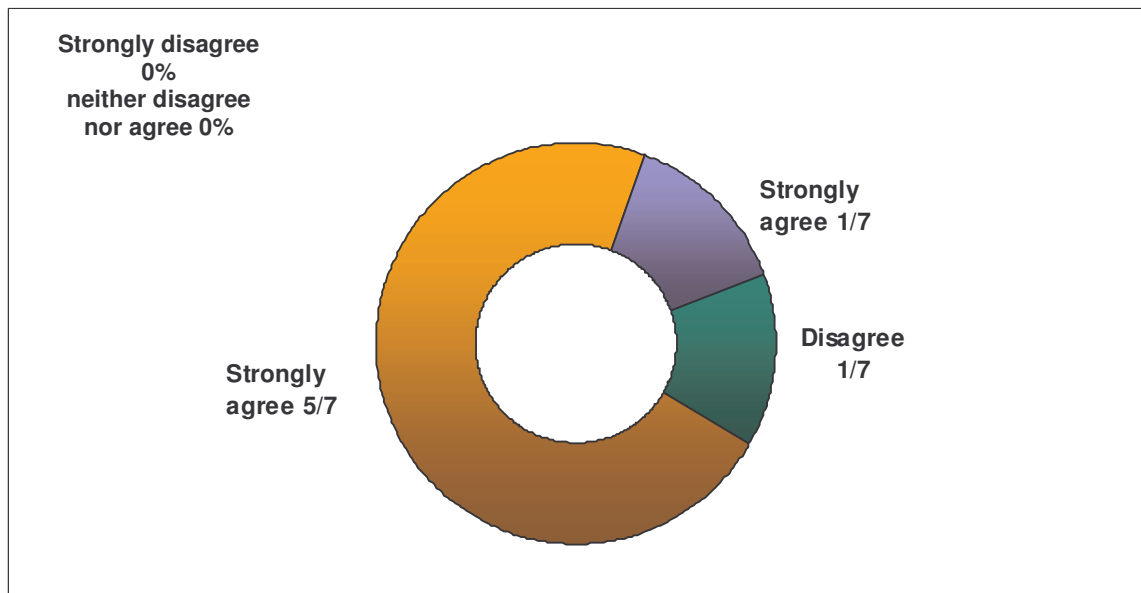


Figure 4.4: Marketing graduates equipped with public relations skills.



Company 1 agreed that public relations staff are equipped with marketing skills but disagrees that marketing staff were equipped with public relations skills. As indicated earlier public relations lays a platform for marketing, thereby demanding

that public relations staff be well versed with marketing related activities. However, the marketing practitioner does not show any indication of being well versed in the public relations field.

Company 2 agreed that marketing and public relations graduates coming into the organisation are equipped with the necessary skills required by the organisation.

Company 3 agreed that marketing and public relations practitioners currently employed at the organisation are equipped with skills of both public relations and marketing.

Company 4 agreed that marketing and public relations graduates as well as employees at the organisation are equipped with the necessary skills.

Company 5 Disagreed. They indicated that marketing graduates are not equipped with the skills of public relations and maintains the same view for public relations practitioners within the organisation.

Company 6 agreed that public relations and marketing graduates at the organisation are and should be equipped with both skills. Being equipped with skills of both public relations and marketing is a necessity within the organisation.

Company 7 strongly agreed that graduates from both disciplines coming into the organisation are equipped with the necessary skills. This is of vital importance as the job functions of both public relations and marketing are merged.

Summary

One respondent strongly agreed that both public relations and marketing graduates are fully equipped with the necessary skills required while the majority of the respondents (five out of the seven companies) agreed that public relations and marketing employees/graduates are to some extent equipped with the necessary skills to handle both public relations and marketing functions. However, respondents

also indicated that more emphasis should be placed on providing graduates with the necessary skills of both public relations and marketing. In contrast Company 5 indicated that public relations and marketing employees were not sufficiently equipped with the skills required to perform both functions.

4.2.15 Organisational support to internal training programmes with regard to public relations and marketing

Question 15.1 & 15.2: Does your company offer or support any internal training programme with regard to public relations and marketing? If yes, what are these programmes.

Company 1 offers internal training to the staff from the public relations and marketing departments. Public relations and marketing staff attend seminars, workshops and conferences to kept informed with current trends and practices globally.

Company 2 indicated that staff were sent on regular conferences and seminars to be informed of current practices both national and internationally.

Company 3 highlighted non-attendance at conferences and workshops citing budget constraints. However, budgets will be revisited in the near future to allow for internal training as it is of vital importance for staff to be updated with current global practices. With communication globalising rapidly, it is crucial for the public relations and marketing departments to adopt a global view on public relations and marketing.

Company 4 indicated that internal training is offered.

Company 5 indicated that intern students are sent for in-house training, to become knowledgeable about the operation of the organisation. Permanent staff within the organisation attend numerous workshops and seminars to keep on par with current trends.

Company 6 indicated that all staff as well as intern students attend seminars and workshops related to public relations and marketing.

Company 7 supports internal training. Staff is exposed to various conferences and seminars relating to both public relations and marketing.

Summary

Public relations and marketing training programmes are offered and supported by six companies. Respondents highlighted that attending conferences, workshops and seminars are some of the types of training programmes supported and offered at the organisation. However, the concerning factor indicated by a specific respondent (Company 3) was that no support was given to internal training because of budget constraints. This company has however indicated that attending public relations and marketing related conferences, seminars and workshops is of vital importance to keep abreast with the current trends and practices in the respective fields.

4.2.16 The equipping of public relations and marketing graduates with the necessary skills required by industry

Question 16: To what extent do you think tertiary institutions equip public relations graduates with marketing skills and marketing graduates with public relations skills?

Company 1 indicated that the students or graduates they received from educational institutions are equipped to some extent with the necessary skills required, however these skills vary according to the nature of the event and skills required for that event.

Company 2 indicated that to some extent tertiary institutions equipped public relations and marketing graduates with skills required by industry. However, problems were encountered with students' ability to exercise what they have learnt.

Company 3 indicated that the students recruited for in-service training were not adequately equipped with the necessary skills. Short practical courses as well as guest speakers from industry are important for students' development during their first and second years of study as this will introduce students to the expectations of industry. This company also indicated that educational institutions should adequately equip students/graduates with the necessary skills required by industry.

Company 4 indicated that the graduates they received were adequately equipped with the skills required for both public relations and marketing functions. The company emphasised their gratitude to certain tertiary educational institutions for taking into consideration industrial requirements.

Company 5 indicated that the graduates they received are to some extent equipped with the necessary skills required by their company.

Company 6 viewed the graduates as being skilled to some extent with both public relations and marketing skills. However, students should be well versed with both disciplines as this is one of the requirements from industry.

Company 7 indicated that students from tertiary institutions are to some extent equipped with essential. Although students may not be fully equipped with the necessary skills of both public relations and marketing, the organisation provides the student with the necessary skills that are required by that particular organisation.

Summary

In response to the above question, six companies confirmed that certain graduates from tertiary institutions were equipped to some extent with the necessary public relations and marketing skills. However, there was a concern that not all graduates received from tertiary institutions were equipped with the necessary public relations and marketing skills. In support of this, research conducted at Macleay College in Sydney (2000) believes that there is a major growth for employer demand for a business course in public relations and marketing. The combination of this type of

qualification offered is currently in short supply. The findings reveal that tertiary institutions should equip graduates with the fundamental skills necessary to perform both public relations and marketing functions, as it is a requirement at certain organisations.

4.2.17 Allocation of budget for public relations and marketing

Question 17: To what extent do you consider the budget for public relations and marketing to be adequate?

Company 1 indicated the budget is adequate to some extent. Depending on the nature of the public relations and marketing campaigns implemented budgets are allocated accordingly.

Company 2 viewed the budget to be adequate to some extent as budgets are allocated to specific events.

Company 3 reported that the budget is inadequate for public relations and marketing functions. The company indicated non-attendance to conferences and seminars due to the unavailability of funds. Budget constraints limit the development of the department.

Company 4 indicated the budget to be adequate to some extent. This is dependent on the nature of the activity.

Company 5 reported that the marketing budget is adequate to a great extent, but the company has given a “not sure” response for the public relations budget.

Company 6 indicated that the budget allocated to public relations and marketing is generally adequate.

Company 7 indicated that the budget is to an extent adequate for both public relations and marketing functions.

Summary

In view of the data received, Company 3 indicated that the budget was inadequate for public relations and marketing functions. This company highlighted that the budget constraints limited staff development as staff could not attend the necessary conferences and seminars. On the other hand the majority of the respondents (six companies) indicated that the budgets allocated for public relations and marketing were to some extent adequate. However, this is dependent on the nature and size of these organisations. The integration and merging of public relations and marketing have contributed to the increase in budgets within these departments. One of the reasons for integrating and merging public relations and marketing departments is a need to downsize and increase resources and profitability. This is viewed as one of the current trends within certain organisations. In view of this Rensburg & Cant (2003: 116) add that one of the reasons for integrating departments is as a result of downsizing, staff numbers. They also maintain that the increased use of product publicity and sales promotion has resulted in budget constraints.

4.3 Conclusion

This chapter has shown that the majority of the sample supports the theoretical underpinning relating to the current practices of organisations in relation to open systems theory. It is perceived that the current trend within certain organisations is for public relations and marketing departments to function as a single department and share a synergistic relationship. The majority of the companies indicated that 'stand alone' departments have recently merged to form a single department variously known as public affairs, corporate communication, marketing and communication. These departments have incorporated marketing, public relations and communication functions.

Some organisations revealed that public relations is part of the marketing department. Out of the total sample only one of the organisations indicated that public relations and marketing were separate departments. However, both departments report to a common director. Cornelissen (2004: 41) believes that as a

result of the overlapping and complementary functions between public relations and marketing it is useful for an organisation to closely align marketing and public relations or at least manage both functions in a more integrated manner. Although the two disciplines may work best when they are treated as distinct functions, they are able also to create spectacular results when working in a symbiotic relationship.

Research also revealed that marketing and public relations should be recognised as top-level decision making functions as both functions greatly impact on the organisation's overall aims and objectives.

Hence it appears that public relations and marketing share a harmonious relationship within majority of the sample group. Due to the level of interaction, the majority of organisations in the sample indicated that their public relations and marketing departments have merged to form a single department. This has also come about as companies downsize to reduce overheads and trim staff in order to become more competitive.

Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the conclusions that were drawn from the study. The chapter highlights the summary, conclusions and limitations of the study and makes recommendations for further studies.

The lines between marketing and public relations have never been distinct. The average person and the media use the terms marketing and public relations more or less interchangeably. Some organisations are also consciously blending the concepts and the tools of public relations and marketing communication. Further, this debatable view of the relationship between public relations and marketing is becoming more evident as companies are now merging both functions due to the downsizing, restructuring and overlapping of functions. Therefore, the intention of this study was to examine if there exists a synergistic relationship between the public relations and marketing functions within selected sectors of industry.

5.2 Summary of the study

The purpose of the study was to determine the level of synergy between the marketing and public relations functions and whether public relations practitioners are equipped for marketing projects that they may be asked to undertake, and vice-versa. A sample of seven companies representing different industries was used in this study to identify current trends as well as different perspectives on the relationship between public relations and marketing.

The literature review provided a broad overview of the historical development of public relations and marketing. This chapter also focused on the management function and the current relationships between both disciplines. Communication within organisations was also examined. The theoretical approach of the systems

model was investigated as well as its application to public relations, marketing and communication. The literature review revealed that although public relations and marketing may be seen as two disciplines that work best when they are treated as distinct functions, they can however create positive results when working together as equals towards the same goal as highlighted in systems theory. It is evident that despite the debate on the relationship between public relations and marketing, they are interdependent of each other as a result of their overlapping functions and the need for their close working relationship for successful organisational communication to occur. The study also revealed that marketing and public relations should be recognised as top-level decision making functions as both functions impact on the organisation's overall aims and objectives.

The methodology adopted for this study assumed a purposive approach, as all the respondents (seven companies) were selected by the researcher according to the size of the company, their status in society, the existence of a public relations and marketing department, a representation of different sectors of industry and their willingness to participate in the study. The nature of this dissertation pertained to public relations and marketing, therefore the researcher was led to choose only marketing and public relations managers as the unit of analysis for each company.

Questionnaires were administered to the selected organisations and the data was analysed in Chapter 4. The results of this study were then compared to the literature review as well as the systems theory model to determine whether marketing and public relations functions have overlapping goals and functions. The analysis revealed that the majority of the sample supports the theoretical underpinning relating to the current practices of organisations in relation to open systems theory. One of the significant results emerging from this study is that the public relations and marketing departments function as a merged unit and they share a synergistic relationship as a result of both departments focusing on building and maintaining relationships necessary for the survival for the organisation.

It emerged in Chapter 4, that as a result of the overlapping and complementary functions between public relations and marketing, the majority of the organisations have either merged or closely aligned the marketing and public relations functions.

5.3 Conclusions

The following section presents the conclusions to the study based on the objectives set out (Chapter 1).

- **What is the current trend pertaining to marketing and public relations management?**

It is perceived that in most organisations the roles of public relations and marketing have changed over the past five years. The results of the study indicate that public relations and marketing have in most cases merged into a common department as the result of their functions either overlapping each other or are interdependent on each other.

The majority of the respondents (six companies) indicated that one of the key reasons emerging from the analysis in response to the change over the past five years may be attributed to the growth of the company, the need to downsize, reduced overheads and the ambition to gain competitive advantage. It is believed that a shift towards integrated communication (which includes public relations, marketing and communication functions) is driven by downsizing and re-engineering through the consolidation of departments and staff reductions. It is also assumed that relationship marketing also contributes to the merging/close working relationship between public relations, marketing and communication. Therefore the consensus to merge the two functions results from effective communication within the organisation.

- **Do the objectives and strategies of the public relations manager differ from that of the marketing manager?**

The research results indicate that a close relationship between the public relations and marketing departments appears to be crucial. Although messages sent by each department are not expected to be identical, each department should bear in mind that they exist within the same organisation and should work towards maintaining the overall company objective and ethos. Based on the research, it may be concluded that the objectives and strategies are similar to each other as they convey similar messages which should be in line with the overall objectives of the organisation.

- **Are public relations and marketing both seen as management functions?**

This study has shown evidence that public relations and marketing are seen as management functions as both contribute to top-level decision making within the organisation.

However, the level to which public relations and marketing managers participate in decision-making depends on the structure of the organisation. Although public relations and marketing may be management functions it is imperative that organisations acknowledge the importance of both public relations and marketing at top-level decision-making processes.

- **Are public relations and marketing graduates within organisations equipped with the necessary cross-disciplinary skills?**

Respondents indicated that although many graduates may to some extent be skilled in both public relations and marketing, they also believed that with the merging of both departments graduates are required to a great extent to be versed with skills in public relations and marketing. Based on the research it may be concluded that there is major growth for employer demand for a course in public relations and marketing. There is an indication that the qualification offered with this combination is currently in short supply. It is therefore recommended that tertiary institutions

should equip graduates with the fundamental skills necessary to perform both public relations and marketing functions, as it may be an essential requirement at organisations.

- **Should the public relations function be integrated with the marketing function?**

The research found that although public relations and marketing may operate as independent functions in certain organisations, the current trend is to merge these departments as they are interrelated, and interdependent on each other and therefore have common goals and functions that overlap. Hence, public relations and marketing, although they may be seen as independent departments, are actually interdependent.

The majority of the respondents (six companies) indicated that one of the key reasons for change resulted from either growth of the company, the need to downsize, reduced overheads and the ambition to gain competitive advantage. The research also indicated that there is a shift towards integrated communication (incorporating public relations, marketing and communication functions) which is driven by downsizing and re-engineering through the consolidation of departments and staff reductions. The rise of relationship marketing also called for the merging/close working relationship between public relations, marketing and communication.

- **What are the communication functions performed by the public relations and marketing practitioners.**

Another conclusion that can be drawn from the study is that communication management helps the organisation achieve its goals by identifying and building healthy relationships with the strategic constituencies and it facilitates interaction. The quality of these relationships determines the effectiveness of the public relations and marketing functions in the organisation.

Corporate communication works as an interface model approach which specifically focuses on how this theory unfolds in practice and compliments the public relations and marketing function.

General systems theorists believe that in spite of the obvious differences among the many kinds of living systems, they share very general characteristics. The public relations structure and processes are functions of the organisation's sensitivity to its internal and external environment. The public relations function is that of information input about the environment. This information is channeled into organisational decision-making. Marketing on the other hand, takes the input from public relations and designs a particular product that services and influences the needs of the environment. This information implies that all open systems operate effectively if each department or sub-system is inevitably interdependent on others for the overall success of the organisation. In light of this view, all respondents agree that public relations and marketing functions should be integrated as they share general complementary characteristics and overlapping functions that meet the overall goals of the organisation. However, the integration of both departments may vary in different organisations depending on the focus of the organisation.

The research found that the majority of the respondents stated that the job descriptions of both public relations and marketing overlap due to the nature of their portfolios. Due to the overlapping of functions, organisations therefore confirm that public relations and marketing do share a synergistic relationship. The marketing communication should therefore be revised with the incorporation of public relations. The researcher is therefore concludes that an organisation's public relations function should be blended smoothly with marketing in order to achieve the organisation's overall marketing communication effort.

5.4 Limitations of the Study

The researcher experienced the following problems:

- Due to time constraints responses during the interviews were not always substantial.
- All questionnaire studies are limited by the design and nature of this method of research. However, attempts have been made to achieve the most accurate results possible.
- Questionnaire studies by their very nature depend on memory, and some information may have been omitted.
- The study was confined to the greater Durban area, which limited the researcher from investigating current trends and practices in other regions.

5.5 Recommendations

The following recommendations, arising out of the study, are made:

- Both marketing and public relations be significantly involved in top-level decision making as they are management functions.
- The involvement of both public relations and marketing staff in the company's development activities is vitally important. Staff at all organisation's should be able to attend public relations and marketing related conferences, seminars and workshops to further equip themselves with the current trends and necessary skills.
- Public relations and marketing should both be involved from the inception stage of all organisational campaigns as all the respondents (seven companies) indicated that the job descriptions of the two functions do overlap to some extent.
- Tertiary institutions should equip both public relations and marketing graduates with the necessary cross-disciplinary skills essential for industry.

5.6 Concluding Remarks

Public relations and marketing may be distinct yet overlapping fields. Each has its own focus, and each discipline fulfills different purposes within an organisation. However, it is becoming more evident that the coordination of public relations and marketing communication can increase an organisation's efficiency and effectiveness.

The researcher believes that both public relations and marketing deserve a seat at the management table, as they identify wants, needs, interests and expectations of key groups of people, and both structure ways to communicate with them. Both disciplines rely on research and are rooted in the organisation's mission and directed toward its bottom line. The increasing interdependency between the organisation, the environment and stakeholders has placed renewed emphasis on the vital role of communication for the survival of the organisation.

The role of communication has also impacted on the consumer decision making-process. In addition, it is believed that the relationship age also impacts on the way goods and services are produced, sold and delivered, hence contributing on all levels of organisational functioning. Communication in and by the organisation is used to create mutual understanding and is aimed at maintaining balanced relationships between the organisation and its publics. In this process it is evident that organisations use all communication activities to formulate communication strategies, maintain effective two-way communication channels, and determine prevailing attitudes and opinions, in an attempt to build beneficial relationships. By acknowledging the crucial role of communication as a prerequisite for its functioning and survival, the organisation in turn acknowledges the importance of relationship building. These relationships are dependent on the nature of the link between the environment and the organisation with all communication activities working together to build ongoing relationships through communication. It can therefore be concluded that both public relations and marketing share communication functions that are focused on both the long-term and short-term interests of the organisation, one of which is building and maintaining relationships with both internal and external

audiences. It emerges from the results of the study that some organisations are consciously blending the concepts and tools of public relations and marketing communication. While other organisations may persist against diluting the disciplines, often fearing that integration will demote either public relations or marketing functions, others accept the integration between the both disciplines.

The literature also revealed that systems theory does not treat any form of communication as an isolated event. Therefore, according to the systems model, a human communication system is seen as a set of interdependent people who work together to adapt to a changing environment. The systems theory defines the manner in which a department works or functions within an organisation. A close examination of this theory reveals that all departments within an organisation have to work together in order to fulfil the overall goals of the organisation. It can therefore be concluded that intimate contact between the public relations and marketing departments is necessary for communication in an organisation to be achieved effectively. Public relations and marketing may be understood as separate yet complementary functions. However, depending on the nature of the organisation, public relations may serve as either a complement or a counterbalance to marketing activities.

The significance of public relations and marketing as cross-functional activities was also revealed by the study and confirms that public relations and marketing do not work in a vacuum. The research revealed that the work of marketers affects other departments within an organisation. Managers must integrate and co-ordinate marketing functions with other corporate functions so that they are all directed toward achieving the same objectives. Scholarly literature concerning public relations as relationship management is integrative, as it draws concepts from the disciplines of mass media, interpersonal communication, inter-organisational behaviour, social psychology concepts, marketing and management. Public relations, like other communication functions, has evolved to play a far more central role in an organisation's planning process. Public relations and other communication programs actively contribute to an organisations' broad, strategic goal of reaching out to its consumers. It can therefore be concluded that as key elements in building

and sustaining relationships, both public relations and marketing should establish strong working relationships with other non-public relations departments. From the study it may also be concluded that the public relations and marketing activities cannot work in a vacuum, isolated from other company activities. It is imperative for both public relations and marketing to engage in cross-functional activities as the overall success of the organisation is ultimately dependent on the synchronization of departments within the organisation.

Mergers, downsizing and restructuring have resulted in organisations seeking ways to operate with lean resources, therefore merging departments and functions that have duplication. However, while shrinking of organisations is occurring, corporate communication needs are increasing. Therefore, for effective communication to occur within an organisation the co-operation between public relations and marketing is essential. Strategic communication uses multiple tools, drawing from all communication-related disciplines to communicate with the various publics. The common purpose of strategic communication is to build understanding and support for ideas and causes, services and products, and between an organisation and its publics. The embodiment of marketing and public relations is evident in the field of strategic communication.

Based on the literature review and empirical research, this study recommends that all public relations and marketing functions work in harmony thereby making mutual contributions towards achieving overall organisational goals. Although public relations and marketing may operate as separate functions they should ultimately be housed under a common department. However, the decision to merge or separate the marketing and public relations departments is situational, depending on the management of specific organisations.

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Annexure 1

Paulene Naidoo

Residential Address

Flat 2, Pevensey Park
330 Florida Road
Morningside
4069

Tel: (031) 312 4459

Fax: (031) 308 51 06

Cell: 084 44 44 396

E-mail: paulene@dit.ac.za

Postal Address

P O Box 19574
Dormerton
4015

Tel: (031) 308 52 77

To :

From : Paulene Naidoo
Lecturer and Master's Student
Durban Institute of Technology

Date :

Re : Masters Degree in Public Relations Management.

Topic : "The synergy between public relations and marketing within corporations in the greater Durban area"

Dear

As per our telephonic conversation earlier this month, this letter serves confirm that I am a registered student at the Durban Institute of Technology studying towards a Masters Degree in Public Relations Management.

My research is based on the synergy between public relations and marketing within corporations in the greater Durban area.

As per our conversation you have confirmed that your company will be participating in this study. I assure you that any information that is made available to myself will be used with discretion.

I thank you for your acceptance to be a part of my study and look forward to working with you.

Please find attached a letter from my supervisor's, confirming my registration at the Durban Institute of Technology.

Kind regards

Paulene Naidoo

Annexure 2



**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC RELATIONS MANAGEMENT
TEL (031) 3085277**

6 February 2004

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Ms Paulene Naidoo is currently studying towards the Masters Degree in Public Relations Management. Her Topic is the 'The Synergy between Public Relations and Marketing within selected companies in the greater Durban area'.

Her research includes an empirical exercise that comprises fieldwork. To this end questionnaires will be administered to selected respondents.

It would be most appreciated if you could spend some of your valuable time to assist with the completion of her questionnaire.

The results of the study will benefit both Ms Naidoo and your company. Please be assured that responses will be kept strictly confidential. A copy of the results will be made available to you, should you so require.

Yours sincerely



Dr J Govender
Supervisor



Ms R Rampersad
Supervisor

Annexure 3

QUESTIONNAIRE

The interaction between public relations and marketing within selected companies in the greater Durban area.

Personal Details (optional)

Name _____

Position _____

Department _____

Company _____

1. What is your organisation's area of specialisation?

AREA OF SPECIALISATION	Please tick the appropriate column
Financial	
Beverages (non alcoholic)	
Beverages (alcoholic)	
Retail	
Communication	
Sport	
Motor	
Other Specify _____	

2. What is the mission statement of your organisation?

3.

3.1 How is the **marketing function** positioned in the hierarchy of your organisation? (Please tick the appropriate box).

a) As an independent department.

b) As an interdependent department.

If interdependent, please explain.

3.2 How is the **public relations function** positioned in the hierarchy of your organisation? (Please tick the appropriate box).

a) As an independent department.

c) As an interdependent department.

If interdependent, please explain.

3.3 What is the staff complement within these departments?

Department	No. of Staff
Marketing Department (If independent)	
Public Relations Department (If independent)	
Total Public Relations and Marketing (If inter-dependent)	

4. Is public relations involved from the inception stage of any marketing campaign?

Yes

No

5. Is there constant liaison between the public relations and marketing departments.

Yes

No

6. What input does the public relations person give to marketing related activities.

7. How does public relations practitioners assist in recognizing consumer needs.

8. Does the public relations practitioner assist with marketing functions, such as: packaging, advertising, customer education, etc.

Marketing Functions	Yes	No
Packaging		
Advertising		
Customer Education		
Other _____		

9. To what extent do you consider the job descriptions of the two functions to overlap.

No extent	Small extent	Not sure	Some extent	Great extent

10. Please indicate your opinion on the following statement:
 “The **public relations function** should be integrated with the **marketing function**.” (Please tick the appropriate box).

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree

11.

11.1 Has the department managing the **public relations function** changed over the past 5 years?
(Please tick appropriate box.)

Yes

No

If yes, please indicate the changes that have taken place in the **public relations function** over the past 5 years under each of the following headings or if no, please indicate the future plans for the **public relations function** within the organization under the following headings (where relevant):

Management

Structure

Staffing

Financing

Strategy

Objectives

Other
Please specify.

11.2 Has the department managing the **marketing function** changed over the past 5 years?
(Please tick appropriate box.)

Yes

No

If yes, please indicate the changes that have taken place in the **marketing functions** over the past 5 years under each of the following headings or if no, please indicate the future plans for the **marketing functions** within the organization under the following headings (where relevant):

Management

Structure

Staffing

Financing

Strategy

Objectives

Other

Please specify

12.

12.1 Please indicate how the **public relations strategies** differ from the **marketing strategies** in your company.

12.2 Please indicate how the **public relations objectives** differ from the **marketing objectives** in your company.

13.

13.1 To what extent does the **public relations manager** participate in top-level decision making in your company?

No extent	Small extent	Not sure	Some extent	Great extent

13.2 To what extent does the **marketing manager** participate in top-level decision making in your company?

No extent	Small extent	Some extent	Great extent

14. Please indicate your opinion on each of the following statements:

14.1 “**Public relations practitioners** in your company are fully equipped with marketing skills. (Example, preparing a marketing strategy).”

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree

14.2 “**Marketing practitioners** in your company are fully equipped with public relations skills.
(Example, preparing a public relations programme).

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree

15.

15.1 Does your company offer or support any internal training programme with regard to **public relations** and **marketing**?

Yes

No

15.2 If yes, what are these programmes?

16. To what extent do you think tertiary institutions equip:

	No extent	Small extent	Some extent	Great extent
public relations graduates with				

marketing skills?				
marketing graduates with public relations skills?				

17. To what extent do you consider the budget for these functions to be adequate?

	No extent	Small extent	Some extent	Great extent
<i>marketing</i>				
<i>public relations</i>				

Thank you for your co-operation.

Annexure 4

INTERVIEW SUMMARY – THE INTERACTION BETWEEN PUBLIC RELATIONS AND MARKETING WITHIN SELECTED COMPANIES IN THE GREATER DURBAN AREA

Question	Company 1	Company 2	Company 3	Company 4	Company 5	Company 6	Company 7
1. What is your organisation's area of specialization?	Beverages (non-alcoholic) / soft drink industry	Motor manufacturing	Communication	Financial services	Financial services	Sport	Retail
2. What is the mission statement of your organisation?	Our mission and vision statement is available in our brochure. ABI is dedicated in fostering stronger relationships with ABI's partners. - The company strives to surpass their	That information is available on our website. Toyota South Africa is a company dedicated and committed to ensuring that products are of outstanding quality, value for money and instill pride of ownership. - The company is	There are 6 imperatives that form the Sentech mission: - Establish a unified next generation broadband digital platform to provide world-class communication solutions and services to our customers. - Define our	You can retrieve that information from our website address. Being the leading financial services group serving all our stakeholders (www.absa.co.za , n/d).	Sanlam, is dedicated to: - growing shareholder value through innovation and superior performance, - leading with courage, serving with pride, respecting others and acting with integrity and accountability. This information is also	Our mission and vision statement is available on our website and our 1991 year book. - To encourage excellence, professionalism and sound business practice when dealing with all stakeholders. - To develop world-class rugby players as role models throughout the communities that the brand serves.	Our mission is to exceed tenant and shopper expectations by being responsive to their needs, and delivering carefully planned and rationalised communication and marketing strategies.

	<p>audience's expectations in fresh and unexpected ways.</p> <p>- ABI's deep local roots allow them to create closer bonds with their environment and the neighbouring communities (ABI brochure, 2005)</p>	<p>devoted to developing and maintaining a dealer network which will provide superior service and excellence in customer care.</p> <p>- Fair and progressive employment practices and the development, in accordance with the Company's requirements, of the skills and potential of all its employees.</p> <p>- Keeping abreast of international best practices relating to vehicle manufacturing, distribution and</p>	<p>market niches in which we will be the recognised brand leader.</p> <p>- Create and market innovative, value-adding products that satisfy the needs of our customers.</p> <p>- Align our internal processes and systems to enable us to be customer centric, taking cognisance of regulatory boundaries and fair accounting practices.</p>		<p>available on our website (www.sanlam.co.za, n/d).</p>	<p>- To continuously grow the loyal supporter base through relevant and appropriate match day content (www.sharksrugby.co.za),</p>	
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		information technologies (www.toyota.co.za , n/d).					
3.1 How is the marketing function positioned in the hierarchy of your organisation? Is it interdependent on any other function or department?	In our organisation the marketing department is seen as a department interdependent on sales, communication and public relations.	Marketing is actually dependent on public relations and communication.	The marketing function is definitely interdependent on public relations and communication.	Marketing is seen as an interdependent department within the company. The marketing, communication and public relations departments have merged resulting in combined resources, skills and facilities.	Marketing as an interdependent function, working with other departments within the organisation (example finance). However, it is not integrated with public relations, however our organisation is currently undergoing restructuring and therefore could affect the pr and marketing departments.	Marketing as an interdependent department. The marketing department is fully integrated with the public relations department and reports directly to the CEO.	Marketing is seen as an interdependent department, incorporated with public relations and communication.

3.2 How is the public relations function positioned in the hierarchy of your organisation?	Public relations is seen as an interdependent function, incorporated within the marketing division.	Public relations is an interdependent department. It is a sub-division of the marketing division.	The public relations function is interdependent on the marketing and communication sub-departments.	The public relations, communication and marketing department have merged resulting in combined resources, skills and facilities as a result of their interdependence on each other.	Within our organisation public relations is viewed as an independent department. However, this could change as all departments are in the process of being restructured.	Public relations is fully integrated with the marketing functions as a result of their interdependencies.	Public relations is viewed as an interdependent function, incorporated with marketing and communication as this is of vital importance for the overall success of the organisation.
3.3 What is the staff complement within these departments?	We have a total staff complement of thirty-eight within the departments of public relations and marketing.	There is only two staff that make up the public relations and marketing department in Durban. However, at our head office based in Johannesburg there is a larger staff complement.	We have a staff complement of eight people within their public relations and marketing departments. However, the manager intends on revisiting the departmental structure with the	There are currently five staff members at their Durban branch.	Did not respond to this question as they were currently undergoing restructuring.	We have a staff complement of sixteen (4 full time, 2 part-time, 10 sub contractors) within the department of pr and marketing.	Our department comprises of three (2 permanent and 1 contract) staff members.

			aim of increasing the staff compliment.				
4. Is public relations involved from the inception stage of any marketing campaign?	Most definitely. Public relations is involved from the inception stage of all marketing campaigns.	Yes public relations is involved from the inception stage of certain marketing campaigns.	The public relations department is involved from the inception stage of all marketing campaigns, as it is a merged department operating under a common director.	Public relations is involved from the inception stage of certain marketing campaigns.	No, public relations is not involved from the inception stage of any marketing campaign.	Yes public relations is constantly involved in all marketing campaigns.	Yes public relations is involved in all stages of all their marketing campaigns.
5. Is there constant liaison between the public relations and marketing departments?	Indicated that there is constant liaison between the two departments as they are interdependent on each other. Both departments	Asserts that there is a constant interaction between the PR and marketing departments as these departments compliments each other.	Stated that public relations and marketing fall under a common department due to their interdependencies on each other. Therefore an ongoing relationship exists between the two	Indicated that the constant liaison between the public relations and marketing departments has led to the merging of the two departments. The functions of PR and marketing overlap to a great	Indicated that there was no evidence of constant liaison between the public relations and marketing departments. However, the relationship between the two departments could change in the near	Maintains that there is a continuous relationship between public relations and marketing. Both PR and marketing target and maintain relationships with important stakeholders.	Confirmed that the constant liaison between the public relations and marketing functions inspired management to merge the two functions.

	work very closely especially with regards to communication with the target audience.		functions.	extent as both contribute to the communication within the organisation.	further as the company was undergoing restructuring.		
6. What input does the public relations person give to marketing related activities?	Sees public relations as section of marketing that lays the platform for customer relations.	Did not respond to this question.	Indicated that public relations is involved in branding, media selection, provides press releases, copy for brochure, website management and update.	Public relations provides regional input on the needs of the province before initiating marketing campaigns, event co-ordination, media and publicity issues.	Indicated that the public relations department does not offer input into their marketing activities as they are currently seen as two separate departments.	As a result of the merging of both departments are public relations inputs into all marketing related activities from the inception to the finish.	Highlighted the interchangeable input from both functions as they have merged to form one department.
7. How do PRP's assist in recognising consumer needs?	PR is responsible for all consumer related needs, and they are the first point	The PR practitioner is responsible for conducting market research and informing the	PR is the first point of contact via media monitoring, and direct contact with the public.	Market research is conducted at regional level. Public relations keeps top-level management	Public relations is not involved in recognising any consumer needs as it is currently incorporated within	The general public has direct contact with the PR practitioner, as it is the first point of contact within the company.	They conduct market research, focus group meetings, and general feedback from

	of contact within the organisation.	organisation of the wants and needs of the market.		informed and sensitive to public opinion.	the marketing portfolio.		promotions. PR also emphasises the responsibility of the organisation to respect public interest.
8. Does the PRP assist with marketing functions, such as: packaging, advertising, customer education, etc.	The PRP only assists with customer education and launches. Packaging and advertising are dealt with by the marketing practitioner.	There is no need for packaging in our industry, but as the PR department we deal with all aspects of advertising, customer education and launches.	The PR department deals assists with all aspects of packaging, advertising and customer education.	As the department of group marketing and communication, our area of specialization includes advertising, customer education, events and sponsors.	The PRP does not assist with any of the marketing functions.	Packaging is not a marketing function practiced in our department as it is not applicable to our organisations area of specialisation. However advertising and customer education is incorporated in our merged department called marketing and communication. This department handles all PR and marketing functions.	There is no need for packaging with the PR and marketing department as that is done by individual stores. However, advertising and customer education about the centre is of vital importance to the centre. The department responsible for PR and

							marketing activities is known as the department of marketing and communication.
9. To what extent do you consider the job descriptions of the two functions overlap?	Indicated that the job functions of public relations and marketing overlap to a great extent.	The job descriptions of both functions overlap to some extent.	The functions of PR and marketing do overlap to some extent.	They overlap to such a great extent that the company is in the process of merging both departments.	Company 5 was not in a position to answer this question as they were undergoing restructuring. Although both departments are operating independently they could overlap or join together. The future of both departments are dependent on the decision of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and the Managing	Both portfolios overlap to such a great extent that the company has merged the two departments.	The both functions are currently operating as one department due to their synergistic relationship.

					Director (MD) of the organisation.		
10. Please indicate your opinion on the following statement: "The public relations function should be integrated with the marketing function."	Strongly agrees that both functions should be integrated as both departments build and maintain the relationships necessary for the company to survival.	Agree that public relations and marketing come together as a result of the functions overlapping to such great extent.	Affirms that organisational goals and objectives can be accomplished through an integrated approach with regards to public relations and marketing functions. As a leader in the communications sector, an integrated communication approach from public relations and marketing is therefore essential.	Strongly consents the integrated functioning of PR and marketing as they share a synergistic relationship.	Agree that public relations function should be integrated with the marketing function. However this may not necessarily be applied in all organisations.	Strongly agree to the merging of both disciplines given that both public relations and marketing manage the building and maintaining of long-term customer loyalty through service and two-way communication. In doing so both functions are interchangeable and share general characteristics.	Strongly agrees to marketing and public relations functions merging. One of the current reasons for the merging of the two disciplines is the downsizing and reengineering of organisations.

<p>11. 1 Has the department managing the public relations function changed over the past 5 years? If yes, please indicate these changes under each of the following headings or if no, please indicate the future plans for the public relations function within the organisation under the following headings</p>	<p>Yes, with regards to Staffing, Financing, Strategy/ objectives as well as Corporate Social Investment (CSI). Staff has increased over the past five years resulting from the growth of the company. There has been growth in the budget allocation to the department. ABI is in the</p>	<p>Yes, Toyota has changed over the past 5 years with regards to management and finance. Toyota SA has been bought out by Toyota Motor Corporation (Japan), therefore, our instructions are from a global perspective. There has also been a decrease in the budget allocation to the department. However with regards to structure, staffing and company strategy and objectives there</p>	<p>Yes there have been changes in management, structure, staffing, finance as well as the strategies and objectives of the department. Sentech's pr and marketing division has been merged over the past five years and is therefore under one management. Previously the corporate communication department was independent but now it has also incorporated pr and external communication. Staffing has</p>	<p>There have definitely been changes at ABSA. The staff turnover specifically with regional managers within Absa has been high. In the last 5years, the pr department has increased to 5 managers at regional level. This was attributed to internal transfers, retirement and more lucrative offers. In the past 5 years the pr department has undergone changes as follows: (2000 – 2002) –</p>	<p>Yes with regards to management only. For the first time management of both public relations and marketing communicate with each other about projects involving the client. This communication was brought about to avoid duplication of sponsorships. Since November 2004, the marketing division was renamed group marketing. This department oversees marketing and branding projects across many business units that operate</p>	<p>Yes, at the Natal Rugby Union (Natal Sharks) there have been changes over the past 5 years. The marketing director now oversees both the public relations and marketing portfolios. With regards to structure, the organisation is currently amalgamating job portfolios. Due to integrated and overlapping functions there has been a decrease in staffing. There is no comment on finance issues as it is totally dependent on the sponsorships and donations received every year. The strategies and objectives have not changed over the past 5 years.</p>	<p>Yes, Chatsworth Centre used to be administered in-house but is now under new management (Lifestyle Communication). The hierarchy has changed, as there are more people to report to. Staffing has increased since change of management. There have been incremental increases with the department. The strategies and objectives have definitely</p>
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<p>(where relevant): Management, Structure, Staffing, Financing, Strategy, Objectives, Other. 11. 2 Has the department managing the marketing function changed over the past 5 years? If yes, please indicate these changes.</p>	<p>process of being taken over by SA Breweries, thereby revisiting the pr and marketing strategies and objectives, and CSI has been incorporated into the pr function from inception.</p>	<p>were no distinct changes.</p>	<p>decreased over the past five years as certain functions are merged whilst other functions e.g., internal communication has been transferred to the human resource department (HR). There have been incremental increases but nothing major within the department. The strategies and objectives have definitely changed from being corporate focused to incorporating promotion and</p>	<p>The pr department incorporated pr and events, internal communication, customer service and quality, and community projects (CSI). (2003 – 2004) – The pr department underwent restructuring. The pr practitioner was expected to perform all aspects of pr functions (i.e., media, internal communication, events an communication strategies for a selected number of divisions therefore resulting in three</p>	<p>independently. However, public relations falls under corporate affairs which runs independently from group marketing and communication, however the hierarchy for marketing has changed due to the name change. However with the restructuring of the organisation there could be further changes within the departments of PR and marketing. Discussions are still in progress with regards to staffing, finance, strategies and objectives.</p>		<p>changed. They are more formalized, structured and attainable.</p>
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			communication of products and services.	communication consultants doing all facets of pr. The pr department also interacted with marketing when necessary and when initiated by head office. (2004 – 2005) – Group communication and group marketing were merged and this allowed for much more resources and information being available to both departments. Over the past 5 years the number of staff decreased as job functions were either			
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				<p>discontinued or merged, however, additional staff were appointed on an intern basis. Budgets were previously centralized in the region. However, the merger meant a centralized accounts departments in Johannesburg with budgets being controlled at head office level.</p> <p>With regards to Strategy/ and objectives the pr strategy was previously determined within the department and implemented</p>			
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				<p>accordingly. However, since the last integration between marketing and pr, the pr and marketing strategy and objective are now aligned.</p>			
<p>12.1 Please indicate how the public relations strategies differ from the marketing strategies in your company.</p> <p>12.2 Please indicate how the public relations objectives differ from the marketing objectives in</p>	<p>Indicated that there is a very thin line between public relations and marketing strategies and objectives. Public relations lay the foundation for marketing. Marketing leverages on the foundation of public relations.</p>	<p>The strategies and objectives of both functions are related as they serve each other at Toyota.</p>	<p>Public relations is focused on the corporate aspect whilst marketing is product focused.</p>	<p>No comment – as the company is undergoing restructuring.</p>	<p>The strategies and objectives between public relations and marketing differ as public relations pertains to crisis communication and corporate social responsibility projects whilst marketing focuses on advertising, media, seminar and the development of marketing strategies.</p>	<p>Both pr and marketing strategies and objectives are the same. As a result of the level of their overlapping functions a decision has been taken to merge these departments. Both PR and marketing manage communication, media, public opinion and is aimed at achieving the organisations overall goals and objectives</p>	<p>The objectives and strategies of marketing and pr are most definitely interrelated. Both deal with research of the target markets and communication.</p>

your company.							
13.1 To what extent does the public relations manager participate in top-level decision making in your company? 13.2 To what extent does the marketing manager participate in top-level decision making in your company?	Confirmed that marketing participates at a large extent to top-level decision making whilst public relations involvement is very minimal.	Marketing and public relations are to some extent involved in top-level decision making.	Marketing and public relations are to some extent involved in top-level decision making. However, the organisations need to revisit the extent to which PR and marketing is involved in top-level decision making as it impacts on the overall objectives and goals of the organisation.	Sees marketing and public relations engaging to some extent in top-level decision making.	Confirms that only marketing is significantly involved in top-level decision making. Public relations is to some extent involved in top-level decision making. (no further discussion).	Both public relations and marketing are to a great extent involved in top-level decision making.	The marketing manger (incorporating public relations functions) is to some extent a participant in top-level decision making; however the marketing manager needs to become more involved in higher level decision making.
14.1 Please indicate your opinion on each of the following	Agrees that public relations are equipped with marketing skills but	Stated that marketing and public relations graduates coming into Toyota are	Indicated that marketing and pr graduates are equipped with both skills.	Affirms that marketing and pr graduates are equipped with both skills.	Perceives that marketing graduates are not equipped with the skills of pr and	Agrees that both pr and marketing graduates are equipped with both skills.	Agrees strongly that graduates from both disciplines coming into

statements: PRP's in your company are fully equipped with marketing skills. 14.2 Marketing practitioners in your company are fully equipped with public relations skills.	disagrees that marketing practitioners are equipped with pr skills.	equipped with the necessary skills.			maintains the same view for pr graduates.		Lifestyle Communication are equipped with the necessary skills.
15.1 Does your company offer or support any internal training programme with regard to public relations and marketing? 15.2 If yes,	Offers internal training to the staff from the public relations and marketing departments. PR and marketing staff attend seminars, workshops and conferences to	Indicated that staff are sent on regular conferences and seminars to be informed keep abreast with the current practices.	Highlighted non-attendance to conferences and workshops due to cited budget constraints. However, budgets will be revisited in the near future to allow for internal training as it is of vital importance for	Indicated that internal training is offered (no further details given).	Confirmed that intern students are sent for in-house training, to become knowledgeable about the operation of the organisation. Permanent staff within the organisation attend numerous workshops and	Indicated that all staff attend seminars and workshops related to PR and marketing.	Supports internal training. Staff are exposed to various conferences and seminars relating to both PR and marketing.

what are these programmes?	kept informed with current trends and practices globally.		staff to be updated with current practices globally. With communication globalising rapidly, it is crucial for the PR and marketing departments to adopt a global view on public relations and marketing.		seminars to keep on par with current trends.		
16. To what extent do you think tertiary institutions equip public relations graduates with marketing skills and marketing	Indicated that the students or graduates they received from educational institutions are equipped to some extent with the necessary	Indicated that to some extent tertiary institutions equipped public relations and marketing graduates with skills required by industry. Problems were	Suggests that educational institutions equip students/graduates with the necessary skills required by industry has they pointed out that the students recruited for in-	Recruited students/graduates who were adequately equipped with the skills required for both public relations and marketing functions. The	Viewed the graduates as being skilled to some extent with both public relations and marketing skills. However, students should be well versed with both disciplines as this is	Affirms that graduates are to some extent equipped with both public relations and marketing skills.	Indicated that students from tertiary institutions are to some extent equipped with essential

graduates with public relations skills?	skills required, however these skills vary according to the nature of the event and skills required for that event.	encountered with student's ability to exercise what they have learnt.	service training were not adequately equipped with the necessary skills.	company emphasised their gratitude to educational institutions (DIT) for taking into consideration industrial requirements.	one of the requirements from industry.		
17. To what extent do you consider the budget for these function to be adequate?	Indicated the budget is adequate to some extent, depending on the nature of the PR and marketing campaign.	Views the budget to be adequate to some extent as budgets are allocated to specific events.	The budget is inadequate for PR and marketing functions. The company indicated non attendance to conferences and seminars due to the unavailability of funds. Budget constraints limits the development of the department.	Sees the budget to be adequate to some extent.	The marketing budget is adequate to a great extent, but the company has given a "not sure" response for the PR budget as the department is undergoing restructuring.	Indicated that the budget fluctuates as the result of varying funding received from sponsors and donors, however the budget allocated to public relations and marketing is generally adequate.	The budget is to an extent adequate for both public relations and marketing functions. However, there is a shortage of qualified staff due to budget constraints.