Chapter 11  
Risks in Project Marketing

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ABSTRACT

The process by which people and organizations can communicate with other stakeholders to win their support has been called project marketing. There are three types of organization involved in projects and project management. There is the project itself, a temporary organization. It needs to engage with stakeholders during project delivery. There are contractors which need to win new business, to interest clients in the services that they can provide and in work from those clients. Finally there is the investor, who needs to gain the interest and support of a large number of stakeholders for the investment the project will make. The service dominant logic dominates project marketing. It is essential to work with other stakeholders, creating networks, doing with rather than unto, to deliver mutually beneficial results. The opportunity that arises from effective project marketing is winning the support of other stakeholders. The risk is that they will not engage with the project, and there can be several causes of that depending on the nature of the marketing being done.

INTRODUCTION

People and organizations involved in the management and delivery of projects need to form relationships with other people and organizations. The success in forming those relationships or not can create threats and opportunities to project participants. The concept of project marketing has been developed, (Turner & Lecoeuvre, 2015; Turner & Lecoeuvre, 2016), by which people and organizations attempt to form relationships with other parties, either to interest them in the project that they are undertaking, or to sell them the project-based services that they provide.

Winch (2014) has introduced a model where he suggests that there are three organizations involved in the management or delivery of projects, Figure 1:

1. **The Project:** A temporary organization.
2. **The Contractor:** A project-based permanent organization.
3. **The Initiator:** An operations-based permanent organization.

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Each of these organizations is involved in the marketing of projects in different ways:

- The project needs to market itself to stakeholder to engage them in the project. This is part of stakeholder engagement, (Turner, 2014). I call it marketing by the project. The threat is that people will not engage with the project, and either not provide necessary resources, or worse work to disrupt the project. The opportunity is to gain strong support for the project.
- The contractor needs to market its services to win future business. This is part of portfolio management. I call it marketing for the project. The threat is that the firm will not identify project opportunities and fail to win new business. The opportunity is to work with clients to provide mutually beneficial outcomes.
- The initiator needs to market the results of the investment from the project. It needs to market to a range of stakeholders at different stages of the investment process. I call this marketing of the project. There are threats throughout the project life-cycle. In the early stages the threat is that the investor will not win financial, political or emotional support for the project. During project delivery it is essential to engage contractors, and during commissioning operators and consumers.

In this chapter I describe the project marketing approaches that can be adopted by the three types of organization, and consider the opportunities that can arise if the marketing is done well, and the threats that arise through failing to engage with the different stakeholders. There are four themes that pervade the discussion:

1. The Service Dominant Logic of Marketing (Lusch et al., 2008): People and organizations involved in the management and delivery should look to work with the other stakeholders and not do unto them. They should look to create networks to achieve mutually beneficial results.
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