

# Empowering Marketing Leaders: AMGEN CONTINUES TO REAP REWARDS

## AMGEN PARTNERSHIP

### The Challenge

How does a global biotechnology leader, with over four decades of experience creating innovative human therapeutics, leverage its marketing teams for future growth? Understanding that success does not depend on scientific breakthroughs alone, Amgen sought to strengthen and elevate the role of marketing within the organization to play a larger role in the company's success.

### The Goal

Amgen's marketers needed to expand their skillsets around strategies and tactics that could drive greater impact across the organization.

### The Solution

Amgen partnered with Wharton Executive Education to create a week-long Marketing Excellence program for all mid- to senior-level marketers around the globe. The program would provide research-based, intentional strategies for targeting key customers and markets, and the latest metrics to track and communicate their efforts. Wharton faculty expertise would be tapped not only for its world-renowned research, but also for its commitment to developing actionable tools and perspectives that can be quickly implemented. The program has already run in the United States, Germany, Japan, and Spain and additional weeks have been scheduled.

“Leveraging the knowledge, I gained from Wharton has been inspiring—it got me and my team out of the typical way of doing things and will increase the impact we can make.”

— **TYLER HOULDIN**  
*Amgen Senior Marketing Manager*

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## The Impact

For Senior Marketing Manager Tyler Houldin, the program offered an opportunity for immediate application. “The Marketing Excellence week showed me that we have a metrics gap,” she explains. “Our team is responsible for strategic tactics and tools that our sales force can execute. But while we adhere to broader business KPIs, we weren’t measuring how our strategies and tools specifically were driving our business goals. As an example, we create a lot of print materials that sales reps order and use with customers, for example, but it’s hard to measure their impact.”

She says the recent introduction of a digital sales aid gave her team some insights into whether their materials were being used, “but we didn’t develop them in a way that we could track pieces of content that are shared. That was the gap we identified—but we didn’t know how to solve it.”

Enter Wharton Marketing professor David Reibstein, an internationally recognized expert in marketing metrics, who led program participants in a KPI mapping exercise. He encouraged participants to define their KPIs and then identify both lagging and leading indicators, seeing whether they were making progress and, most importantly, using those indicators to find specific, tactical marketing actions to influence them. Houldin continued working with the tool after the program ended and shared it with her team, saying it was “serendipitous that the metrics were in line with the gap we identified and were tasked with solving. I called Professor Reibstein to discuss my ideas, and he helped me think through how to create a first draft for implementation.”

Houldin says she didn’t expect the level of engagement with faculty, who “clearly put in a tremendous amount of work to understand our business. The sessions were all tailored to specifically address our unique challenges. I feel lucky to be able to take advantage of the opportunity to learn from leading experts, and having a project in mind ahead of time helped me to use the opportunity to take it further and really apply it.”

She and Professor Reibstein met again after the program’s conclusion and came up with another project for Amgen. “We had a new piece of clinical data as part of our brand story, and we wanted to test its relevance before rolling out broadly,” says Houldin. “Dave encouraged me to do a small test that would minimize the risk and the expense. We talked through approach and KPIs. After my meeting with Dave, I pitched my boss the idea of trying a small test on digital channels that was backed up by the principles I learned at Wharton. It got approved!”

Amgen leadership made the investment in my professional development, and then helped me get the resources to make the test happen. We are now preparing to launch it. Leveraging the knowledge I gained from Wharton has been inspiring—it got me and my team out of the typical way of doing things, and will increase the impact we can make.”

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