

HOW TO COPE WITH THE EXPLODING NEED FOR MARCOM

by using an onshore-offshore team



ABOUT THE AUTHOR



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Debra is a seasoned marketing strategist with more than 20 years' experience rooted in core database marketing methodologies, CRM best practices and measurement-driven strategic planning.

She believes in thorough business analysis and discovery techniques to gain a clear understanding of the client's business, goals, processes and areas of opportunity.

Debra's breadth of experience spans several industries, b2b and b2c, with both corporate and agency roles contributing to her marketing expertise. Financial services, office products/business services, automotive, business intelligence, event marketing, security services, and vacation membership services - to name a few.

Prior to Hansa, she held management roles at Navistar, Trans Union, ADP Dealer Services, Allant Group, Reliable Office Supplies, Townsend Agency, Marcoa Direct Advertising and has also worked with a variety of industry leading companies to provide strategic planning, go-to-market strategies, process improvements, marketing implementation and measurement.



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WHAT IS A CAMPAIGN?

What is a marketing campaign anyway? When we think of traditional outbound campaigns, we think of arbitrary campaign calendars planned way in advance with little consideration to individual customer behavior. Outbound campaigns might have attractive designs but the messages are usually one-size-fits-all. In other words: irrelevant. The more messages the customers receive, the more annoyed they get.

By contrast, putting the customer in control turns marketing campaigns into relevant experiences. The word campaign no longer applies really. Customers control the timing. Customers control the content.

But all this customization puts pressure on marketing teams. There has been an explosion in personalization and versioning which require more digital assets staged and ready to be summoned by campaign



tools. Mix in predictive analytics to vary copy, imagery and offers, and marketers suddenly have a lot more to produce.

Most marketers can't keep up with the need. As a reaction, marketers have considered offshore teams with dreams of doubling productivity by getting work done overnight. At Hansa, we've been working on this for years and have some advice to share on how to make it work.

MAXIMIZE YOUR TEAM TO COVER MORE GROUND

The most successful offshore teams have onshore leads.

Client questions come fast and furious during our day while offshore resources are sleeping. Sometimes, we want to react to a competitor. Other times, we are adjusting our strategies based on experiments and analysis.

Spreading out the teams is a must: a mix of local and offshore. At Hansa, we have a business model we call **Hansa Three-O**: onsite-offsite-offshore.



When it makes sense, we place resources at a client site and our team becomes part of our client's culture and functions as an extension of their team. We are in the room contributing when the client is setting strategy and prioritizing their marketing efforts.

- We embed resources onsite**
We become part of the culture, attending meetings, using client technology, becoming a part of their team.
- We add offsite resources**
This adds subject matter expertise and strategic oversight from experts in the field.
- The offshore team provides round-the-clock service**
Hansa executes campaigns around the clock in a continuous stream of work.



ONSITE



OFFSITE



OFFSHORE

TEAM COMMUNICATION IS CRITICAL

Communication is the key to making the model work, beginning with effective handoffs between the US and India teams. This is important because we are constantly passing work back and forth, underlining the need for clarity, structure and understanding. So, written communication is the foundation for success including:

- **Campaign briefs** to identify target audiences and behaviors, outline segmentation and testing, and specify the personalization required
- **Quality Assurance** processes with several layers of checks (e.g., consistency checks, threshold checks, inspection of real data)
- **Measurement plans** with alerts and dashboards that lead to decisions and actions

A lot can get lost in translation so be careful of jargon. Sports references are particularly bad since they may mean the opposite of what you intend.









For example, when an American says we should “punt”, they mean give up and try something else. To an Indian ear, “punt” means go forward and place a bet (take the risk). Real-time communication is also important. Screenshot applications such as WebEx or Skype help with collaboration and problem-solving while regular communication is done with WhatsApp, email and calendars to orchestrate all the players and components of high volume campaigns. Recordings can be particularly valuable as well.

LEVERAGE TIMEZONES

Timezones can work for or against you. Effective hand-offs between teams are the key to extend the workday and reward marketers with completed work every morning. Without a strong process, you can end up with questions waiting for you instead. Don't expect productivity instantly by fielding an isolated offshore team.

At Hansa, we have teams based in the US and India, occupying opposite timezones. To ensure good coordination, schedule check-ins twice a day. The benefit of an evening touchbase is that changes during the US day can be shared as India starts their workday. You can ensure questions are answered right away.



 US EST	 India IST
Morning Touchbase	
08:00 am to 11:00 am	05:30 pm to 08:30 pm
	
Evening Touchbase	
05:30 pm to 08:30 pm	08:00 am to 11:00 am
	

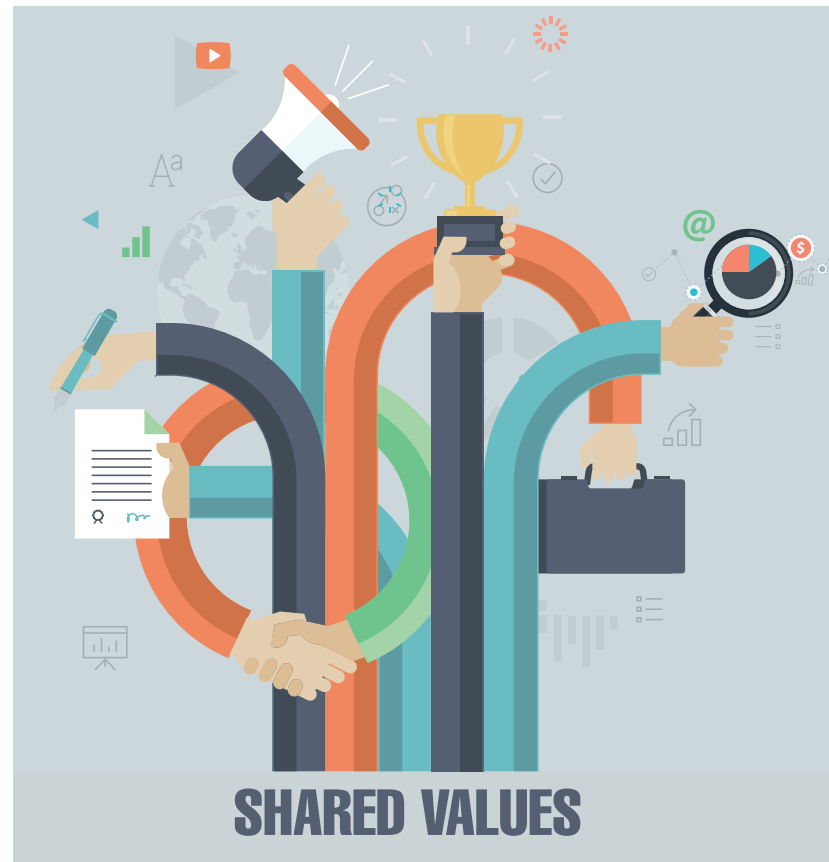
Remember, the US is behind the rest of the world so our day is just beginning while everyone else is signing off. Their tomorrow comes before our tomorrow.

EMBRACE THE CULTURES

Put cultural differences to work. The best processes add structure but also empower team members, especially juniors, to speak up. This may seem like encouraging negativity and pushback, but it actually establishes a comfort level for people to say “I don’t understand”, or “I know a better way to do that.”

Much has been written about cultural differences. In the US we reward behavior that is cool, linear, plan-oriented, decisive. We Americans love email as the best way to communicate for business, which may not work abroad. In India by contrast, resources tend to circle the problem and shy away from making decisions. The tendency is to just fulfill only what is requested, but if you encourage collaboration you will reap the reward of better solutions.

But there are plenty of shared values. A good team cares about the outcome and is motivated to make suggestions and work hard towards this goal.



Last piece of advice - create a regular rhythm of meetings; find a time to talk when people are not in cars or on trains, and leverage the benefits of screen-sharing tools whenever possible to drive more interaction.

CUT LABOR COSTS 30-50%

It takes effort to get onshore-offshore teams to be productive. From our experience, the reward is a substantial increase in productivity in marketing communications. When done well,

this model will reduce time to deployment and provide a significant cost savings. Clients can cut as much as 30-50% in labor costs for campaign implementation.

TOP TEN WAYS TO MAKE ONSHORE-OFFSHORE WORK

1. Put resources onsite to acclimate into your culture, learn your business and become a part of your team
2. Insist on project managers on both shores to facilitate effective coordination
3. Adjust the campaign specialist resources up or down as you go; don't feel locked in
4. Have your onshore/offshore teams talk twice a day
5. Communicate, communicate, communicate!
6. Stagger the work hours to maximize overlap
7. Measure the team's productivity, but also responsiveness and quality
8. Align campaign efforts to business goals and establish business-oriented KPIs
9. Measure campaigns from a customer's perspective; and find ways to cut down on volume without sacrificing margin
10. Celebrate – you saved money and dealt with the exploding need for marcom

ABOUT HANSA

Marketing and strategy leaders turn to Hansa to get to the essence of a marketing problem, then take action. We do that by offering:

- Campaign execution in a unique business model
- Customer analytics
- Customer experience research
- Strategic consulting

OUR THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

Hansa invests time in thought leadership. To access other whitepapers, visit <http://www.hansamarketing.com/marketing-resources> and subscribe to receive ongoing Thoughticles™ and attend live webinars.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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