

# Never the Twain Should Meet!

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and sealants industries in the past have moved into another orbit of tolerance and we in these industries must adapt or fall out of favor, thus being unable to fulfill our strategies.

There is an old saying from Rudyard Kipling, in his Barrack-room ballads, 1892: “Oh, East is East, and West is West, and never the twain shall meet.” Its meaning is simply, two things which are so different as to have no opportunity to unite. Kipling was lamenting the gulf of understanding between the British and the inhabitants of the Indian subcontinent.

In our current global communication condition, while the worlds’ physical platelets have basically stayed the same over the past 500 years, the cultural and communications dynamics have moved at warp speed in the past 75 years and are now not just bumping into each other, they are in fact overlaid onto each other. This fact is forcing the business of doing business into an exponentially more complicated and equally demanding business orbit.

The speed and market/customer demanded accuracy of communication that surround a service or product development component, therefore, requires vastly improved market demand assessment accuracies to be input with much greater speed.

In other words, the market/customer bases we’ve served in the paints, coatings, adhesives,

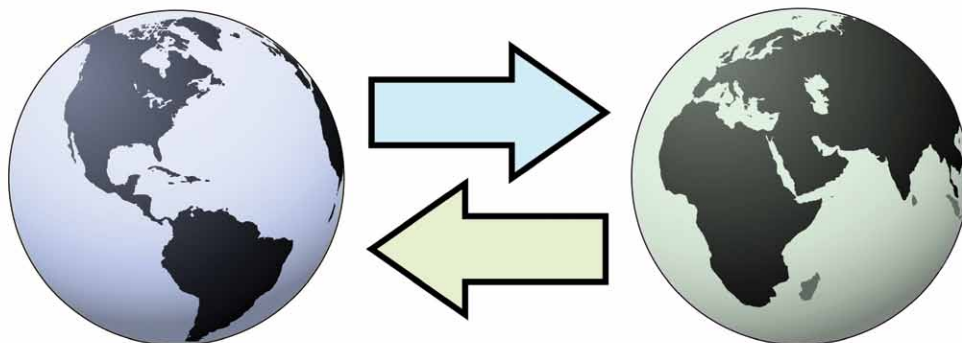
## Marketing & R&D

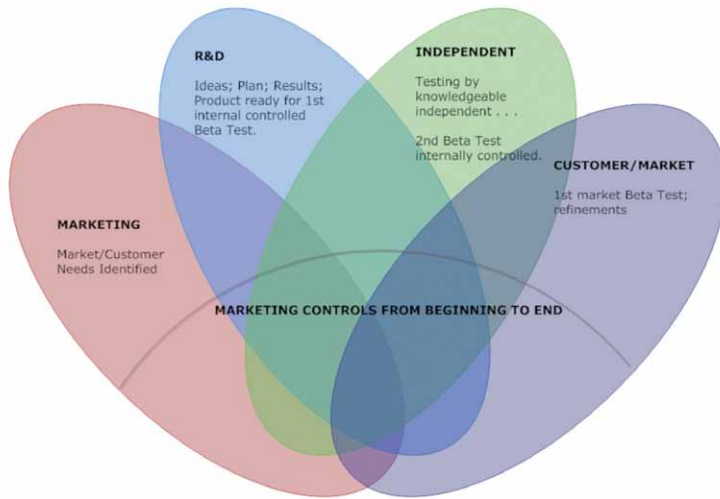
To succeed in our industries today a business must be driven by Marketing, which takes the lead from beginning to the end of a product/service development process. Assuming the Marketing function is strongly creative and narrowly focused on targeted strategic markets/customers, it must first accurately identify market needs, including but not limited to, product performance in target markets’ use environment; balance in value in price/cost ratios; and other elements that could influence product/service.

This “package” of understanding, developed by Marketing, is then brought to the internal “team” for developmental planning. The key players on this team are . . . Research & Development; Product/Service Manager; Manufacturing and Purchasing. Once the team signs off on the development plan, R&D will then produce initial products that are first tested internally to the extent of the company’s internal capabilities.

Once this is completed and the product fits the identified structural specifications, R&D will identify an outside testing facility recognized by the target market as an authority, for the first Beta Test.

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### What is a Beta Test?

Beta testing is the process of subjecting a product to testing by real customers in their real environments prior to its release. It adds a key dimension to quality testing, with its unscripted use and wide variety of environments that can't be replicated in a lab setting. SOURCE: Wikipedia

### Why do it?

For product developers, beta testing results in higher quality products, improved customer satisfaction, better reviews, and increased sales, reduced support costs, more insightful product planning, and a more positive brand image. For customers, beta testing offers the unique opportunity to

help improve products they love in a community of like-minded people. SOURCE: Wikipedia

There is normally not a first-time total success and subsequent tweaking takes place with the outside testing authority.

Assuming a product is “passed” by the outside testing facility; it is ready to be taken by the Marketing Department and designated R&D/Product Manager to the customer for its first outside Beta Test. Close communications is mandatory since procedural questions/results needs be addressed quickly and thoroughly.

There should be minimal surprises to anyone person on the team as well as within the targeted market/customer base. There are many keys to successful product development in this process. However, the one predominant key factor is having one function responsible for “herding” the essential elements over and through the critical test and communications hurdles. That function alone, should be the responsibility of Marketing. **CW**

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