Atos entry – Catherine Howard – Marketer of the Year





Category number: 24

Category name: Marketer of the year

Name: Catherine Howard

Job title: Head of UK & Ireland Marketing

Company name: Atos

Summary page

This submission describes how Catherine Howard (Cat) has transformed the perception of marketing within Atos from being “reactive, not visible and having little budget” to a “proactive, approachable and professional” team within a 12 month period.

Stepping into the role in February 2014, Cat undertook a thorough review of attitudes to marketing and her team’s past delivery through 1-1 meetings with business stakeholders, an online survey and 1-1 meetings with team members. Having identified the underlying issues, she set a vision, clear direction and led the team in realigning its objectives to match those of the business. She has transformed marketing’s culture, addressed morale issues and introduced new processes and business leading programmes.

Cat developed a business led marketing strategy, presented this to the Board and secured an increased budget to implement it. Since the plan’s implementation, the team are now delivering a phenomenal return on that investment, able to demonstrate measurable contribution to Atos’s business growth and receive consistent praise from stakeholders.

Main submission

About the candidate

Cat Howard is Atos' Head of UK & Ireland (UK&I) Marketing. Appointed 15 months ago, Cat leads the company's marketing function, manages the whole marketing team on a day-to-day basis and reports directly into the UK&I Board. Since joining, she has set marketing's objectives and aligned all these to delivering business value.

Previously, Cat was at Fujitsu for 11 years, rising from graduate entrant to Head of Private Sector Marketing. Having undertaken business and marketing related roles, she completed the Windsor Leadership Programme 16 months ago which gave her the confidence to apply for her current position. Cat has won numerous awards and is a Chartered Marketer.

The brand they work for

Atos in the UK&I is a leader in digital services, with annual revenues of £1.3 billion, employing 10,500 employees. Atos works with clients across all industries. Atos solutions include consulting, systems integration, managed services, business process outsourcing, cloud operations, Big Data, security and transactional services. Within the UK&I, Atos is ranked 10th in IT Services revenue according to TechMarketView.

Significant career achievements

- In 2013, Cat received a Leadership award for '*Bringing out the Best in People'*, recognising her team leadership during her time at Fujitsu.

- In 2010-2011, Cat introduced a new programme to '*Enable Field Sales to deliver Business Results*' which resulted in a 21.6% increase in opportunities, improved win rate to 1 in 3 and provided Sales teams with >£30m opportunities. Cat received a Diamond ITSMA Award and developed a passion for utilising marketing to deliver business results.

- In 2008, Cat managed her first employee, Russ Powell, which made her realise she wanted to lead others. Since then, Cat has managed another 28 people.

Achievements in the last 12 months

Cat's immediate challenges were to establish the value of marketing to Atos and build a professional marketing team.

Situation Assessment
Cat thoroughly reviewed the capabilities, experience and knowledge her team possessed, their engagements across Atos, Atos' views of marketing and what was needed.

Cat held 1-1 meetings with Atos UK&I Board members, client-facing teams and team members. She also ran an online survey across the wider organisation.

Team Reinvigoration
Firm in her belief that marketing is about delivering business value, Cat set a vision, clear direction and restructured the team, aligning people and activities to the business and its objectives. The new structure provided main business stakeholders with a day-to-day contact who took ownership for engagement and delivery.

A new team culture was established based on collaboration, trust and Cat's energetic enthusiasm. Cat sat with the team daily to provide guidance, support and imbed good line communication. Cat introduced weekly calls, monthly team meetings chaired by a different member of the team each month, regular 1-1's, pay realignment, celebrations of successes and provided wider access to professional memberships and training.

Future Planning
This was all underpinned by a new marketing strategy, with integrated objectives for each deliverable, clear metrics and business language familiar to stakeholders.

In July, Cat presented the plan to the Board to position marketing as vital to future growth and seek backing with a budget commitment. She prepared carefully, spending time with each Board member beforehand to understand their needs and wants in terms of a 'return' on marketing investment. Her bid was successful. Marketing was allocated an increase to its previous half-year budget.

Delivering results
To track the ROI committed to the Board, Cat holds a weekly KPI call to log achievements against each outcome. Results are tracked using Atos' CRM system.

Through Cat's leadership, marketing is over-exceeding on targets, has been awarded 4 individual accolades and received fantastic, positive feedback daily

from stakeholders about its value-added impact, professionalism and business understanding. The transformation of marketing within Atos is evident in the results from the survey retaken in April 2015.

Strategic vision and/or impact on the business

In joining Atos, Cat outlined the Marketing vision:

To be a Leading IT Services Marketing team that is known internally and externally for **delivering business value** through:

- Building Atos' reputation and awareness in the market
- Driving new business through demand generation (filling the pipeline)
- Supporting the growth of the business with target sectors (sector marketing), existing accounts (account based marketing) and securing new names (bid marketing).

Impact on other employees and departments

Through a stakeholder plan, Cat ensures each team member is engaged with their business stakeholders through regular 1-1's and attending their team meetings. Cat creates a quarterly communication which is posted on the UK&I Marketing community site, created in May 2014 for active engagement with the business. Cat holds monthly 1-1's with each board member and shares good news stories with them weekly. Cat proactively engages externally with marketing and business networks including B2B Marketing, where she presented at March's InTech Conference.

Colleague testimonials

"Cat Howard is a marketing leader who enthuses positivity and encouragement for individuals and the team, driving forward and making a real difference to the company brand and strategy. She has turned marketing from a buzzword into a business."
Stacey Shurlin, Marketing team member

"Cat's biggest achievement is the way she has ensured that marketing is not only represented at Board level, but revered as a strategic function. Her direction and tenacity has got marketing a seat at the top-table."
Vicki Evans, Marketing team member

“I thought you presented really well today. It was a tough room to work as there were strong opinions and getting everyone to truly listen was hard. I think trust was a key point - they should trust you and judge you on the results.”
John Yarwood, VP, Central Government, Atos (following the Board presentation).

Submission ends