The Marketing Practice

**Category number:** 22

**Category name:** Marketer of the Year

**Name:** Paul Stevenson

**Job title:** Head of Enterprise Marketing Programs

**Company name:** Telefónica O2 UK



B2B Marketing AWARDS 2012 FINALIST

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## Summary

Paul Stevenson has driven the evolution of the O2 brand as a leader in the enterprise space.
The challenge was to establish O2, a top 20 consumer brand, as a credible and distinctive player in the enterprise communications market, which is commoditised and has many established competitors.
He has found a way to unify the usually disparate disciplines of sales and marketing to create a truly integrated approach to message development and delivery. This integration also allows campaigns to be based on close insights into the customer's world, based on feedback from field-based and desk-based sales teams, as well as research. In the year 2011/12, Paul was responsible for campaigns that exceeded the target of leads and pipeline value. *[Details of leads and pipeline value were provided to judges in the original submission but are commercially sensitive and therefore confidential]*

Word count: **125 words**

## About the Candidate

Paul Stevenson has more than 20 years' experience of business-to-business marketing. He worked in the financial services, manufacturing and technology sectors before arriving at O2 in 2004.

His roles have included channel marketing development, creation of a retail strategy focusing on large/medium enterprises, and his current focus on lead generation marketing programmes with enterprise customers.

### Qualifications:

Certificate in Management Studies Diploma in Management Studies

## The Brand they work for:

O2 is a Top 20 consumer brand in the UK. Best-known as a mobile operator, it has interests as diverse as world-famous music venues, through to enterprise-class communications consultancy and service provision.

Paul Stevenson is part of the O2 enterprise marketing team, which is focused on helping customers to move voice, mobile and data networks onto consolidated, simplified and optimised infrastructures.

O2 is a relative newcomer to the market, which is heavily commoditised and, historically, price-driven. A key challenge is to protect and increase profitability by showing customers and prospects added value.

O2's strategy is based on transformational technologies that enable enterprises to adopt new working practices, ready for a new kind of economy and competitive environment.

## Significant career achievements:

**O2 Retail Channel** – Driving and supporting a growth of over 200% in an 18-month period. Development of an SME channel program deployed through 400 stores and 4,200 sales staff. The goal was to increase the sales and referral volumes from small business customers. Included sales incentives, reward/recognition programs, a learn and earn education programme, sales referral incentives and proposition launches through retail and franchise-owned stores.

**Regional Marketing Manager, O2, with responsibility for Scotland, Northern Ireland and Northern England** – Business market share increased from 28% to 38%. *[Annual local budget provided to judges in the original submission but are commercially sensitive and therefore confidential]*

**Head of Enterprise Marketing Programs, O2 –** Development and launch of a series of Enterprise-focused propositions, under the banner 'Joined Up Business'. Paul took the O2 brand, which has an unconventional tone-of-voice for the enterprise sector, and applied it as a competitive differentiator in a commoditised and sluggish market.

He evolved the structure, bringing sales and marketing channels together in integrated campaigns that draw heavily on customer research and direct feedback from customer-facing teams, field-based and desk-based.

The programme is still evolving, but it has already over delivered on leads and pipeline. *[Details of leads and pipeline value were provided to judges in the original submission but are commercially sensitive and therefore confidential]*

## Achievements in the past 12 months

The first O2 enterprise sales and marketing programme under the Joined Up Business banner was Joined Up People, which delivered more than 250 qualified leads in six months. (beating the target). *[Details of pipeline value were provided to judges in the original submission but are commercially sensitive and therefore confidential]*

It followed the award-winning (Best Lead Nurturing Campaign, B2B Marketing Awards 2011) Reduced Cost And Complexity (RCC) programme. The RCC programme was based on independent market research into 300+ leading organisations. The findings were used to develop a model that benchmarked an organisation's communications performance against agility and cost efficiency.

O2 propositions were matched to the model and used to develop a business case for change and a route forwards.

## Creative or original thinking in tackling marketing challenges

A key differentiator for O2 in the enterprise sector is the fact that it is one of its own best case studies. As its propositions have evolved and new technologies have been added (landlines, broadband, managed services) it has adopted the solutions for itself, following the processes of consultancy it recommends to customers.

Paul Stevenson has championed the approach, recognising that customers trust organisations that practice what they preach. The 'Our Story' series of customer-facing documents gives O2 sales people a competitive edge – other providers in the enterprise space cannot present such a coherent and compelling message about how the technology works for them.

Paul's strategy is to align O2's own experience with the customer's world, showing parallel pain points and ways of dealing with them. The sales team can offer customers short cuts around common problems and show them proven benefits from the technologies they are proposing as solutions.

The ultimate example of this was O2's flexible working day, in which nearly everyone based at the head office in Slough worked remotely. The enterprise marketing team, under the guidance of Paul Stevenson, developed a campaign under the banner Business Readiness, which engaged customers in the whole project. It encompassed direct marketing, a dedicated website, video, PR and social media. The messages centred around the need to be prepared for the disruption caused by the Olympics and the Jubilee celebrations. Through the campaign, O2 proved it is possible to run a big organisation without a big office.

## Contribution to the wider marketing or business community

Paul Stevenson is an advocate of skills development. He recognises that it involves more than man-management and training days. He mentors people within his team and others outside his team, to help them develop their strategic thinking and understand the value of faultless execution. As well as weekly operational catch-ups, he's developed a template for monthly 121s which track progress and development through the year, as well as capturing some of the softer aspects of how his team are feeling, not just performing. Each year, he sets himself the goal of preparing one of his team ready to manage a new team in the following year.

## Impact on the personnel within the organisation

Paul is a strong member of the management team. He's collaborative and takes the time to seek feedback on his people and programmes. He chooses to serve as the marketing specialist for O2's Connected Markets sales teams, opening up a channel to get direct feedback into the marketing team's programmes to test ideas and shape award-winning campaigns.

He also helps skill them as a team so they can promote propositions more comprehensively with their customers, and follow up on marketing execution to improve the volume and quality of lead-generation. Paul is always ready to serve as a sounding board for other managers, he is constructive yet challenging in his approach. He's a great believer in sweating marketing assets and using different media – and other teams within O2 – to communicate the messages at the heart of O2's propositions.

## Testimonials

**"Not only a great marketer who can drive campaigns forward, but also an intuitive business-thinker who has been indispensable in crystallising our new propositions. That's what makes Paul the kind of person who is going to have an undeniable impact on where our business goes."**

*Oliver Potter, Head of Enterprise Marketing, Telefónica O2 UK*

**"Paul's insight and tenacity have helped us take a story to the market that's driving customers to O2. He and his team are explaining just why businesses should be talking to us for all their ICT needs and it's exciting to work alongside them."**

*Fiona Pearl, Head of Customer Engagement, Telefónica O2 UK*

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