

Editorial: *Waiting for the third spring, by considering all related interactions with customer that make up the customer experience and expanding our role in leading this customer experience*

We all know, of course, that “*time is the wisest counselor of all*” (Pericles), and is “the school in which we learn, the fire in which we burn” (Delmore Schwartz). But according to Max Frisch, “*time does not change us, it just unfolds us,*” and in the opinion of Tennessee Williams time is “**the longest distance between two places**” (IMO, the case of our “Holistic Marketing Management” Journal between January 2011 and December 2012). “Time goes, you say? Ah, no! alas, time stays, we go” (Henry Austin Dobson). What can say more... the will to try it and the faith to believe that it’s possible... Because as Thomas Hardy said: “time changes everything except something within us which is always surprised by change.” From the very beginning we attracted the attention that *making change* (organizational, operational, commercial) *happen is not an easy matter* because it depends on how receptive the organizational environment is to this idea of change as a two-way process, considering the degree to which forces in the task and general environments change and evolve over time, and the organization develops the skills and knowledge necessary to deal with these environmental changes while competing and cooperating according to the tone of the organizational culture (organizational structure, employment relationship, characteristics of organizational members, organizational ethics), and re-imaging and re-innovating on the basis of the managerial actions impact, knowing that the best transformation is only through an improved understanding of how people interpret their environment and choose to act, bridging the gap between top management and the whole organization by building hope and conviction. Let us also remember the importance of the quality of team relations, as well as the quality of the network in initiating partnerships, along with establishing a fluid and flexible process for planning sequential stages, of a supportive organizational culture that goes beyond just the aggregation of the three components of the holistic marketing management and finds alternatives to the current bureaucratic and disempowering management practices so as to adequately managing the probability to capitalize on the opportunity to satisfy the customers and transforming them in team members.

In our first Editorial we showed that according to Gary Hamel's Management Innovation eXchange (MIX, an open innovation project aimed at reinventing management for the 21st century), organizations must be adaptable, innovative, inspiring and socially accountable in order to thrive in the 21st century, being necessary to find alternatives to the current bureaucratic and disempowering management practices. We took into account our duty to properly understand, step by step:

- the manager’s personal development in the context of the interaction between the managerial culture, the workplace culture and the surrounding culture, as bequeathed to us **Professor ION SMEDESCU**, the Founding-President and Rector of the Romanian-American University (1991-2008), who made a constant and coherent effort to transpose in the academic landscape powerful ideas specific to the „cultural architect” that is his beloved „Marketing”, advocating for „intelligent growth”, and often speaking of the necessity of the conscious sense of the ordinance, of the beauty, in order to perform a task the right way, in joyful communion;
- the designed holistic marketing management framework as to adequately answer to the challenge of establishing the right goals, and of making the right decisions and monitoring on the way of identifying new opportunities, of creating more promising new values offering, of using capabilities and infrastructure to deliver the new offerings more efficiently (within the value chain, by proving the commitment in value exploration, creation and delivery);
- our status of both, participants and spectators of the *experience marketing* versus *experience branding*, while being involved in the „consumption” of the crisis which presupposes a rigorous analysis of instruments that bring the most;
- the difference between being responsible (in a general sense; you can delegate it) for something and being held *accountable* (more measurable; you can’t delegate it to anyone) if it goes wrong, and the actual need of the marketing organization *to become the customer-engagement engine* (a

customer engagement going beyond pure communication to include the product or service experience itself), *while considering all related interactions with customers that make up the customer experience* (challenged in turn by the multiplication of the customers renewed touch points used to to interact with companies) within the reality that the buying process has become collaborative, and must ensure critical touch points that drive engagement;

- the economic recovery of the customer relationship affected by the current crisis requires the introduction of a functional culture of the relationship marketing, a culture based on a stated commitment of the company and a detailed implementation program of this „relational culture.” It is worth to remember that within this context we assumed the following definition: *„Relationship marketing is the art of strategic building of relationships between key stakeholders brands in a organization, for the benefit of all relational landscape that stimulates the organization performance and profitability improvement, the quality and the depth of customer relationship”*;

- in order to meet the challenges posed by new technologies and maximize the success of their organizations marketers must expand their role in leading the customer experience (*considering that today's consumers are changing marketing, being well-informed, social media-savvy, more demanding - expecting current and perpetually shifting new channels, such as mobile and social, to deliver an exceptional customer experience*), remove silos and integrate across channels, and embrace a greater partnership with IT - according to the results revealed by the third annual IBM State of Marketing Survey 2012.¹

Of course, we do agree that: *“Metrics are rarely perfect... The marketing environment continues to change rapidly and often feels like a moving target that's impossible to hit.”*² But as participants at the seasonal symphony of a new Journal, we enjoy waiting for the third spring, knowing that each spring comes with its own meaningful palette belonging to the eyes that can see this palette offered by our “Holistic Marketing Management” Journal *taking place in time and using up time* as Peter Drucker said.

Theodor Valentin Purcărea
Editor - in - Chief

¹ IBM 2012 State of Marketing Survey, Marketers' Biggest Challenges and Opportunities Reveal the Rise of the Empowered Customer, <http://www-01.ibm.com/software/marketing-solutions/campaigns/surveys/2012-marketers-survey.html>

² David Court, Jonathan Gordon, and Jesko Perrey - Measuring marketing's worth, Marketing and Sales Practice, May 2012