



Center of Marketing Advantage Advancement and Action

CM3A NEWS ♦ April 2025



Editorial: Relaunching of the Center

The Center for Marketing Advantage, Advancement, and Action

www.business.rutgers.edu/cm3a) comes out of the merger of two centers and several labs: the Center for Marketing Research and the Center for Market Advantage, which also housed the Lab for the Advancement of Nonprofits. It aims to offer consulting services to New Jersey corporations and small business enterprises (SBEs), nonprofit organizations, and government agencies at a fraction of market cost, based on graduate and undergraduate student teams that work on semester-long projects under the coordination of an experienced faculty member who sets the bar high enough to exceed clients' expectations.

We have already worked on roughly 40 projects for the Panamanian Museum of Contemporary Art, the YMCA of Newark and vicinity, the NJ Department of Children and Families (DCF), Carelink, Restmo, and others with excellent results. Our teams follow a detailed due process that illuminates the criteria of our clients and then delve into their needs, be it consumer or market research, strategy mapping, core process alignment, or other requirements.

We welcome you to our network, hoping to serve you in the near future.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading 'Francisco J. Quevedo'.

Francisco J. Quevedo
Executive Director

Spotlight: “Mommy, I can’t be a Super-Hero...”

When in 1984, Professor Yla Eason’s son told her, “Mommy, I can’t be a superhero because He-Man is white!” She discovered a huge racial void in toys. She spoke with other mothers who said the absence of a Black action figure for their sons to play with was a concern to them as well and began researching the toy industry. How big is the market? How many children are there? How many children of color are there? What kind of revenues are coming from the action figure market?

Her research proved there was a market and an unmet need for multicultural action figures and dolls. None were being produced, so she decided to make them.

After securing investors and developing her product, Professor Eason founded Olmec Toys (www.olmec toys.com) and introduced Sun-Man



After proving that the “ethnically correct” action figures sold, she approached the larger retailers, eventually growing the company to \$5 million in sales, with worldwide distribution in major retailers. Other toy manufacturers later followed Eason’s lead and created multi-racial toys and dolls. Olmec’s success remains a case study for business school classes teaching multicultural marketing.

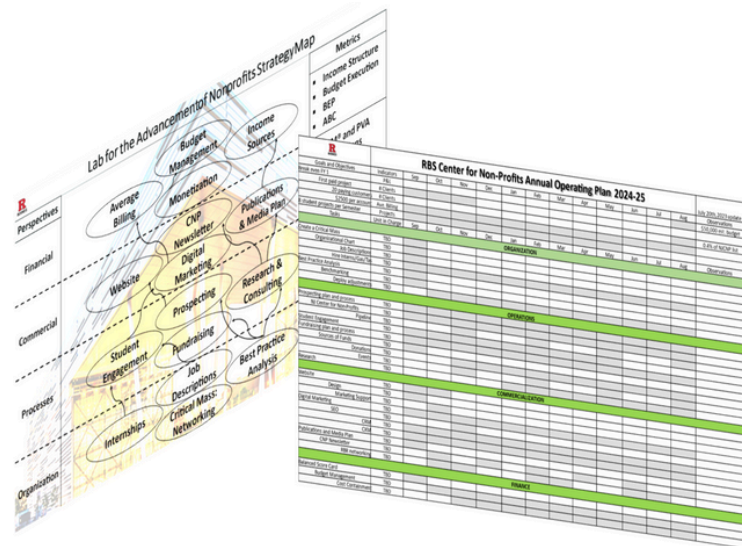
What took Sun-Man® to new heights, however, was her clever alliance with Mattel. The toy carries the SKU number HDR90 and contributes to the company’s sales revenue, which reached \$5.38B in 2024. He-Man® and his newer masters of the universe are making a comeback, having reached worldwide sales of \$400 million in the past and now extending into Netflix.

“Reintroducing a Black hero for today’s kids not only feels good, it feels important,” said Professor Eason to The New York Times. “Sun-Man is such an aspirational character, from his aesthetic design to his character traits and powers.”

Way to go, Professor Eason!

CM3A Tips: Core Processes Mapping

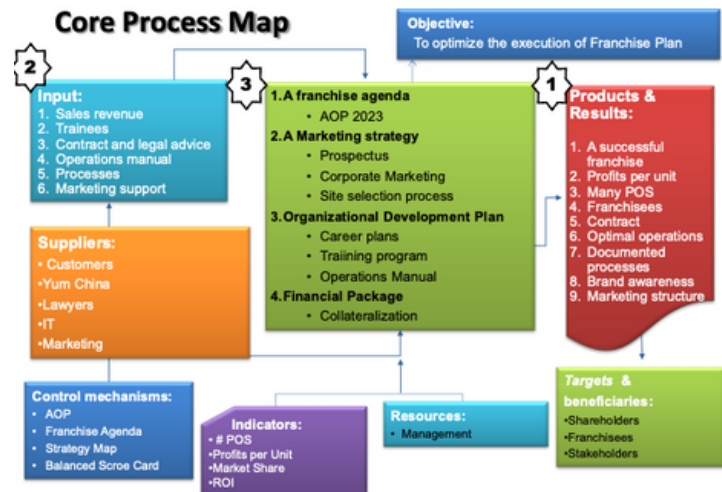
What happens when you've finished your Strategy Map and need to migrate those bright ideas like "Branding" or "Networking" or "Franchising" into an AOP (Annual Operating Plan) but cannot come up with the details that make the strategy possible, that actually translate those labels into precise actions and responsibilities (see graph on the right)?



The answer: **Try Core Processes Mapping!**

Core Processes Mapping will ask you quite simply "(1) what is the outcome of the initiative, i.e.: what are the results of -say- "Franchising," (2) what do you need to achieve them, and then (3) what must you do to make them a reality?"

In the exercise to the right, "a successful franchise" required a detailed Franchise Agenda to be inserted into the AOP, for example, and opening many POPs demanded a prospectus to attract franchisees.



Core Processes Mapping creates a bridge between the Strategy Map and the AOP; it allows filling the blanks that turn ideas into actions. Words like "Business Intelligence" are translated into Consumer Research, for instance, or Market Research, Benchmarking and Best Practice Analysis, or Site Location Studies; and then "Consumer Research" turns into Focus Groups, and/or Surveys. The exercise brings up the detail that makes the strategy possible.

The Academic Corner by Professor Can Uslay, Ph.D.

The Unconventional Wisdom of the Nonprofit

“The 20th century was the century of business, the next century is going to be the century of the social sector.”

- Peter Drucker

Welcome to the inaugural issue of our center's newsletter! As a career academic, I have attended dozens of conferences and found out that the most often quoted thinker by keynote speakers is, invariably, Peter Drucker. Drucker arguably was (and for me remains) the greatest management thinker of all time. I have had the opportunity to spend time in the archives of the Drucker Institute in Claremont, California, and examine his contributions to the discipline of marketing in the past. I think reflecting on his insights provides a great starting point for us as we embark on this journey.

Drucker felt it was crucial to examine the often-overlooked wellspring of management and marketing wisdom found within the non-profit sector. Half of his consulting time was allocated to non-profits, which enabled him to foresee social sector developments well ahead of others. He also considered non-profit organizations to be the research labs of the next society. To him, social innovation was more significant than that of high-tech. Yet too many businesses, fixated on the bottom line, neglect the profound lessons these organizations offer.

For too long, the for-profit world has operated under the assumption that its models are inherently superior, that the pursuit of profit is the singular metric of success. However, the non-profit sector, driven by social mission rather than shareholder value, offers a unique perspective on organizational effectiveness and sustainability.

One of the most striking lessons gleaned from non-profits is the power of a clearly articulated and deeply ingrained mission. In these organizations, the mission is not a mere statement on a website; it is the very essence of their existence. It serves as a compass, guiding every decision, every action, and every allocation of resources. This clarity of purpose fosters a sense of unity and commitment among employees and volunteers alike, creating a powerful engine for achieving organizational goals.

Businesses, in contrast, often struggle with mission drift, succumbing to the pressures of short-term gains and fluctuating market demands. They lose sight of their core values, leading to a diluted sense of purpose and a decline in employee engagement. By adopting the non-profit's unwavering commitment to mission, businesses can cultivate a more cohesive and motivated workforce, one that is driven by a shared sense of purpose beyond mere financial incentives.

Thus, businesses can learn immensely from non-profits: the power of a clearly articulated mission to galvanize employees, the importance of rigorously evaluating performance against that mission, and the necessity of building a workforce driven by purpose, not just profit. Too many brands have recently ventured into and caught up in the storms of socio-political activism without compelling authenticity. It is not for everyone, but it can be a highly viable strategy for those who have mastered the lessons from non-profits.

Furthermore, leading non-profits excel in the art of measuring and demonstrating impact. They too, understand that accountability is paramount, not just to donors and funders, but to the communities they serve. This rigor in impact assessment forces them to be precise in defining their goals and meticulous in tracking their progress. Businesses can learn from this disciplined approach to performance evaluation. By focusing on outcomes rather than mere outputs, they can gain a deeper understanding of their true effectiveness and make more informed strategic decisions.

Another crucial lesson from the non-profit sector is the mastery of resourcefulness. Operating with limited budgets and often facing significant constraints, these organizations cultivate a culture of innovation and efficiency. They are masters of leveraging existing resources, finding creative solutions, and maximizing impact with minimal input. In that sense, the non-profits are more entrepreneurial than most large businesses! This demonstrates that innovation is not solely a product of abundant resources; it can thrive in environments of scarcity.

Moreover, non-profits understand the power of volunteerism. They recognize that human capital, when driven by passion and purpose, can be an invaluable asset. They cultivate a culture of collaboration, leveraging the skills and expertise of individuals who are motivated by a desire to make a difference. Businesses can learn from this by fostering a sense of community and purpose among their employees, recognizing that intrinsic motivation can be a powerful driver of performance.

Finally, non-profits excel in stakeholder engagement. They build strong relationships with diverse groups, from donors and beneficiaries to community leaders and government agencies. This demonstrates the importance of understanding and responding to the needs of all stakeholders, not just shareholders. Businesses must realize that sustainable success is built on a foundation of trust and collaboration.

In an era marked by increasing social and environmental challenges, businesses can no longer afford to operate in isolation. They must embrace a more holistic approach to management, one that considers the needs of all stakeholders and contributes to the well-being of society. By studying and adopting the lessons of the non-profit sector, we can create a new paradigm for business, one that prioritizes purpose, efficiency, and stakeholder value.

Let this center be a catalyst for this transformation. Let us bridge the gap between the for-profit and non-profit worlds, fostering a dialogue that leads to a more sustainable and equitable future. Drucker believed that there was more “from the nonprofits to be applied to business than the other way around.” Let us work together to explore, articulate, and implement these lessons.

References

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News: Highlights

We are busy preparing for the 7th Annual Marketing Summit, which will focus on “Transformative Marketing” as a force of development and constant change. The date is still being decided, but it will surely be in November at our Livingston Campus.

Last year, we hosted top corporate speakers (see flyer on the right) who attracted a large audience, both in person and online. This year, we intend to better ourselves.

Save the date; don't miss it!



Other upcoming events that may be also of interest to our corporate, nonprofit, and governmental audiences are:

- ✓ **Conference:** [Poverty | Equity | Influencing Factors: A REACH Symposium](#)
 - Wednesday, April 09, 2025, 9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.
- ✓ **Virtual Workshop:** Personal Strategy Mapping Workshop at Humanitas University, Milan, Italy |
 - Wednesday, April 09, 2025 | <https://www.hunimed.eu/in>
- ✓ **Presentation:** CRXM: 360° Customer Centricity at the 2025 Sales Management Engagement Forum, New Brunswick
 - Tuesday, April 22, 2025 | <https://members.thesmeforum.net/event/2025-spring-sme-forum/>
- ✓ **Virtual Webinar:** [Resilient Leadership: From Internal Strength to External Impact](#)
 - Wednesday, May 21, 2025, 12:00 p.m.–1:00 p.m.



Feedback: Please send us your comments and events to cm3a@business.rutgers.edu



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