

Not just branding

It was pleasing to see an edition of *the marketer* dedicated to global marketing but I was surprised to find a concentration on one issue, branding. For example the *Global vs Local* article (June 2006, *the marketer*, page 7) mentioned marketing in the title but focused almost exclusively on branding issues. Having a global brand is of no use if your customers cannot buy your products or services.

Brand is important but marketers wanting to lead their organisations into international markets also need to focus on the product, pricing and channels to market. These can make or break a company. For example, incorrectly pricing products in local markets can limit sales, directly reduce profitability, or lead to arbitrage. Failure to meet technical standards, or to ensure the product is fit for local conditions, can result in a product recall – at huge cost. Channels to market are also a vital ingredient of any international marketing plan as anyone who has tried to extend sales from the UK into North America or the Middle East will tell you.

We need to cover the complete marketing mix in both b2c and b2b marketing, indeed geography and cultural difference can have a surprising influence on b2b products and services, despite the growth in international standards. Marketers should take a lead in addressing these issues and not solely focus on the brand.

*Alistair Fox FCIM MIEE,
Director, Expertek*