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Dateline AGL – Value for service begins with credentialed marketers

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In the beginning, I frequently heard from licenced professionals with whom I worked that marketing was something nebulous. Back then, marketing was an activity passed along to the well-dressed male with a full mane who could play golf, get choice seats at professional sports events, tell (somewhat) funny jokes at staff parties and client meetings, and feign friendships with everyone, almost.

Then it was the ladies turn. If you were well groomed, spoke well with a sense of humour (that was strained at times in the presence of sexist jokes and lewd comments), and carried yourself with grace and beauty, the marketing coordinator job was a high-heel shoe-in.

In both scenarios that are now too outrageous to be believed, the “nice people” in charge of marketing were oblivious to marketing principles, standards, ethics, strategy, and tactics. They were having a wonderful time that really boiled down to advertising and entertainment at the whim of a boss in the name of marketing.

That was then and this is now. To validate the personal brand of a professional consulting marketer, academic accomplishments are necessary, as are marketing credentials. People engaged in B2B and B2C marketing owe clients, employers, and the public assurances that their professional opinions are based on industry-wide knowledge and practice and not subjective insight and experience alone.

There are organizations in Canada that offer credentials following graduation from a university or college. There are many learning centres that have programs that specialize in various disciplines of marketing. All include marketing basics to form a foundation for a specialization.

Certification organizations include the Chartered Institute of Marketing Management of Ontario (CIMMO) that offers several levels of certification including the Chartered Professional Marketer (CPM). The Canadian Marketing Association (CMA) offers the chartered Marketer (CM) designation along with certificates. And the American Marketing



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Association offers the Professional Certified Marketer. There are many more marketing associations offering certifications and this is a good thing.

When projects arise requiring the services of a professional consulting marketer, or an organization takes the decision to staff its marketing interests, employers and organizations preferring outsourcing have the option in this century to begin with credentialed people. There are thousands of bright minds entering the marketing profession, and most have credentials. In many organizations, members holding those credentials are subject to mandatory continuing education. This ensures institutions, governments, and entrepreneurs alike that they are taking on a hire that is a long-term intellectual asset.

When a business engages the services of an educated, credentialed professional marketer, I can assure you that there is nothing nebulous about the professional opinion that may be expressed as a marketing plan, an integrated marketing communications plan, set of tactics, communications products, and research recommendations.

And, judge not the appearance of a professional marketer.