

Industry Snapshot: Corporate/ Professional Services



When it comes to B2B marketing, the corporate and professional services sector is quick to identify smarter, cost-effective ways of promoting their services.

“The big shift in the last two years is about spending more money on having more time with clients and creating deeper relationships,” says Louise Broekman, Managing Director of the Advisory Board Centre. Louise establishes and chairs company boards, working with a number of companies in the corporate and professional services sector.

This shift towards relationship building is happening at the same time as the cost of doing business is lessening, particularly from a marketing perspective. Ten years ago marketing spends were sitting around 14%, however this is now sitting around the 7%.

“Ten years ago there was a lot of outbound sales activity, so you would be doing a lot of cold marketing and you had to spend a lot of money to get a 1-2% conversion rate,” Louise notes. “This is versus relationship building – the investment is in time rather than advertising space.”

“The marketing strategies in the future and the way we use them for business should be a whole lot smarter, effective and really exciting.”

As the cost of marketing has decreased, businesses are able to operate more efficiently, leading to an increase in outsourcing. Louise is seeing a lot of outsourcing activity in areas of search engine optimisation, social media and website development, allowing businesses to focus on their core capabilities.

“Staffing is expensive and people’s focus and their value are eroded as they are pushed into other things,” she explains. “Whereas if you outsource a project and that firm is employed just to do that thing, the job gets done and it doesn’t get caught up in the rest of the noise of the business.”

“The problem I am seeing is that if they insource, they give their biggest marketing activity to a junior because the junior understands the technology but that is not the right person to be doing it,” she continues. As more organisations come to this realisation, they are more willing to invest in the right resources that will allow them to analyse data and build better relationships.