

# Powerful marketing strategies

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# A case study

- An introduction to United Response – who we are, what we do
- Our historical approach to marketing
- The “personalisation” agenda...
- ... and what this means for our marketing strategy

# About United Response

- Large national charity
- Supporting adults with learning disabilities, mental health needs or physical disabilities
- Range of support – supported living, residential care, outreach, day time activities, supported employment
- Turnover c. £60 million
- Almost entirely funded by contracts
- Small head office function
- Small communications team
- Very small marketing budget!



# Marketing - the traditional method...

- Purchasing and procurement carried out by local authorities
- Formal tender processes – tenders advertised; detailed PQQ; presentation
- Competing with similar providers (cross-sector)
- Preferred providers lists
- Decisions made by commissioners/funders
- Little if any user involvement in selection
- Service user allocated a support provider – little or no choice
- Budgets set centrally by local authorities – often block contracts awarded
- Ongoing marketing in terms of account management with local authorities
- Organic growth
- Supported by press and PR, information materials
- Limited value of/need for “marketing” – i.e. other than annual review, direct marketing not appropriate?

# Marketing mix – traditional model

## The United Response approach

- **Product** – tailored to each person but similar models
- **Price** – highly developed budget model with local variations
- **Place** – broad geographic coverage but different products in different areas – very tailored
- **Promotion** – built on local relationships, responding to invitations to tender, supported by Press & PR
- **People** – key to service delivery, usually team structure
- **Process** – different delivery methods but broadly shared systems and processes
- **Physical Evidence** – case studies, people sharing their own stories
- **Philosophy** – our values, policy and campaigning work.

# The shift to “personalisation”

- Arguably largest shift in social care provision since hospital closures
- Putting control into hands of users
- People receive their own individual or personal budgets
- Have direct control of how they spend their money...
- .... and who supplies their support
- Huge implications for how services are developed and delivered,
- What does this mean for our marketing strategy?

# Marketing strategy – a useful mnemonic

- **S**ituation
  - **O**bjectives
  - **S**trategy
  - **T**actics
  - **A**ctions
  - **C**ontrol
- 
- And some useful tools
  - Situation
  - External analysis
  - PEST + Competitor analysis (5 forces – direct competition, indirect competition, new entrants, substitutes)
  - Internal analysis

# Situation – where are we now?

- External analysis
  - PEST
  - Competition
- Internal analysis
- SWOT

# External analysis

- Political
  - Strong drive towards personalisation
  - Cross party commitment – likely to survive change of government
  - Political pressure to reduce prices
- Economic
  - Recession! Very strong downward pressure on prices and austere years in public spending
  - Plus more people needing social care – money needs to go further
- Social
  - People living longer - specifically, more people with much more complex needs now surviving and living longer
- Technological
  - Advances in telecare, telesupport,
  - Online marketing platforms

# Competition

- Threat of entry/barriers to entry
  - New entrants likely – individual PAs
- Buyer power
  - Local authorities hold all the cards?
  - Objective of cutting costs? Nb Resource Allocation
  - Power of end user/parents?
- Supplier power
  - Some strong brands and good links
  - Not difficult to change supplier, although emotional investment
- Substitutes
  - Technology
  - Using in different ways – e.g. support to get a job
  - Football ticket or gin & peanuts!
- Rivalry
  - Crowded market place - highly competitive
  - Public, private and voluntary sector providers
  - USP around qualitative factors – or price?

# Internal analysis

- Resources & capabilities
- Very lean centrally so need project team approach to develop new approaches
- But lots of internal expertise
- Systems and processes geared towards local authority contracts – slowly changing...
- High quality – but not cheap...
- Good geographic coverage – but not everywhere...

## Strengths

Large existing service base  
Good national coverage  
Expertise in supporting people especially with complex needs  
Person centred approach – translates naturally to personalisation  
Expert teams – local with national backup  
Award winning and good reputation  
Organic, tailored approach to delivery  
Developing links with families

## Opportunities

Few providers good at higher needs  
Few providers confident with personalisation  
Young people in transition -  
Older people – and dementia services  
Existing networks – good links  
Brokerage – selling our expertise?  
Differing pace of change – testing what works

## Weaknesses

Systems not geared up to individual budgets  
Quality approach isn't cheap  
Are we too expensive?  
We don't do everything everywhere  
Links with families are fairly new

## Threats

New entrants to the market  
Individual "PAs"  
Increased competition  
Prices driven down  
Cost main driver?  
Differing pace of change  
Limited marketing channels  
Inexperienced purchasers



United Response  
making it **happen**

# Strategic options?

- Firstly – it's happening! We need to be in it to win it.
- **Market penetration** – reaching more people with learning disabilities and their families and converting existing clients
- **Market development** – reaching new audiences – young people in transition, older people, dementia services?
- **Product development** – not just support at home but community support, support to find a job, learn skills – addressing substitutes
- **Diversification** – what else might we do? Brokerage is a big question.... And an ethical one...
- Some big questions!

# Objectives

- To grow our market share in personalisation arena
- To retain our existing client base and “convert” people to individual budgets in line with their wishes and funders’ programmes
- To grow our client base by supporting new people
- To support more young people coming through transition via individual budgets
- To test out models around personal budgets – what works
- To develop our internal systems and processes to ensure our sustainability

# Tactics – a new marketing mix

- Product
- Price
- Place
- Promotion
- People
- Process
- Physical Evidence
- Philosophy

# Product

- Product – is the product still right?
- All things to all people vs very specific “menu” of options e.g.:
  - Day time support
  - Support to find a job
  - Help with budgeting and money management
  - 24 hour care and support
  - Support with community activities, to make friends...
  - Specific opportunities for working with more young people? A different product?
- Particular expertise in supporting people with more complex needs
- Need to test! No assumptions
- Should we offer new products (e.g. brokerage)?
- What is the competition doing?
- Threat from small local providers/individuals – how can we compete?

# Price

- A very complex area!
- Do we offer different models of delivery?
- Basic price with add ons?
- Geographical variations
- Big threat from small local providers/individuals with lower prices
- What will buyers' main motivations be?
- Key influencers in purchasing decisions
- Price sensitivity vs quality?
- Hidden costs vs your peace of mind...
- Links to USP...
- ...can't compete on price alone but can be competitive and offer added value...

# Place

- United Response services tend to develop organically
- Very tailored and targeted not one size fits all
- But in this market place do we need to offer everything everywhere?
- “Global” marketing channels could create demand in new areas
- What about areas where we don’t work?
- Could we move into new areas?
- What’s our critical mass?
- Fixed vs variable vs stepped costs
- New budget model?
- Big questions re: planned vs organic growth and being able to deliver what we promise...
- Links to People and Process...

# Promotion – who do we need to reach?

- Who do we need to reach?
- Fragmented markets – complex purchasing decisions
- Who makes the decision?
- Pace of change differs from authority to authority
- Decision makers
- Purchasers
- Influencers
- Gatekeepers
- Key audiences – people with learning disabilities, parents, local authorities, advocates, brokers, social workers, young people's services...

# Promotional channels

- New purchasers – hard to reach!
- No mailing list of people with learning disabilities and their families!
- Do families read Community Care?
- United Response family magazine “In Touch”
- New promotional information – standard and accessible
- Press and PR to support – even tangentially
- Developing our website – “supporting you”
- New channels – local postcards, promotion in GPs’ surgeries
- Developing links with transitions teams and colleges
- National and local focus
- Events and workshops
- Making the most of every opportunity...
- ...and integrating our channels to make them work harder

# Promotion – getting the message right

- Segmentation - selling to people with very different level of expertise
- But channels are not precise – need to appeal to different audiences
- Buyer “literacy” varies
- Very emotive area
- Need to be very clear about we do
- No assumptions
- Testing with family members to get it right
- Terminology and key words
- USP – what do we offer that others don’t?
- Supporting people to choose what’s right for them – and what they need
- And the implications of their choice – employer vs “gin and peanuts”

# Web platforms

- Shop4support partnership
- You2choose
- United Response shop in development
- Radically new promotional and purchasing vehicle

The screenshot shows the Shop4support website. At the top left is the logo 'shop 4 support' with a shopping cart icon. To the right of the logo are links: 'Login to your account', 'Not a member? Register your interest here'. Below the logo is a navigation bar with 'Home | in Control | Contact us | About us'. A secondary navigation bar contains buttons for 'My Catalogue', 'My Account', 'My Budget', 'My Life', and 'My Basket'. A search bar is located below these buttons with a dropdown menu set to 'All categories' and a 'Search' button. On the left side, there is a 'Catalogue' section with a shopping bag icon and a list of categories: 'Help, Planning & Brokerage', 'Personalised & Domestic Support', 'Lifestyle, Leisure & Community', 'Employment, Volunteering & Enterprise', 'Houses & Accommodation', 'Finance & Legal Services', 'Nursing & Domiciliary Care', 'Health & Therapy', 'Adaptations & Equipment', and 'Mobility'. The main content area is titled 'Home' and features a 'Welcome to shop4support' message. Below this is a large image of a woman and a boy holding a bat, with text describing the service as a unique shopping experience for people with disabilities. There are two bullet points: 'Find out more' and 'Take the tour'. Below the image is an information icon and the heading 'On shop4support you can:', followed by a list of benefits: 'find support to suit you - near you', 'see feedback about organisations and people who offer support', 'find out about your support plan', and 'track the progress of your personal budget'. A quote follows: 'shop4support wants you to be in control of your life.' Below this is a section titled 'What do I do now?' with three circular icons: 'TAKE THE TOUR' (Find out about our seven steps to being in control), 'REGISTER INTEREST' (Register here to receive our newsletter), and 'SUPPLY YOUR SERVICES' (Register here to make your services and products available to the public). At the bottom of the main content area is a call to action: 'Call 01942 614 088 for more information'. On the right side, there are two utility sections: 'Set contrast' and 'Set your text size' with icons for adjusting text size, and a 'Latest news' section with three news items: 'Government's drive to personalise social care 'moved up a gear'', 'Report highlights satisfaction of people and PAs', and 'Department of Health Personal Budget date'. The footer contains 'Home | Contact us | Terms of use', 'United Response Read about our ethical values', 'Thursday 03 July 2008 - Shop4Support - All rights reserved', 'in Control', and 'POWERED by' with a logo.

## ...from wholesale to retail

- Web designed to showcase “products”
- Prices transparent
- Comparing like with like?
- Radical shift in model of purchasing – and promoting – social care
- Developing catalogue of our products to test with families
- Breaking down support actions – showing what we do
- Huge process and systems questions
- Longer term almost eBay for support?
- User feedback - accountability
- Watch this space...

# People

- More important than ever in dispersed delivery model
- Ambassadors for United Response
- Our reputation lives or dies on each individual experience
- Practice – tools for workers
- But also account management and becoming marketers
- Local staff become sales force ever more than before...
- Internal marketing training and awareness raising
- Marketing isn't a dirty word...



# Process

- Massive geographical variations in what we do and can offer
- Huge mix in terms of pace of change
- Some commissioner led
- Individual approach varies
- Shop4support and web systems – product based approach to purchasing
- Click a button to order a support worker?
- How will it work in practice?
- Big challenge for systems and managing multi strand approach

# Physical evidence



- Making it tangible
- Case studies - telling the story
- Credibility and building confidence
- Does what it says on the tin
- Walking the walk as well as talking the talk
- Third party testimonials:
  - Parents
  - Commissioners
  - Regulators
  - Customers!

# Case study

- Elizabeth Harkness, aged 56, from Carlisle, has been supported by United Response for over a year and organises her own package of support.

- She said:

"In the past it was always other people who decided things for me. They decided where I had to be and when. "Now, I have the freedom to do what I want and when I want. United Response supports me to do a lot of different things in my life. They support me to sort out my bills and arrange doctor's appointments. They also support me to go on holiday. Recently, I've been all the way to Budapest!

"I also receive support to go out to work. In my job I tell other people about how they can organise their own support. If you need support, then you should get it when you need it. You should decide."

## Case study

“The Direct Payments scheme has given my children more security and freedom and has made more things possible. Before they accessed the scheme, it felt as if many decisions about how they lived their lives were being made for them. Now they are in control. They have their own home and can choose who supports them and what support they receive. They have both used the Direct Payment scheme to access 24-hour support from United Response and it has made a real difference to them. The United Response support workers are really pro-active. My daughters now take part in a lot more leisure activities than they did before Direct Payments became available. And one of them is doing a horticultural course. The United Response support workers have also helped my husband and me provide better support for our daughters.”

# Philosophy

- More important than ever!
- Jury is still out on whether personalisation will deliver the step change it promises
- And we are not United Response plc!
- Press work and positioning – what is our policy response and how can that sit alongside effective marketing?
- Positioning – “4 legs good” vs protectionist dinosaur!
- Playing to strength re: complex needs – important that personalisation is available to all...

# Action – putting it into practise...

- We are doing all the above...
- ... but can't be prescriptive – it's very individual!
- Darren & John are establishing their own small enterprise - a coffee bar in a community centre – using a personal budget carved from ex-day centre funding.
- Another two young people in Carlisle have pooled their support to employ a worker who supports them AND to help them set up a gardening business
- Need to keep an open mind and adapt strategy – product, price – everything – as things change...

# Control - tracking what works

- Early days
- Pace of change very varied across the country
- Not one size fits all
- Need to share learning and market intelligence
- Constantly changing market so we need adapt continuously
- Systems need to run concurrently
- Still lots of challenges!

# Thank you

- [www.unitedresponse.org.uk](http://www.unitedresponse.org.uk)