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Advantages and Disadvantages of Formulating Short-Term and Long-Term Marketing Strategies

Mohammad Abbasi

Digital Marketing director Alpha 77 CORP, 21641 Canada Rd 9i Lake Forest CA 92630 USA
Email: *mamad1368abbasi[at]gmail.com*

Abstract: ***In the context of ever-increasing instability in global markets and rapid digital transformation, the issue of reconciling the temporal horizons of marketing planning acquires critical significance. This study constitutes a comprehensive system-analytical review of the advantages and limitations of short-term and long-term marketing strategies. The aim of the work is to develop an integrative model that ensures the alignment of operational marketing tactics with the long-term objectives of the organization in order to enhance its adaptability and competitiveness. The methodological foundation of the research comprises methods of system analysis and synthesis, as well as a meticulous selection and synthesis of findings from leading scientific publications and up-to-date empirical data from industry reports. During the analysis, the principal friction points and areas of potential synergy between the short-term focus on rapid results and the long-term perspective of sustainable development were identified. On the basis of these findings, an original conceptual model of dynamic strategic harmonization is proposed, grounded in the principles of flexibility in resource allocation, cyclical (iterative) review of marketing steps, and a value-oriented approach to communication construction. The conclusion of the study is that abandoning the classical dichotomous perception of short-term versus long-term and transitioning to their dialectical synthesis constitutes a necessary condition for the formation of sustainable competitive advantages in the modern economic environment. The information presented in this study will be of interest to executives and marketing directors aiming to construct a balanced strategy that simultaneously achieves operational goals and strengthens the organization's long-term market position. The theoretical contribution lies in substantiating an integrative paradigm of strategic marketing, thereby actualizing the discourse on the harmonization of temporal dimensions of management.***

Keywords: marketing strategy, short-term planning, long-term planning, digital transformation, agile marketing, sustainable development, brand management, Customer Lifetime Value (CLV), Key Performance Indicators (KPI), integrative model.

1. Introduction

In the context of the evolution of technological landscapes and the increased uncertainty of business ecosystems, strategic planning acquires entirely new characteristics of complexity. Marketers face a dilemma: on the one hand, operational tactical decisions aimed at short-term revenue growth; on the other hand, fundamental investments in brand reinforcement and the cultivation of long-term audience loyalty [11]. The significance of this study is determined by the necessity for organizations to operate in a mode of continuous reconfiguration of key processes. According to The CMO Survey at the beginning of 2024, over 73 % of marketing executives identified the ability to respond instantly to market changes as a critical factor of competitive advantage, whereas approximately 60 % acknowledged the absence of a clear correlation between short-term activations and the strategic objectives of brand development [1]. Moreover, forecast estimates indicate that global spending on digital advertising—a tool predominantly focused on immediate results—reached USD 753 billion in 2024, vividly demonstrating the predominance of the tactical approach in the allocation of marketing budgets [2]. Consequently, a theoretical and practical gap emerges: existing models frequently oppose short-term and long-term strategies, failing to consider them as complementary components of a unified dynamic system. In particular, the processes for their harmonious integration under conditions of accelerated product-line renewal and consumer-behavior fragmentation remain insufficiently explored [7, 8].

The aim of this work is to develop an integrative model that ensures the alignment of operational marketing tactics with the organization's long-term objectives in order to enhance its adaptability and competitiveness.

The scientific novelty of the research is manifested in the proposal of an original conceptual model of dynamic strategic harmonization, grounded in principles of flexible resource allocation, cyclical (iterative) revision of marketing steps, and a value-oriented approach to communication construction.

The underlying **hypothesis** posits that the implementation of the proposed integrative mechanism will not only ensure the synergistic unification of marketing efforts but also strengthen overall resilience and the organization's capacity to respond promptly to external fluctuations, as evidenced by growth in key performance indicators.

2. Materials and Methods

In the marketing planning literature, four thematic groups of sources are distinguished, each offering its own understanding of the advantages and risks of short-term and long-term strategies. The first group—reports and reviews of practicing organizations—provides empirical data on budgetary priorities and current trends. The second group focuses on conceptual models and brand value measurement. The third concentrates on organizational capabilities to adapt while simultaneously maintaining long-term objectives. Finally, the fourth combines studies that prioritize sustainable development and innovative supply chains.

The CMO Survey reports a trend toward increased interest in short-term productivity amid stagnant marketing budgets, driving CMOs to focus on tactical campaigns with rapid return on investment and to abandon riskier long-term initiatives [1]. A comparable perspective is offered by the eMarketer report, where the dynamics of global digital advertising expenditures show annual growth, yet experts note that without strategic long-term planning, the effectiveness of these investments remains limited [2]. Gartner analysts adopt a similar position: despite the optimization of current processes and the pursuit of quick wins, companies increasingly face deadlines for innovation implementation, requiring a balance between speed and foresight [11]. The HubSpot report highlights the growing importance of automation tools and urgent metrics (ROI, CPA), but points to a lack of measurements for intangible assets such as loyalty and brand trust [8]. In turn, McKinsey proposes a five-star formula for marketing excellence that combines clear goal setting, digital transformation, and long-term brand strengthening through a systematic approach to talent and technology management [7].

Conceptual studies pay attention to how short-term actions influence the fundamental elements of brand value. Oliveira M. O. R. et al. [3] describe the brand value chain linking tactical marketing activities with brand perception and financial performance, proposing a multilevel measurement methodology that integrates quantitative and qualitative metrics. Veloutsou C. [10] investigates the relationship between brand building and audience response, demonstrating that short-term advertising campaigns increase recognition, but that sustainable reputation enhancement requires investments in long-term communication and social responsibility. Cano J. A. et al. [6] analyze e-marketplaces and open innovation, showing that successful platform strategies require simultaneous attention to immediate commercial outcomes and to the development of partner ecosystems in the long term.

Organizational research emphasizes the key role of internal competencies in resolving the fast versus long dilemma. Hafifi A. A. M., Ishar N. I. M. [4] in a systematic review analyze the concept of marketing agility, considering it as the ability to quickly adapt to market changes through process modularity and decentralized decision-making; the authors warn, however, that excessive fragmentation can undermine strategic vision and jeopardize long-term projects. Chakma R., Paul J., Dhir S. [5] introduce the concept of organizational ambidexterity, describing models in which one part of the company is responsible for operational execution while the other focuses on research and innovation. The authors emphasize that the balance between exploration and exploitation functions is critical but often disrupted in the pursuit of short-term metrics.

Finally, the works of Sobczak-Malitka W., Drejerska N. [9] expand the framework of marketing strategies to include sustainable development: they demonstrate how short supply chains in smart villages can serve as a laboratory for testing and scaling long-term environmental and social initiatives, leading to a synergy of short-term economic benefits and long-term image enhancement.

The literature retains a contradiction between the need for rapid adaptation and for long-term strategic vision: some authors focus on tactics with quick ROI, while others [3, 7, 10] emphasize the importance of investments in brand and intangible assets. Meanwhile, the frameworks of organizational ambidexterity and marketing agility [4, 5] remain at the level of conceptual models without sufficient empirical validation across different sectors. Insufficient attention is given to the integration of digital channels into long-term planning, as well as to effective methods for assessing intangible assets under short-term budget constraints. There is a lack of studies on the impact of sustainable practices and smart villages on traditional business models over a retrospective period of more than three years.

3. Results and Discussion

Analysis of a broad spectrum of theoretical approaches and empirical research findings makes it possible to delineate the strengths and weaknesses of each method, providing a foundation for the development of an integrative model.

Short-term marketing strategies typically cover a period of up to one year and are aimed at achieving operational, easily measurable targets, whether growth in sales volume, lead generation, or improved conversion rates. Their principal advantage lies in the ability to monitor return on investment in real time and to rapidly adjust actions based on obtained data. The use of digital tools such as pay-per-click advertising (PPC) and social media targeting ensures instantaneous monitoring of campaign performance and allows prompt implementation of modifications in the spirit of agile marketing [4]. At the same time, such tactics entail the risk of tactical myopia: the drive for immediate results often leads to reduced price barriers and the issuance of discounts, which can undermine brand perception and devalue its reputation in the minds of consumers [9]. Moreover, a focus on easily tracked metrics (clicks, conversions) may eclipse the strategic objective of establishing robust long-term relationships with the customer base.

Long-term marketing strategies—with an implementation horizon of three years or more—primarily invest in the company's foundational assets: brand equity, audience loyalty, and reputational advantage. The principal benefit of this approach is the creation of a hard-to-replicate competitive edge. Investments in content marketing, SEO optimization, PR campaigns, and loyalty programs strengthen customer trust and emotional attachment, which over time increases customer lifetime value (CLV) and reduces acquisition cost [3]. The chief drawback of extended strategies is the delayed nature of their effects and the difficulty of directly attributing results: deferred metrics are challenging to correlate with specific expenditures, complicating the justification of budgets to management focused on quarterly reporting. Furthermore, in a highly volatile market there is a risk that a meticulously crafted strategy may become obsolete before its full realization [10].

In Table 1 a comparative characterization of short-term and long-term marketing strategies will be presented.

Table 1: Comparative characteristics of short-term and long-term marketing strategies (compiled by the author based on [3, 4, 9, 10])

Parameter	Short-term strategy	Long-term strategy
Time horizon	Up to 1 year	3-5+ years
Primary objective	Sales increase, lead generation	Brand building, loyalty
Key metrics	ROI, CPA, CR, CTR	Brand equity, CLV, NPS, market share
Speed of results	Rapid (days, weeks)	Slow (years)
Risks	Brand erosion, price wars	Loss of relevance, investment inefficiency
Primary tool	Performance marketing, promotions	Content marketing, SEO, PR, branding

The misalignment between a focus on operational tactics and investment in long-term brand development entails significant business risks. Empirical data from HubSpot indicate that 40 % of marketers experience the greatest difficulty precisely when attempting to objectively assess the contribution of their activities to overall ROI, which directly correlates with the predominance of a short-term decision-making approach [8].

To avoid this dichotomy, the concept of dynamic strategic harmonization is proposed (see Figure 1). Rather than fixing a rigid, one-time plan, this model is constructed as an iterative cycle: at the strategic level, long-term orientations and key hypotheses are established; at the tactical level, specific campaigns and activation channels are planned; at the operational level, real-time monitoring of results and parameter adjustments are performed. A bidirectional link is built between each of the three stages, ensuring constant verification of hypotheses and redistribution of resources in accordance with actual performance metrics. This approach enables simultaneous preservation of focus on brand growth and flexible response to short-term market opportunities, minimizing the risk of strategic priorities being supplanted by tactical tasks.

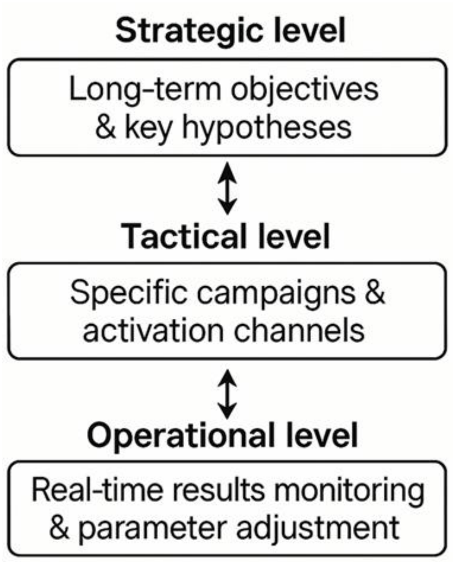

Figure 1: Model of dynamic strategic harmonization (compiled by the author based on [5, 6])

The immutable foundation of the proposed model is the strategic core that integrates the mission, vision and values of the brand. This core sets the overall ideology and tone of all marketing activity, ensuring continuity and coherence at all levels of management.

On the long-term contour (planning horizon 3–5 years) macro-target objectives are formulated, among which are the desired market share, key brand equity metrics and projected customer lifetime value (CLV). These metrics define the strategic vector of development and serve as benchmarks when assessing the outcomes of strategy implementation.

The short-term contour (planning horizon 1–3 months) is structured according to Agile principles: tasks are divided into sprints, each aimed at the empirical validation of a specific hypothesis (for example, how will conversion change upon implementation of video content in email newsletters?).

Central to the model are two complementary streams:
- Data and analytics: sprint performance metrics (CTR, CPA, CR and others) are delivered in real time not only for the operational optimization of subsequent iterations but also for the revision of long-term plans. Thus, consecutive unsuccessful experiments within a single audience segment become a signal to reconsider prospective strategies for working with that group.
- Strategic directives: top-level directives ensure that tactical decisions within the short-term contour do not deviate from the overall brand vision and its mission.

For practical implementation of the model a transformation of the KPI system is required: instead of disparate metrics of the long-term contour and the sprinters a balanced set of indicators is introduced, integrating the objectives of both horizons

Analysis of the presented data demonstrates that the integrated marketing approach creates a synergistic effect: it ensures a rapid initial impulse while simultaneously laying the foundation for sustainable exponential growth on medium- and long-term horizons, surpassing in efficiency both purely traditional and exclusively digital strategies. Accordingly, the structure of marketing budget allocation should reflect this dual dynamic, providing a harmonious combination of initiatives aimed at immediate responses and activities designed to strengthen the brand in the long term. Contemporary trends recorded in Figure 2 indicate a noticeable shift toward digital channels, which are most often employed to achieve short-term objectives. However the proposed harmonization model does not deny their significance and strongly recommends integrating their tools into a unified brand-building strategy built upon long-term principles.

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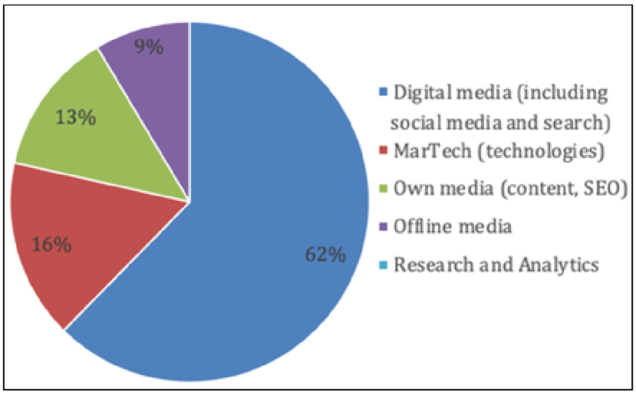

Figure 2: Approximate distribution of marketing budgets in large companies in 2024 (compiled by the author based on [1, 2, 7]).

Implementation of the dynamic harmonization model creates a mechanism whereby the vulnerabilities of each method are transformed into their antitheses. Thus the limitations of tactical targeting in short-term strategies are offset by the integration of a long-term orientation, while the potential inertia and tendency toward obsolescence of long-range plans are smoothed out through adaptability and continuous feedback generated by short iterations. This allows the focus of the discussion to shift from the dilemma of which path to choose? to the question of how to integrate approaches? The proposed framework model converts the process of strategy utilization from intuitive expertise into a precisely regulated managerial algorithm. At the same time the specific calibration of component balance (see Table 2) varies depending on the current stage of the product life cycle or the corporate development of the organization.

Table 2: Matrix for selecting strategic focus depending on product life cycle stage (compiled by author based on [3, 5, 8])

Stage PLC	Primary objective	Dominant focus	Key metrics
Introduction	Awareness building	Hybrid (70% long-term, 30% short-term)	Reach, brand awareness, initial leads
Growth	Market share capture	Balanced (50/50)	Sales growth rate, customer acquisition cost (CAC)
Maturity	Profit maximization, retention	Hybrid (40% long-term, 60% short-term)	CLV, ROI, share of wallet (Share of Wallet)
Decline	Cost optimization	Predominantly short-term (90/10)	Profitability, CPA

Thus, it is emphasized that in contemporary conditions the independent application of either short-term or long-term strategies does not ensure the expected effectiveness.

The true strength of strategic management lies in their mutual interweaving, implemented through a cyclical approach to planning, bidirectional circulation of information flows and the use of a harmonized system of key performance indicators.

The dynamic strategic harmonization model serves as the theoretical basis for implementing this principle in practice, providing organizations with the ability to maintain operational adaptability while ensuring systematicity and consistency in strategic decisions.

4. Conclusion

Within the framework of the conducted analysis, the interaction between short-term tactical and long-term strategic marketing initiatives in a dynamically changing business landscape was examined. It was revealed that the traditional either–or dichotomy, which places operational measures in opposition to long-term planning, not only diminishes managerial effectiveness but also impedes the formation of a coherent strategy. The study's conclusion is that only through the mutual integration and alignment of the temporal horizons of marketing activities is it possible to achieve sustainable growth and strengthen a company's competitive advantages.

During the course of the research, it was demonstrated how the synergistic combination of lightning-fast tactical steps and a strategically forward-looking vision contributes not only to a rapid return on investment but also to the accumulation of long-term brand value and the extension of the customer lifecycle.

The practical significance of the model lies in its applied potential: the proposed tools—priority-focus matrix, principles for constructing balanced KPIs, and the cyclical analysis protocol—can be directly implemented by marketing departments and senior management to build an adaptive yet resilient marketing function. Abandoning simplified binary logic in favor of a dialectical synthesis proves not to be an abstract theory but a necessary condition for survival and prosperity amid constant transformations of the market environment.

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