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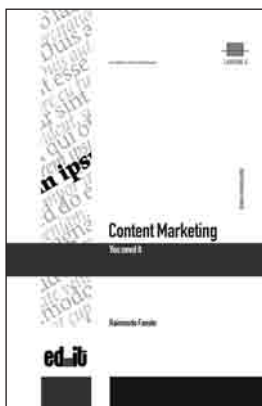
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Introduction

Building a business is most certainly not an easy job regardless of its main area of activity, of how many employees you have or of the country in which you live. While some businesses are prone to be more successful than others from the very beginning, the truth is that one cannot actually predict with 100% certainty what is about to happen with a new business and how it will develop. Of course, following a business plan is absolutely essential, but after all, most of the startups out there have the same chance of success the moment they are created.

Marketing can definitely make the difference between a great business that is successful and that finds itself in a continuous growth and a business that seems to be doomed for failure. Believe it or not, the size of your business is not the decisive factor when it comes to whether or not it will need a great marketing strategy and neither is its main area of activity. You can have a small bakery or a huge electronics store, but ultimately you will need a marketing strategy of some sort to make sure that your products (or services, for that matter) reach your target market and that they convince them to buy them.

Many of the new business owners out there do not really understand the purpose of marketing or the actual mechanism behind it. Of course, this is understandable nowadays, in an age when there seems to be a very fine line between marketing and other sub-branches of marketing. For instance,

many of the people out there would believe that marketing is one and the same as advertising (and up to a certain extent, they would be almost right), but if you want to start out on the right foot you should definitely try to understand the fact that advertising is, in one way or another, a branch of marketing (one that has developed as a stand-alone service, for sure, but still submitting to a particular marketing strategy in most of the cases).

So, what is marketing, really and why do you need it? Even more, how does marketing work now, at the beginning of the 21st century and which are the tools you should definitely not miss out on? How to use these tools to maximize your business' potential and how to understand them in real depth?

These are some of the questions this book aims to give an answer to. Don't worry if it will all seem very confusing at first – it is natural even for those who are nowadays great marketing experts and they were one day just as dazzled as you are now. Instead of worrying, try to read everything with an open mind, try to go through the book and accumulate as much information as possible. Try to understand and to look into even further information. Try to see how all this information applies on your particular case and how it will help you and your business grow bigger and stronger.