

Marketing and Integrated Business Functions

How marketing links with operations, finance and human resources, and why coordination matters.

Worksheet	4.1-WS03	Suggested time	45-60 minutes
Total marks	34	Coverage	IB Business Management 4.1 Introduction to marketing

Answer all questions. Show full workings for calculations. Use business terminology and apply answers to the context where relevant.

Section A - Multiple choice

- Which business function is most directly affected when marketing forecasts much higher sales demand? **[1]**
 - Operations
 - Only finance
 - Only legal services
 - External auditors only
- If marketing promises fast delivery and premium packaging, which statement is most accurate? **[1]**
 - The decision affects only the advertising team
 - The decision affects other functions because it changes costs, staffing and operations requirements
 - The decision reduces the need for coordination across the business
 - The decision means finance no longer needs to approve spending
- Which is the best example of a corporate objective? **[1]**
 - Increase brand awareness by 10 per cent in six months
 - Launch a social media campaign next month
 - Increase overall profit by 8 per cent next year
 - Offer two more colours in the product range
- Why must marketing work with human resources? **[1]**
 - Because only HR can choose customers
 - Because increased demand may require more staff or different skills
 - Because HR decides the selling price of all products
 - Because HR replaces the marketing department in competitive markets

Section B - Short answer

- Define the term corporate objective. **[2]**
- Explain one way marketing decisions may affect finance and one way they may affect human resources. **[4]**
- Explain why the business functions must coordinate their decisions if a launch is to succeed. **[4]**

Section C - Data response / case study

Case study - HomeNest

HomeNest plans to launch a smart kitchen appliance. The marketing team wants three colour options, eco-friendly packaging and a large digital campaign. Operations managers warn that the factory is already close to full capacity.

Finance has approved only a limited launch budget, and the human resources team says the business lacks trained installation advisers for customer support.

Senior managers are concerned that the business may advertise benefits it cannot consistently provide during the first six months of launch.

8. Explain two likely problems if HomeNest's marketing team does not coordinate with the other business functions. [4]

9. Analyse how cross-functional planning could help HomeNest achieve a more successful launch. [6]

Section D - Extended response

10. Evaluate the extent to which marketing should influence decisions in operations, finance and human resources. [10]

Answer key and marking guidance

Indicative answers are provided below. Equivalent, well-applied business answers should also be credited.

Marks	General marking guidance
2	Award for a precise definition or one simple explained point. Terminology should be accurate.
4	Award for two relevant explained points, or correct working plus answer where calculation is required.
6	Award for developed analysis that links cause and effect and uses case material where relevant.
10	Award for balanced evaluation or discussion, use of context, and a supported conclusion or judgement.

Section A - Multiple choice answers

Q	Answer	Why
1	A	Operations must be able to produce or deliver the volume marketing expects to sell.
2	B	Marketing choices often change costs, staffing and production needs across the business.
3	C	A corporate objective is a target for the business as a whole.
4	B	Marketing changes may require additional staff, training or new skills.

Section B - Short answer guidance

Q5. Define the term corporate objective. [2]

- A target set for the business as a whole.
- It applies to the overall organisation rather than just one function.

Credit other relevant, accurate and well-explained answers.

Q6. Explain one way marketing decisions may affect finance and one way they may affect human resources. [4]

- Finance: launching or promoting a product requires budget approval and affects spending on development or promotion.
- Finance: prices and forecast sales also affect revenue and profitability.
- Human resources: new products or growth may require more staff, different skills or staff training.
- Human resources: stronger customer service promises may require recruiting or training suitable employees.

Credit other relevant, accurate and well-explained answers.

Q7. Explain why the business functions must coordinate their decisions if a launch is to succeed. [4]

- Marketing may identify demand, but operations must be able to deliver the right product in the right quantity.
- Finance must ensure enough money is available for launch and promotion.
- Human resources must provide staff with the right skills.
- Without coordination, the business may promise something it cannot deliver, damaging performance and reputation.

Credit other relevant, accurate and well-explained answers.

Section C - Data response / case study guidance

Q8. Explain two likely problems if HomeNest's marketing team does not coordinate with the other business functions. [4]

- Operations may be unable to produce the required quantity or variety, creating stock shortages or delays.
- Finance may not approve enough budget, limiting the planned launch and damaging return on investment.
- Human resources may not have enough trained staff to support customers, harming service quality and satisfaction.

Credit other relevant, accurate and well-explained answers.

Q9. Analyse how cross-functional planning could help HomeNest achieve a more successful launch. [6]

- Joint planning allows marketing to set realistic promises based on production capacity and support resources.
- Finance can help prioritise the most effective promotional activities so spending matches likely returns.
- Operations can advise on product range and timing, reducing the risk of shortages or excess complexity.
- Human resources can recruit or train support staff in advance, improving service quality after launch.
- Overall, coordination reduces the gap between what is promoted and what can actually be delivered.

Credit other relevant, accurate and well-explained answers.

Section D - Extended response guidance

Q10. Evaluate the extent to which marketing should influence decisions in operations, finance and human resources. [10]

- Marketing should influence other functions because it represents customer needs and helps the business decide what to offer.
- Operations decisions about design, volume and quality depend partly on market expectations and demand forecasts.
- Finance decisions about budgets, pricing and investment are linked to marketing plans and likely returns.
- Human resources may need to recruit and train staff to deliver the value promised to customers.
- However, marketing should not dominate without limits because the business must consider capacity, cost, quality and staff capability.
- A supported judgement should conclude that marketing should have major influence because customer demand drives the business, but decisions must be balanced with operational and financial realism.

Judgement guidance: reward balance, use of relevant evidence or case context, and a justified final conclusion.