

Why study marketing?

Do you enjoy communicating with other people? Do you like working with new media forms or trying out new products or services? Are you creative? Can you think 'out of the box'? Are you good with people as well as numbers? If the answer to any of these questions is yes, then it's already looking like a marketing degree is a good fit for you.

Marketing is considered the heart and soul of most businesses, since nearly every type of business or industry utilises marketing professionals in some way. This is probably because the success of a business is directly impacted by marketers – from the analyses of markets and consumers, to the advertising and selling of products. If you look at successful businesses like Virgin, Apple and Coca-Cola, they all have one thing in common – a successful, dynamic marketing team. In a world where social media and relationships with customers are becoming increasingly important, so too is the role of a well-rounded marketer.

What opportunities exist with a marketing degree?

Did you know, you can work almost anywhere with a marketing degree? The opportunities for marketing graduates are endless. Many companies offer internships or graduate programmes for marketing graduates as they realise the importance of filling positions with young talent. The opportunities don't stop here. Marketing covers a range of job opportunities, including branding, communications, market research, consulting, advertising and digital marketing, to name but a few.

Marketers work in a variety of industries and sectors including retail, manufacturing, financial and public services, leisure and tourism, fast moving consumer goods, advertising, and so on.

There is a good chance that you will enter the marketing profession through sales in some capacity, but having a BCom (Marketing Management) degree will enable you to easily work your way up through the ranks. Sales is, in some ways, a "hit the ground running" real-world training in marketing, and it is a good foundation for some of the higher level marketing positions available. If you like the dynamic sales environment, you can move up the ranks to sales manager. Sales managers direct organisations' sales teams. They set sales goals, analyse data and develop training programmes for the organisation's sales representatives. Most sales managers have a Bachelor's degree and work experience as a sales representative.

Some of the other positions you might land in with a marketing degree include those of marketing manager, marketing researcher, product/brand manager and account executive.

Let's explain some of the popular job titles in marketing:

- Being a *marketing manager* is a position that many marketers strive towards. Marketing managers control a number of departments, ensuring that they work together in order to maximise profit. Normally, a marketing manager will require a master's degree in marketing. Marketing managers are in charge of strategy: they identify potential markets, estimate demand and promote brands, products or services.
- A *marketing researcher* is another exciting area within marketing where you will do more behind-the-scenes analysis in order to determine consumers purchasing behaviour in an attempt to understand how to communicate the company's

products. To excel in the research field, you need, as minimum, a Bachelor's degree and a passion for numbers.

- A marketing background is also helpful for a career in advertising, where your work could include creating advertising campaigns and logos. Many graduates become *account executives* who maintain relationships with current and potential advertising accounts. An account executive acts as a middleman between a company and advertisers. They make new contacts, secure new accounts and maintain current business relationships. To survive in the dynamic advertising environment, you must have, at minimum, a Bachelor's degree and have the ability to work under pressure. Things need to happen fast in the advertising world because being first in the market with an idea or product is key to many companies' success.
- A *product manager* (also referred to as *brand manager*) is similar to a marketing manager, but is in control of one specific product (or brand), as opposed to a whole marketing strategy. Product/brand managers will certainly require Bachelor's degrees in marketing, as a bare minimum, and very well may require higher level degrees and experience, as the field is very competitive.
- Retail marketing is another fun career that includes determining what products to sell and how to promote them. Also, with the growth of online retailers, there is an increasing demand for savvy *web marketers*. A Bachelor's degree will take you a distance, but here most employers are looking for candidates with marketing experience, whether it's from a previous job, internship or side project. Because of the nature of the Internet, digital marketing is ever-changing. So here's a tip: If you don't keep up with the latest trends and news, it shows in interviews and on the job.

What does the Department of Marketing Management offer?

The staff in the Department of Marketing Management is passionate and dedicated to producing well-rounded graduates who are ready for the corporate world. The marketing programmes on offer expose students to two sides of marketing – the strategic side, which includes marketing theories and principles, as well as the practical side, including real-life case studies and projects.

The Department of Marketing Management covers the following topics as part of its BCom (Marketing Management) degree:

- On first-year level we expose you to the basic principles of marketing, followed by an introduction to marketing applications in fields such as e-marketing, services marketing, tourism marketing, business-to-business marketing, retailing and global marketing.
- On second-year level we focus on consumer behaviour and the influencers of buying behaviour, as well as integrated brand communications. We also expose the students to an integrated practical project where they have to develop a marketing offering, fully backed by a proper marketing plan and strategy.
- On third-year level we turn up the volume (so to speak) and expose the students to marketing research and strategic marketing. We also prepare students for the market with a course on personal selling. Finally, students are involved in real-life industry projects where they are required to prepare a tactical marketing plan for one or more industry partners.

The Department of Marketing Management also offers various postgraduate degrees for students who would like to further their studies:

- The BCom (Honours) Marketing Management degree focuses on the marketing of services, strategic marketing management, marketing research with a full-scale

research project, and marketing in practice where students partake in industry projects.

- The MCom (Marketing Management) degrees (two options available) focus on engaging students on specific marketing topics backed up with a research process and a research article or dissertation.
- The DCom (Marketing Management) degree comprises the writing of a thesis on an identified marketing topic with an article for publication in a recognised academic journal.

So, do you think you have what it takes to become part of one of the most exciting fields in the business world? If so, you may want to take note that successful marketing graduates are individuals who are highly numerate and have developed an essential range of business skills, including good oral and written communication, teamwork and presentation skills, a solid research background, the ability to plan and think strategically and independently, and, of course, have a passion for marketing!