Product marketing vs...

Setting the record straight

Product marketing vs. brand marketing

	Product marketing	**Brand** marketing
1. Key role	The driving force between getting products to market and keeping them there.	Builds brand identity, reputation, and emotional connection.
2. KPIs	• Win rates • Product (and feature adoption) • Customer churn rates	• Brand awareness • Brand equity • Customer engagement
3. Skills needed	• Market research and analysis • Go-to-market strategy • Product storytelling • Sales enablement	• Brand strategy • Visual storytelling • Content marketing • PR
4. Main differences	Focuses on positioning and launching specific products for target markets.	Focuses on cultivating a consistent and compelling brand that resonates widely.
5. Common points	Both engage and retain customers, leverage storytelling, ensure brand consistency, and support revenue growth.	
6. Positioning & messaging	• Market and customer analysis • Design unique positioning • Value-driven messaging	• Brand story • TOV creation and consistency • Integration into brand campaign
7. Impact	Direct impact on specific product success in the market and customer retention.	Indirect impact on wider company perception and long-term customer loyalty.

Product marketing vs. channel marketing

	Product marketing	**Channel** marketing
1. Key role	The driving force behind crafting messaging, positioning, and go-to-market strategies to ensure product success.	Focuses on enabling and supporting sales through channel partners such as distributors and resellers.
2. KPIs	• Win rates • Product adoption rates • Customer retention	• Partner activation rates • Channel revenue growth • Partner satisfaction scores
3. Skills needed	• Market research & analysis • Messaging & positioning • Product storytelling • Sales enablement	• Partner relationship management • Co-marketing strategy • Incentive program development
4. Main differences	Focuses on **direct customer engagement** through targeted messaging and strategies.	Focuses on **indirect sales enablement** by providing tools and resources for partners to sell effectively.
5. Common points	Both aim to increase product adoption and revenue by clearly communicating value, one to customers and the other to partners.	
6. Positioning & messaging	• Aligns messaging to customer needs and pain points • Creates business • value-focused materials	• Tailors product messaging • for partner audiences • Develops partner-specific campaigns and materials
7. Impact	Drives product adoption, customer retention and overall market success.	Expands market reach and revenue through empowered, well-equipped channel partners.

Product marketing vs. customer marketing

	Product marketing	**Customer** marketing
1. Key role	The driving force behind getting products to market and keeping them there.	Engages and retains existing customers.
2. KPIs	• Win rates • Product (and feature adoption) • Customer churn rates	• Retention rate • NPS • Community engagement
3. Skills needed	• Market research and analysis • Go-to-market strategy • Product storytelling • Sales enablement	• Customer segmentation • Engagement tactics • Community building • Advocacy programs
4. Main differences	Mixed focus on acquiring new customers and engaging existing ones.	Primary focus on the existing customer base.
5. Common points	Together, they drive growth across the customer journey.	
6. Positioning & messaging	• Market and customer analysis • Design unique positioning • Value-driven messaging	• Personalize messaging to strengthen customer relationships • Develop customer-centric content
7. Impact	Drives market positioning, go-to-market strategy, and product adoption amongst prospects and customers.	Enhances retention, loyalty, and CLTV through targeted engagement and expansion efforts.

Product marketing vs. demand gen

	Product marketing	**Demand gen** marketing
1. Key role	The driving force behind getting products to market and keeping them there.	Generates audience interest and qualified leads.
2. KPIs	• Win rates • Product (and feature adoption) • Customer churn rates	• Lead volume • Conversion rates • Pipeline contribution
3. Skills needed	• Market research and analysis • Go-to-market strategy • Product storytelling • Sales enablement	• Campaign management • Multi-channel marketing • Data analysis • Sales collaboration
4. Main differences	Establishes the strategic foundation, focusing on the who, what, and why of the product launch.	Activates the strategic foundation to create demand, focusing on the where, when, and how of the launch.
5. Common points	Together, they create impactful revenue-driving campaigns.	
6. Positioning & messaging	• Market and customer analysis • Design unique positioning • Value-driven messaging	• Use to develop demand campaigns • Use to optimize landing pages • Give feedback based on data
7. Impact	Drives market positioning, product adoption, and long-term customer retention.	Fuels sales pipeline growth and accelerates customer acquisition.

Product marketing vs. marketing

Product marketing	Marketing
Defines the audience	Attracts the crowd
Crafts the product story	Builds the brand story
Drives deep understanding	Drives awareness
Creates sales momentum	Creates campaign moments
Owns market fit	Owns market presence
Masters the funnel bottom	Masters the funnel top
Creates a product people actually want	Generates demand
Determines WHAT we say	Determines HOW we say it
PMM MYTH: All product, no strategy	**MARKETING MYTH:** All vibes, no revenue
PMM REALITY: Market strategist that shapes category perception	**MARKETING REALITY:** Growth engine that scales market impact

Product marketing vs. solutions engineering

	Product Marketing	**Solutions** Engineering
1. Key role	Defines product positioning, messaging, and go-to-market strategy to ensure customers understand the value of the product.	Provides technical expertise during pre-sales to demonstrate how the product solves specific customer challenges.
2. KPIs	● Win rates ● Product adoption rates ● Customer retention	● Technical support for closed deals ● Pre-sales pipeline contribution ● Deal acceleration
3. Skills needed	● Market research and analysis ● Messaging & storytelling ● Competitive analysis ● GTM strategy	● Deep technical knowledge of the product ● Customer communication skills ● Problem-solving for use case alignment
4. Main differences	Focuses on creating broad, market-facing messaging and strategies to appeal to target audiences.	Focuses on customizing the product's technical capabilities to specific customer needs during the sales cycle.
5. Common points	Both aim to drive product adoption by clearly communicating its value, though one focuses on the why (strategy) and the other on the how (execution).	
6. Impact	Ensures the product resonates in the market and aligns with customer expectations.	Builds customer confidence, overcomes technical objections, and drives deal closure through hands-on support.

Product marketing vs. solutions marketing vs. portfolio marketing

	Product marketing	Solutions marketing	Portfolio marketing
1. Key role	Drives individual products to market, aligning with the market and customer needs.	Solves strategic customer challenges with bundled products and services.	Manages and positions a portfolio of related products for cohesivity.
2. KPIs	• Win rates • Product (and feature adoption) • Customer churn rates	• Solution adoption • Customer loyalty • Solution revenue	• Cross sell revenue • Upsell revenue • Customer retention and expansion
3. Skills needed	• Market research • Go-to-market strategy • Product storytelling	• Solution design • Consultative selling • Relationship building	• Strategic planning • Portfolio analysis • Messaging alignment
4. Main differences	Focus on individual products or features.	Focus on solving the broader challenges of the customer.	Focus on a portfolio of products and their alignment.
5. Common points	All drive growth by meeting customer needs, supporting sales with targeted messaging, and differentiating offerings in the market.		
6. Positioning & messaging	• Market and customer analysis • Unique positioning per product • Value-driven messaging	• Identify complex customer needs • Position holistic value • Tailored messaging	• Portfolio-wide market analysis • Position portfolio • Overarching messaging to unify
7. Impact	Drives product success within competitive markets.	Builds customer loyalty and long-term relationships through solutions.	Increases portfolio revenue through cross-product strategy.

Product marketing vs. technical marketing

	Product Marketing	**Technical** Marketing
1. Key role	The driving force behind crafting messaging, positioning, and go-to-market strategies to ensure product success.	Ensures technical users understand, evaluate, and adopt the product through detailed, solution-focused content.
2. KPIs	• Win rates • Product adoption rates • Customer retention	• Content engagement (e.g., technical docs, videos) • Technical asset downloads • Support ticket reduction
3. Skills needed	• Market research & analysis • Messaging & positioning • Product storytelling • Sales enablement	• Deep technical expertise • Creating technical collateral • Collaboration with engineers
4. Main differences	Focuses on the **who**, **what**, and **why** of the product's value to the market.	Focuses on **how** the product works and ensures technical stakeholders can understand and use it.
5. Common points	Both work to ensure the product's value is clearly understood and effectively communicated, focusing on enabling adoption and success for their respective audiences.	
6. Positioning & messaging	Develops customer-centric messaging based on business pain points and value propositions.	Creates technical narratives focused on implementation, integrations, and product performance.
7. Impact	Drives product adoption, customer retention and overall market success.	Accelerates technical adoption, reduces implementation friction, and builds trust with technical audiences.