

Gene Del Vecchio

Adjunct Professor of Marketing, USC Marshall School of Business
Consultant and Strategist

Office Ph: 661-287-9995

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Overview

Gene Del Vecchio is an adjunct professor of marketing with particular expertise in marketing strategy, consumer behavior, research, youth marketing and entertainment. In his 30+ years in private industry, he conducted roughly one thousand research studies to provide essential strategic and tactical marketing direction that helped build multimillion-dollar businesses across film, television, packaged goods, toy, restaurant, and technology industries. He has written four business books, his most recent being *Creating Blockbusters*. Gene has written articles for Forbes.com, Huffington Post, USA Today, and The Hollywood Reporter. He was an SVP, Director of Planning & Research at advertising giant Ogilvy & Mather where he led highly successful strategic efforts for global businesses. His career began at General Mills.

His clients included The Walt Disney Company, Paramount Pictures, Starz, PBS Kids Sprout, Hasbro, Mattel, MGA Entertainment, Microsoft, IBM, Nestle, Kraft Foods, Procter & Gamble, Carl's Jr. and more.

USC Marshall School of Business

Spring 2013 to Present

Adjunct Professor of Marketing

Classes:

- *Marketing Blockbuster Entertainment* (Undergrad MKT 499/MKT 461): 2016-Current
- *Marketing Management* (Executive MBA): 2016-Current
- *Consumer Behavior* (Undergrad/MKT 450): 2013-2014

Avg. Instructor Rating by Undergraduates=4.9; by Graduates=4.8 (scale of 1 to 5)

Service:

- Judge for OMBA Case Competition: 2019
- Created New Undergrad Class: MKT 461 Marketing Blockbuster Entertainment
- Club Advisor: Marshall Entertainment Association. 2017-2019
- Career Advisor: Master of Science in Marketing Program. 2015-2017
- Co-Chair, USC Marshall Critical Thinking Task Force. Conceived of and developed the USC-CT Problem Solving Process. 2013-2014
- Panel Moderator for the USC Marshall Career Conference. 2015
- Faculty Advisor: USC Library Ambassador Program. 2013
- Invited to various Sorority/Fraternity Scholarship events - Speaker. 2013-2019

USC Awards:

- Dean's Award for Community for leading the Critical Thinking Task Force. 2014
- Professor Appreciation Award. The USC Panhellenic Council. 2014

Education

- MBA, USC, 1980, Marketing Emphasis, Honors
- BA, UCLA, 1978, Economics, Phi Beta Kappa, Magna Cum-Laude

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Marketing Consultant and Strategist

1998 to Present

Gene has helped global corporations such as The Walt Disney Company invent, develop, and market multimillion-dollar blockbuster franchises and products. He has conducted dozens of ideation sessions to help clients generate ideas for new franchises and merchandise, has executed roughly one thousand consumer research studies on TV pilots, movies, toys, video games, and packaged goods, and has provided seminars on a variety of topics including *How to Create and Market Blockbusters!*

Ogilvy & Mather Advertising

1981 to 1998

Gene was the Senior Vice President, Director of Planning and Research at Ogilvy & Mather Advertising in Los Angeles where for seventeen years he led research and strategic efforts that helped build multimillion-dollar businesses for Mattel, Paramount Pictures, Microsoft, AAA, Kraft Foods, and Nestle. He sat on the Executive Committee that ran the office, was a key member of the new business team that won millions of dollars in billings, spearheaded the training program for several years, and developed the agency's worldwide philosophy and approach to youth marketing.

General Mills

1980 to 1981

Gene began his career at General Mills as a project director where he conducted research on new products as well as established brands such as Betty Crocker.

Teaching Experience

Gene joined the USC Marshall School of Business as an Adjunct Professor in the Spring 2013. He has been a guest speaker at various colleges (UC Berkeley, CSUN, USC, OTIS) on topics ranging from creating blockbuster entertainment to the fundamentals of marketing and consumer research. He organized the employee training program at Ogilvy & Mather in Los Angeles and was a guest lecturer on strategy sessions for the American Association of Advertising Agencies in Los Angeles.

Industry Spokesperson

Gene Del Vecchio is often called upon to speak at various conferences. These have included the LA Times Festival of Books, KidScreen Summit, Kid Power Conference, Youth Marketing Mega Event, Toy Fair, Southern California Writers Association, the Willamette Writers Conference, and the national conference of The American Library Association. He has been quoted in a variety of publications and websites of The New York Times, Los Angeles Times, Huffington Post, Associated Press, USA Today, CNBC, Fox Business, Bloomberg Businessweek, The Washington Times, The Guardian, Variety, Advertising Age, The Orange County Register, The San Diego Union Tribune, and more. He's been a guest on various radio and TV shows including CNN, ABC News and NPR.

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Publications: Books

Business Books

- **Creating Blockbusters!**: 2012. Pelican Publishing. This revealing book contains an analysis of the greatest blockbuster entertainment of all time and provides fresh audience research to arrive at 11 principles to help entertainment executives create and market blockbusters. It delves into audiences' core emotional needs, the trends and culture that can provide a fertile ground for ideas, the essentials of story and character development, how to extend ideas into franchises, and how to create marketable artistry.
- **The Blockbuster Toy! How to Invent the Next Big Thing**: 2003. Pelican Publishing. This book details the greatest toys of all time and what contributed to their success. Chapter by chapter, it outlines the core emotional needs that toys satisfy. It also provides tools that can help executives create hundreds of ideas for new playthings.
- **A Knight's Code of Business**: 2003. Paramount Market Publishing. This book outlines the key traits that make for achieving high moral character and competence in the corporate world.
- **Creating Ever-Cool, A Marketer's Guide to a Kid's Heart**: 1997. Pelican Publishing. This was Gene Del Vecchio's first ground breaking book. It received WPP's prestigious Atticus Award. It was the first youth marketing book to delve deep into the psyche of children and to offer detailed principles regarding how to invent, develop and market youth oriented products and entertainment.

Novels

- **The Sword of Anton**: 2006. Pelican Publishing. This novel is the fantasy sequel to *The Pearl of Anton*. It received the Young Adults' Choices Award in 2008 by the International Reading Association.
- **The Pearl of Anton**: 2004. Pelican Publishing. This is Gene Del Vecchio's first fantasy novel for young adults. It received a Starred review from Booklist, the publication of The America Library Association.

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Publications: Articles

WarnerMedia Follows The Money. 2021 Films Will Be On HBO Max Simultaneously - A Blow To Theaters. Forbes. 12/3/20

Disney's 2020 Year End Streaming Results Are Stellar – Better Than They Appear - But The Future Is Vastly Complicated. Forbes. 11/13/20

A Lack Of Vision Is Driving AMC To Bankruptcy. What's Next? Forbes. 10/24/20

The 2020 Emmys TV Ratings Crashed -And So Did Its Relevance. Forbes. 9/21/20

Disney May Have Blundered By Prematurely Announcing That 'Mulan' Is Free In December. Forbes 9/9/2020

'Tenet' Is Sickened By COVID-19 – Only Streaming Can Save It Now. Forbes. 9/6/20

'Mulan' Is A Blockbuster – Even On The Small Screen. Forbes. 9/5/20

Disney Can Make More Money Streaming 'Mulan,' A Move That Will Transform The Entertainment World. Forbes. 8/5/20

Disney Earnings Foretell The Company's Future As Legacy Businesses Crash, Disney+ Soars. Forbes. 8/4/20

Comcast's Q2 – Sound Strategy Gives NBCUniversal And Peacock A Bright Future. Forbes. 7/31/20

The Launch Of HBO Max Had Minimal Effect On Q2 Due To Marketing Missteps. Forbes. 7/24/20

Netflix Earnings Have 5 Major Implications For The Entertainment Industry. Forbes. 7/16/20

Disney Can Make More Money Streaming 'Mulan' Which Will Transform The World - Here's How. Forbes. 8/5/20

Disney Earnings Foretell The Company's Future As Legacy Businesses Crash, Disney+ Soars. Forbes. 8/4/20

Comcast's Q2 – Sound Strategy Gives NBCUniversal And Peacock A Bright Future. Forbes 7/31/20

The Launch of HBO Max Had Minimal Effect on Q2 – Largely Due To Marketing Missteps. Forbes. 7/24/20

Netflix Earnings Have 5 Major Implications For The Entertainment Industry. Forbes. 7/16/20

Disney May Have Wasted Its Shot By Streaming 'Hamilton' Now. Forbes. 7/8/20

Dear Celebrities, Research Shows That Your Political Opinions Hurt Your Cause More Than Help It. Forbes. 6/25/20

Netflix May Have Lost \$200 Million In 2019 Due To Threats Of Theater Boycotts. Forbes. 6/1/20

Disney Plus Has The Potential To Become A \$30 Billion Giant In Only 5 Years. Forbes. 5/11/20

Only Fools, Mad Geniuses, And Daredevils Would Invest In A Theater Chain. Forbes.com 5/1/20

Hollywood Is About To Be Reshaped By Giants For A New World Order. Forbes 4/26/20

'Ozark' Season 3 Opens Huge – Killing It In Many Ways. Forbes 4/25/20

How 'Trolls World Tour' Could Transform How We Watch Films Forever. Forbes.com 4/20/20

The Coronavirus May Kill Movie Theaters – A Perfect Time For Studios To Buy Them. Forbes.com 4/14/20

Why the Oscars Should Revive the Best Blockbuster Idea, The Hollywood Reporter. 11/4/19

Endeavor IPO Numbers May Not Add Up, The Hollywood Reporter, 6/20/19

New Oscar Category for Best Popular Film Marks a Long Overdue Change in the Academy, USA Today, 8/25/18

It's Time to Create an Academy Award for Best Blockbuster, USA Today, 3/2/18

Final Analysis of How Trump Out-Marketed Clinton, Huffington Post, 2/19/17

When Activist Consumers and Activist CEOs Collide, Huffington Post, 2/10/17

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Publications: Articles (Continued)

Marketing of Politics, Huffington Post, 5/2/16

The Disney Dilemma, Huffington Post, 2/8/16

Imagine a World in Which Star Wars Never Existed, Huffington Post, 12/18/15

Mattel Needs to Redefine Its Business, Huffington Post, 1/30/15

Disney's Cinderella Does \$70 Million in First Weekend, Yet Leaves Money on the Table, Huffington Post, 3/16/15

It's the Hard Knock Life For Sony, Huffington Post, 12/23/14

Wake Up Sony and Smell the Opportunity, Huffington Post, 12/18/14

If Put In Other Industries, Many Hollywood Executives Would Be Fired, Huffington Post, 11/11/14

Guardians of the Galaxy: A Blockbuster Franchise is Born, Huffington Post, 8/4/14

The Dodgers, Time Warner Cable, and Blistering Unintended Consequences: A Lesson for All Organizations, Huffington Post, 6/6/14

A Final Lesson for Grads: Learn the 22 Keys to Career Success, Huffington Post, 4/29/14

Got Milk? Got Fired: 5 Valuable Lessons Executives Must Heed, Huffington Post, 3/12/14

The Lego Movie and the Science of Storytelling, Huffington Post, 2/24/14

Hollywood- Biting the Hand That Feeds It, Huffington Post, 2/4/14

Building Blockbusters, KidScreen Magazine, Feb-Mar/'09

What's Cool in 2004, Animation Magazine, 4/'04

Catering to Tweens, Restaurant Hospitality Magazine, 4/'00

Children Gone Violent, Marketing to Kids Report, 7/'99

An Advertising Primer, Getting to the Beginning of Cool, Selling To Kids, 6/'98

Keeping it Timeless, Trendy, Advertising Age, 3/23/98

Chasing Cool, KidScreen Magazine, 2/1/98

How is Humor in Advertising Effective When Marketing to Kids and Teens, The Marketing to Kids Reports. Roundtable Comment, 9/'94

The Consumer and Technology, Not the Government, Will Dictate the Future of Healthcare, USC Business Magazine, Summer/'93

A Caution to Tech-Happy Bankers, USC Business Magazine, Spring/'93

Speculations, USC Business Magazine, Fall-Winter/'92

A Question of Loyalty, Newsweek Magazine. My Turn Column, 9/23/91

Market Research as a Continuous Process, Journal of Services Marketing, Summer/'90

Generating Marketing Ideas When Formal Research Is Not Available, The Journal of Consumer Marketing, Winter/'88

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Speaking Engagements

Netflix

November 2016

Netflix Headquarters

Presentation: Creating Blockbusters for Kids

LA Times Festival of Books

April 13, 2014

University of Southern California

Panelist: Sitcoms, Dramas and Blockbusters: Creating for the Screen

Greater Los Angeles Writers Society

February 16-18, 2013

LA Valley College

Presentation: How to Generate and Market Hit Entertainment

Southern California Writers Association

Jan. 19, 2013

Fountain Valley Ca.

Presentation: Guidelines for Creating Blockbusters!

UC Berkeley Film/English Student Forum

Oct 24th, 2012

UC Berkeley Campus

Presentation: Creating Blockbusters!

Southwest Screenwriters and Story Tellers Group

Oct 9th, 2012

Skype: London

Presentation: Creating Blockbusters!

ARF Youth Forum Event

Oct. 18, 2012

Disney Lot, ABC Building, Burbank Ca.

Presentation: Creating Blockbusters!

Southern California Writers Conference

Sept. 23, 2012

Hyatt Regency. Newport Beach Ca.

Presentation: Creating Blockbuster!

Willamette Writer's Conference

August 04, 2012

Airport Sheraton Hotel – Portland OR.

Luncheon Speaker: You Need Perseverance and Perspiration to Become a Writer

Presentation: Creating Blockbusters!

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Speaking Engagements (continued)

American Library Association Conference

June 23, 2012

Anaheim Convention Center in Los Angeles

Presentation: Creating Blockbusters!

KidScreen Summit

February, 2012

Hilton New York

Presentation: Creating Blockbusters!

Association for Library Service to Children

June, 2008

Author Seminar: Kids & Ever-Cool

Toy Fair

February, 2004

Presentation: The Blockbuster Toy: How to Invent the Next Big Thing

Public Library Association

February, 2004

Presentation: Making the Library Cool for Kids

Youth Marketing Mega Event

June, 2004

Presentation: The Blockbuster Toy, How to Invent the Next Big Thing

Youth Marketing Mega Event

June, 2003

Presentation: AgeTUDE!

Note: Earlier seminars include various forums of Kid Power, Youth Marketing Mega Event, National Confectioners Association, and various corporate events.

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Honors and Awards

Dean's Award for Community at USC Marshall School of Business: Given for spearheading the Critical Thinking Initiative. Spring 2014

Professor Appreciation Award: Spring 2014. The USC Panhellenic Council

Young Adults' Choices Award: 2008. Given by The International Reading Association for the novel, *The Sword of Anton*

Starred Review in Booklist, the publication of The America Library Association, given for the novel, *The Pearl of Anton*: 2004

WPP Atticus Award: 1997. Winner, Strategy Category, for the book *Creating Ever-Cool, a Marketer's Guide to a Kid's Heart*

Bronze Effie Advertising Effectiveness Award: 1995 at Ogilvy & Mather for work on the Mattel campaign, *Come Along With Me*

Silver Effie Advertising Effectiveness Award: 1990 at Ogilvy & Mather for work on the Mattel campaign, *I'm Into Barbie*

Gold Effie Advertising Effectiveness Award: 1989 at Ogilvy & Mather for work on the Nestle/Carnation campaign for Pasta & Cheese

Honors and Awards

The David Ogilvy Award: 1988 at Ogilvy & Mather for work on the Mattel/Barbie campaign

USC: Honors MBA. 1980

UCLA: Phi Beta Kappa. Magna Cum-Laude. BA. 1978