

The New CMO Guide:

A Handbook
for Marketing
Leaders



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The New CMO Guide:

A Handbook for Marketing Leaders

Congratulations! You're now the new head of marketing for your company. Maybe you've been promoted from within, or perhaps your new employer found you through an exhaustive search. Either way, your company is thrilled to have you on board and anxious for you to have a huge impact on your company's success.

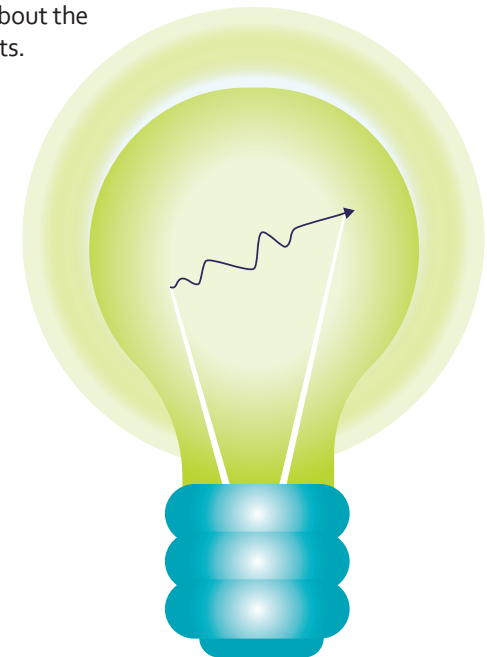
These first six to nine months are critical for both your company and your personal long-term success. It's important that YOU establish the priorities for this onboarding time and not let others completely direct your agenda. The good news is that you're in an excellent position to do so: The CMO now comes second only to the CFO in terms of the influence he or she exerts on the CEO.¹

This paper serves as a guide to help you create a game plan so you can effectively:

- Assess the current situation
- Assimilate other people's viewpoints
- Determine critical success factors
- Develop the important year-one game plan.

Chances are, you've already gathered some information during the interview process. You spent time with your new manager and conducted research about the market, the competition and the products. You spoke with other team members, and perhaps even interviewed outsiders about their perception of your new opportunity.

That was all good information that helped you both decide to consider and ultimately land the position. But now you're on the inside, in the role, and you need to start anew to evaluate where things stand.



Assessing the Current Situation

Unless you're joining a brand new start-up, there's some history around marketing at your company, and it's important to understand the past before you plan for the future. Now's the time to put on your detective hat and begin the real investigative work so you can gain a clearer picture of what's been done previously.

Seek to understand how your company has marketed products and services in the past, what the previous marketing financial investment has been, and who's been doing the work. You'll want to complete a fairly comprehensive assessment as quickly as you can.

As you conduct your evaluation and begin formulating your strategy, you'll need to avoid bringing marketing to a grinding halt. Instead, let your team continue executing and provide input to improve the existing campaigns and operations. Once you've completed the assessment phase described in the next few sections, you can begin to put wholesale change to work.

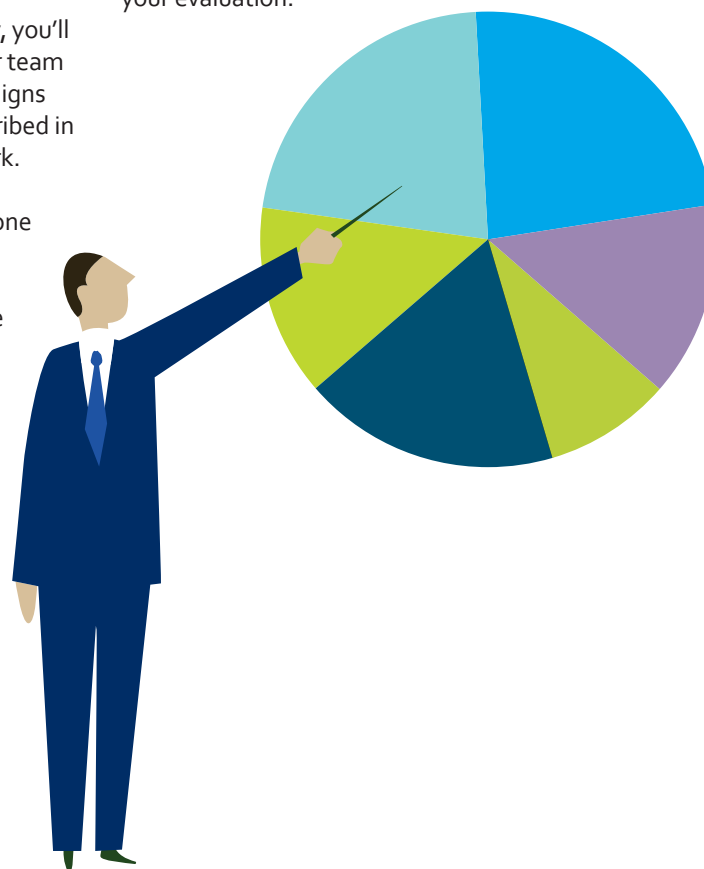
If you've already operated at the VP/CMO/Head of Marketing level, one of your immediate tendencies may be to organize things similarly to how you had them in previous roles. While this might make you feel comfortable as you're getting started, it's important to take the time to understand your new company's situation. You'll often find that the strategies you employed at previous companies aren't the best fit in your new role.

Instead, start with a clean slate and develop a new strategy based on this role and company. You might adapt some tactics you've successfully implemented in the past, but this opportunity warrants an approach that you custom-develop based on the company, people, market, products, competition and evolving consumer needs.

So, what should you be looking at during this initial assessment phase? You'll want to zero in on the following areas:

- Understanding the internal team
- Evaluating external resources and players
- Assessing your foundation
- Taking inventory of current marketing efforts

The next four sections will provide a guide to each of these areas and what you should be looking to uncover as you conduct your evaluation.



Understanding the Internal Team

Today's new buyers and technologies require new skills from marketers, a change in how marketing departments are configured, and increased cooperation with other departments. Now's your chance to see if and how your company has evolved to meet the needs of this changing marketing landscape.

Assessing Your Employees' Skills and Strengths

Start with the basics: Who's on the team? If your position has been vacant for a while, you may have lost some team members to other companies or departments, so perhaps you already have defined openings. Hold off on filling them until you've completed your assessment and determined your game plan. You'll want to evaluate not only your departmental structure, but also each team member to make sure you have outstanding individual contributors.

Chances are good your predecessor is no longer there, but people are going to give you lots of opinions on how effective your employees are. Listen to that feedback, but evaluate each employee with a fresh perspective, giving each person an opportunity to tell you about themselves, their role, and what they think the organization needs to do to improve.

During this process, you might have someone in your company give you a not-so-good review of one of your employees. Resist the temptation to make a personnel change immediately. Perhaps the employees in question was less than stellar because they weren't working under your leadership and their skills weren't being

properly utilized. With your guidance, they might become valuable contributors.

Of course, after the initial observation, you might have some team members that clash with others in your group or aren't going to fit into your long-term plans. Once you've arrived at that decision, it's best to communicate with human resources to understand what you need to do to begin the severance process. You'll be doing yourself and your employees a favor to allow them to move on.

Understanding Colleagues' Positions

Given the experience you've accumulated up to this point in your career, you likely have a strong vision of what you want to achieve, but don't skip on communicating with others regarding their expectations. For starters, schedule a meeting with your new boss to better understand his or her expectations for you and your department. What sort of time frames are you expected to meet? What is your boss' level of understanding of the current situation, and what are his or her thoughts around the approach you should take? Let your boss know you're completing a detailed review of everything in and surrounding the marketing function and that you'll come back with your assessment of the current situation and your recommendations for short and long-term strategies.

Don't forget to meet with your peers and colleagues in the other departments to understand their perspective on what's needed for you to have an outstanding marketing function for your company. They'll probably



all have different but valuable insights on the critical success factors for marketing. As an added bonus, these conversations can serve as a valuable opportunity to begin establishing rapport with coworkers in other departments.

Meeting with Financial Operations

What's the budget? Believe it or not, there might be several answers to this question, so the smart play is to start building some bridges with the finance department so you can gain a better understanding of this area sooner rather than later.

To that end, plan to meet with select members of the finance team. Hopefully they can supply you with the historical and approved budget figures. Do they have this broken down by programs and head count budget? You might find they have a fairly detailed budget for the current year already locked and loaded. Or, you might discover that they've held off from recording a specific budget until you can develop and gain consensus on what the expenditures need to be.

Don't be surprised if finance has created some interesting categories for the marketing spend that have little correlation to how you'll actually account for your investments. You might need to work with accounting

to establish new categories for expenses that more closely align with how you're going to operate.

If the current budget isn't what you think it needs to be, then you'll want to put together your plan and financial requirements. See more about the recommended steps and processes to get approval for additional funding in the "Budgeting for Success" section on p. 16.



Quick Tips for Budgeting
View the video >>>

Evaluating External Players and Resources

Even the most talented marketing organizations need to look outward to be successful in achieving both short-term tactical and long-term strategic objectives. This means increasing your understanding of customers, external resources, key industry players and even the competition.

Reviewing Outside Resources

Has your organization been using the services of outside agencies? You'll want to schedule reviews with each of these firms to understand (from their perspective) their past contributions and areas of expertise. This is also the time to glean their advice on how to best move forward.

You might want to consider having all your agencies do a "clean sheet" presentation of their capabilities. Instead of giving them a defined agenda, ask them to present their firm, their approach and their key portfolio clients. People naturally present their strengths and the type of work they like to do, while typically avoiding those areas in which they're weaker.

You can use these meetings to assess if these agencies are the best fit for what you're going to focus on moving forward. And from this, you can identify gaps that you need to fill with either inside head count or the help of other outside resources.

Most companies now use an array of boutique agencies and outside freelance talent to complement their existing organization. Rarely today is there one agency that has deep expertise in all that you need to go to market. Part of your job will be to make sure you have a full complement of expertise across the marketing spectrum.

Letting Customers Inform Your Strategy

It's tough to market effectively if you don't know the buyers of your products and services. Conversely, tapping buyers for their insights can improve performance: Companies that invite their customers to play a part in shaping the strategic direction they take and the products and services they offer are 59 percent more likely to be outperformers¹. With that in mind, asking and answering questions related to your customers will be one of the most important aspects of your evaluation process.

Take the time to make face-to-face calls or schedule focus groups with existing customers. Recently onboarded customers are often ideal because the evaluation and decision process is still fresh in their minds. You can ask in-depth questions about how they engaged with your marketing, and it should greatly inform your strategy going forward. Include some of your senior team in this as well. It will help infuse them with a customer-focused viewpoint that will pay dividends during the future planning and execution stages.

Depending on your business, you'll likely want to employ additional tools for gathering customer insights. Perusing online reviews, sending surveys via email and hiring third-party firms to provide analysis are additional methods to consider to give you a feel for how contacts view you. (You should also be tapping into data and analytics to learn more about your customers – see the "Understanding Your Database" section on p. 10 for more.)



If you've been hired to bring a completely new product to market that will reach a completely new audience, then uncovering clues from existing customers and current sales and marketing processes may be less important. But most of the time, you can glean critical intelligence from the customers you already have. As an added bonus, you'll likely earn the respect of your sales leadership colleagues who will appreciate your customer-focused viewpoint.

from firms such as Gartner, Forrester and Gleanster are covering your products. If you're selling a consumer product, such as ski equipment, then which reporters and review sites influence potential buyers? Finding and establishing good relationships with influencers is an important part of ramping up your strategy.

Identifying Key Influencers

Who are the other influencers that are important for your market? How are you working with them today, and what needs to change? If you're a B2B technology marketer, then this means understanding which analysts

Documenting Your Competitors' Approach

Competitive intelligence can help fuel smarter campaigns, so this is the time to do an in-depth assessment of your competitors' strengths, weaknesses and marketing strategy. If you can, ascertain how much they're investing in marketing compared to how much your firm has been spending. Inventory their content, website and go-to-market messaging.

The intent isn't to perform this research so you can mimic what they're doing. Rather, you can combine this newfound intelligence with the in-depth knowledge of your products and services to create a unique position, strategy and campaign plan for your company and products.



Assessing Your Foundation

If you don't have a strong foundation, it's likely you'll be limited in how effectively you can enhance the customer experience – no matter how creative your ideas. That's why taking the time to examine the technology you're using and looking at your database are key components of your first few months as a marketing leader.

Reviewing Your Technology Platforms

Has the department you've inherited moved beyond Excel, Word and PowerPoint to get their jobs done? It's time to find out by documenting

what solutions are being used, who is using them and how they are being used. This is also the perfect opportunity to understand how your new company procures hardware and software.

You'll probably need to get in the weeds to understand what these products are all about, the skill sets required to master them, and how they could address your department's needs. It's worth the effort, though: If you don't make this detailed assessment yourself, you could be left with some grave misunderstandings of what you have, what you don't have and what you need to have success in your new role.

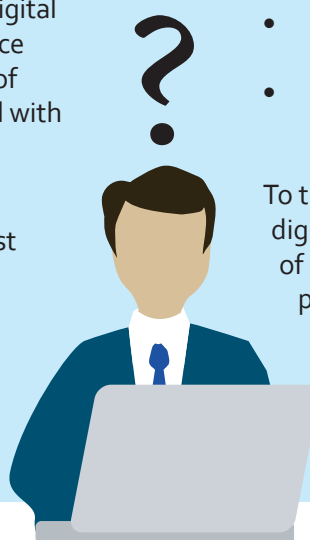
"I'm Not Technical"

While tasks like HTML coding and writing APIs are best left to the good folks in IT, CMOs no longer have the luxury of shrugging off conversations about digital marketing campaigns by proclaiming, "I'm not technical."

In fact, there's a close link between the degree of digital acumen CMOs display and the financial performance of the enterprises for which they work: 43 percent of outperformers are "Digital Pacesetters," compared with just 25 percent of "Traditionalists."¹

In today's landscape, CMOs must fully understand what's possible via new technology and stay abreast of the latest developments so they can address questions such as:

- How can we use push notifications to encourage in-store visitors to see the new arrivals?



- Can we use the answers from last quarter's market survey to personalize our nurture campaign?
- Would we be able to automatically alert sales management when certain companies are visiting our website?
- What are all the ways we can leverage SMS with our newly opted-in prospects?
- Can we begin to apply prediction algorithms to our existing customers so that we can preempt attrition?

To this end, make sure you get regular briefings from your digital marketing platform provider so you can stay abreast of new announcements and really understand what's possible with the technology. Your team is counting on your leadership to help them get and stay ahead of the competition, and this means setting an example by increasing your technical know-how.

Consider starting the technology review process by inviting your incumbent technology vendors to give you a comprehensive presentation of their software's features and functions. Invite your IT colleagues to join you, as they could be key allies in assessing current platforms and determining strategies moving forward.

It's possible your team is only using a fraction of the capabilities available in the platform. Or, perhaps the solution has been upgraded since its original purchase. So, as you're looking at these presentations and demonstrations, make note of the capabilities you could leverage in your future marketing campaigns or in your technology infrastructure.

When your reviews are done, make a diagram of the solutions you already have in house, as well as the different technology capabilities you might need. What are the key gaps that should be addressed? From this in-depth assessment, determine if it's time to begin searching for new solutions.

Understanding Your Database

With digital marketing the primary strategy for virtually every company, the marketing database should be one of your most treasured assets. But for many CMOs, it's also cause for anxiety: 82 percent feel underprepared to deal with the data explosion¹. With that in mind, one of your primary goals should be to get a feel for the size, scope and health of your database.

Have one of your analysts or database administrators prepare some reports for you on how many records you have in your database. How many records are active? For example, what portion of your contacts have interacted with you in the last six to nine months in some fashion, such as opening an email, placing a phone call or completing a form on your website?

If you want to deploy sophisticated digital campaigns, you'll likely need more than just a name and an email address. How much data do you have about each customer and prospect? How's the data being used? Just for general broadcast emails, or something more targeted?

For the customer portion of the database, do you have an integration with your order management and inventory databases? The more database fields you have, the more personalized you can be in your campaigns. If you don't have these integrations complete, you'll want to make this a part of your near-term action plans.

If a larger portion of your database is dormant or inactive, one of your first orders of business should be to launch a reactivation campaign to reawaken those contacts, or you should archive or delete them.

What if you don't have the skills in-house to manage the database? In this case, you might want to hire some third-party specialists to help you clean up the database, append additional fields onto existing records, and complete the important integrations for you. This will cover your short-term needs, but for the long term, you'll want to have skilled head count in your organization for managing this asset given its importance.



Taking Ownership of Your Data
View the video >>>

Taking Inventory of Current Marketing Efforts

Before you launch any new initiatives, it's a good idea to take inventory of what's been done in the past. What are the current marketing strategies, campaigns, tactics and processes? Can you get any metrics on past campaign performance? Did they accomplish the stated objectives for revenue, qualified opportunities, pipeline generation and customer satisfaction?

Understanding Your Marketing Assets

Strong, shareworthy content is more important than ever, serving as the lifeblood of campaigns, moving prospective customers through the buying process, bringing in net new leads and helping retain current customers. For this reason, content marketing is an expensive and time-consuming aspect of many marketing team members' day-to-day roles. Given its importance, you'll want to take some time understanding the assets you have and how they're being used.

Inventory your photography, content (white papers, guides, blog posts, print advertisements, Web content, etc.) and other creative assets. Document the asset's format and age, interview your team, and review existing campaigns to understand how these assets are being used. It might be helpful to develop a content framework to assess at what point in the buying cycle and with which personas the content is being used. You might find an overabundance of content in one area but a big hole in another.

In your opinion, are the items up to standards? Is there consistency within and between mediums? Should any of the assets be retired and replaced? Identify the gaps you have and reserve a section of your action plan (and your budget) to develop new assets and upgrade worn or outdated creative.

Assessing Your Campaigns

Are any initiatives worth keeping in place, or should they be replaced with new strategies? Are current campaigns leveraging technology in the best way possible? You might find campaigns that have been marginally successful in the past but could be super-successful if you applied new approaches that incorporated social engagement or marketing automation.

Customers increasingly expect a seamless experience across channels, so look across your organization and in the marketplace and observe your company's messaging. Do you have brand consistency? Does the current brand architecture reflect the current values, positioning, and strategy for the company and its products?

In some cases, significant transformation may be necessary, while in others you might simply need to strengthen the implementation of the existing brand. The extent of the changes will impact when these shifts should occur given all the other changes that need to take place. If revenue contribution is the top immediate need, new branding efforts might have to take a back seat until you've addressed pipeline and lead generation requirements.

If you're lucky, you might already have existing programs in place that are working well. It's more likely, though, that you've been hired to fix what isn't working or doesn't even exist. By taking inventory of your current campaigns and tactics, you can decide what you want to continue or assimilate into your new campaigns.

This is also the perfect time to take further note of your team's use of marketing technologies such as Web tracking, progressive profiling, automated programs, lead scoring and more. If you don't have employees that are using these technologies, then this is an early warning you'll need to establish new ways of working for your future campaigns and perhaps hire staff or outside resources to implement the latest marketing technology.

Checking for Mobile-Readiness

Mobile phones and tablets are perhaps the most transformative devices since the invention of the PC. We all have them in our hands virtually all the time. We check them constantly, often every few minutes, and many of us have two or three of these devices in use. Increasingly, shoppers are using these mobile devices to research and complete their purchases.

Because of the pervasiveness of these new platforms and the fact that users are often on the go and digesting your content in short bursts, it's smart to perform a thorough assessment of how you're transforming your marketing. Does your content reflect this mobile context, and are you taking advantage of what's possible with mobile to connect more strongly with on-the-move customers?

Many companies now deliver mobile-friendly emails, but you'll want to make sure that whatever websites, forms or landing pages contacts are interacting with from your emails are also mobile-friendly.

Do you have mobile apps in your company? If so, you'll want to understand who owns the content and capabilities of the app, as well as whether your app is integrated into the rest of your marketing efforts so you can capture these behaviors and incorporate them into your marketing mix. With mobile app use on the rise, delivering custom content via this channel, such as targeted push notifications, might be a tactic to consider.

SMS is another channel you'll want to examine. Should text messaging be added to your communication mix, and if so how should it be used? Your answers to these questions should be slanted toward a bias for mobilizing virtually everything you do.

The explosion of mobile has also brought new metrics to be considered. You'll want to further your understanding of how mobile your audience is by examining what devices people are using to interact with you. Comparing click-through, engagement (the length of time an email is opened) and conversion rates on mobile devices versus desktop can also yield enlightening data regarding how you might help optimize the customer journey.

Assessing Sales Enablement

For many marketing leaders, sales enablement is a key function, while in some larger organizations this responsibility may fall under other departments. So, the first order of business will be to ascertain your duties in this area. If sales enablement falls under a separate department, you'll probably want to work closely with them to share assets and photography. You can also provide them with your input on things you've learned on your interviews with customers, non-customers and employees.

If you do own sales enablement, take the time to interview sales' top producers. Understand how they sell and what content, tools or job aids they use to help them in their process. They might even have some specific ideas of things they'd like for you to provide to help them in their selling efforts. One caveat: Make sure these sellers understand that while their ideas may be fabulous, it might take some time before you're able to fulfill their requests.

By marrying the results of these interviews with your customer and employee interviews, you should have some great ideas for aids that will increase the sales team's effectiveness.



Reporting Your Findings

Once you've completed your thorough assessment, you should take the time to document your initial impressions. Writing down your findings will help firm up your feelings about what you've learned and crystalize the strategy you want to implement moving forward.

Sharing Your Discoveries

You can document your findings in a research paper or put together a comprehensive PowerPoint. While you might feel more comfortable with PowerPoint, don't dismiss the power of an in-depth research paper. The different format could make your findings stand out among other projects.

Review the paper (at least the non-personnel aspects) with your team members in your department. Getting feedback will help ensure you've captured the complete picture of what's going on. Then you'll want to give the report to the appropriate higher-ups in your organization. Of course, your boss should be the primary recipient, but you might want to include others such as the Board of Directors.

Use the report as a major milestone and a way to build a common understanding of what's going on. If your boss thinks what you need to do is fairly straightforward, reading your report should help clarify that achieving success will require more time, money, head count and other resources than original (perhaps unspoken) assumptions. The sooner you can set the record straight regarding any erroneous suppositions, the better off you'll be.

Resetting Expectations

The assessment phase may also be a time during which you discover that the reality of your position is completely different than what you were sold on when interviewing for your new role. If this is the case, you should revisit your interview conversations with your new boss and express that

what you've found regarding the current reality is in conflict with your original dialogue.

In most cases, you should be able to reach an understanding. But if the facts are untenable, you may find yourself in a position in which you can't be successful and need to consider an exit plan. The good news is that by following the guidelines outlined in this ebook, you should put yourself in the best possible position to succeed.

Summarizing Your Investigations

At the end of this process, you should have a comprehensive list of items that are going well and that you'll want to continue, elements you'll want to improve, and tactics you'll want to stop. You'll have holes (in the org chart, content, campaigns, skills and more) that you'll want to fill, and efficiencies you'll want to wring out of your marketing processes.

Incorporate these items into a checklist to ensure you'll work your findings and decisions into a new plan. Take the time to document the critical success factors for your role, your organization and your company. Keep this list of critical success factors close at hand as you develop your game plan for moving forward.

Taking time to put together this deliverable will give you a stake in documenting where you were when you came into this role. Then, you'll be able to look back every year to see progress you've made, celebrate your achievements, revisit key assumptions, and stay on top of the rapidly changing world or marketing.



TWEET THIS!

Reading Silverpop's "The New CMO Guide: A Handbook for Marketing Leaders"

Developing Your Plan

So you've made a thorough assessment, reported your findings and summarized your investigation. The next phase in your new role is to develop your plan, establishing your goals and campaign strategy and setting up the resources and infrastructure you'll need to make it happen.

Campaign Planning

Much of your planning will center on campaigns, but this doesn't mean focusing on individual tactics such as a mailing or a series of advertising pieces. To reach the level of sophistication you'll likely need to connect with today's savvy buyers, you'll want to look at a campaign as a long-term (often one-year) strategy incorporating many different types of tactics and channels that results in the achievement of major milestones. At a minimum, your plan should address the key stages of the buyer journey:

- Demand Gen/Top-of-the-Funnel Awareness Campaign
- Nurture/Conversion Campaign
- Post-Sale Advocacy Campaign

Other items you'll want to include in the planning process include:

- Departmental Requirement Head Count, Hiring Needs
- Agency and Partner Strategy (you might want to incorporate agency and partner tactics into your buyer journey campaigns as well)
- Technology Infrastructure Requirements
- Budget (by tactic and campaign)
- Sales Enablement Plan (if you own this function)
- Brand Awareness Campaign (you may not have this if you funnel all your budget into the buyer journey campaigns above)

Focusing on Buyers

Using categories tied to the buyer journey such as those listed above will allow you to formulate a plan that's more integrated and aligned with your

prospects and customers. If you've determined your buyer personas, then you'll want to use those as part of your strategy. If you don't have buyer personas established, then this is an excellent opportunity to do the work to understand who your buyers are and what their motivations are for purchasing from you. You might consider training staff members in buyer persona research and development or hiring outside firms to help you with this foundational strategy development.

Depending on whether you're B2B or B2C, you might break down buyer journey stages differently or give them different names, but no matter how you categorize your company, you'll need to find new prospects for your products or solutions, get additional revenue from existing customers, and turn your customers into advocates for your company. Employing a customer focus during your planning will help you get there.

Establishing Your Goals

This is the time to set program targets. These should be SMART Goals – Specific, Measureable, Attainable (a stretch, but certainly not impossible), Realistic and Time-bound. Examples of program targets could include items such as:

- "Increase the number of people in the awareness funnel by 35 percent by end of the second quarter."
- "Improve the velocity of the nurture process by four months." (measured three months after launch of new nurture campaign)
- "Increase marketing's contribution to the sales pipeline by 45 percent by end of September."
- "Have 34 percent of sales revenue originate from marketing by year's end."
- "Add 55 new customers to the Ambassador program by the end of the year."

Not only will setting SMART goals help keep you focused, but they can also serve as rallying points for everyone in your organization.

Building the Campaigns and Tactics

Take some time to flesh out your campaign ideas. Depending on your background and skills, you might be able to come up with creative themes, messages and campaign approaches on your own, or you might need to rely on either your internal team or an outside agency to help. No matter the approach, don't skimp on thoroughly documenting your campaign overview. Of course, you'll later break the tactics down into individual components such as email, advertising, events, content development, etc. but avoid the temptation to do this at the start.

Once you've mastered the high-level plan, then you'll need to get specific, prescribing how the website/landing pages need to be designed, what Web forms you need (and when and how you'll gather data), how emails will look, what the SMS text will say, and more. Hopefully all these campaign tactics will have provocative subject lines, engaging content, high-quality images and more. The plan and campaign overviews will serve as the rudder of the ship, guiding your direction, but the details will make a huge difference in overall success. Strive for campaign (and brand) consistency, anchored by your buyer persona findings, and you'll be more certain to have success.

Setting Up Infrastructure

If your company previously took a more manual, broadcast approach to its communications, set aside the necessary resources to transition to a more automated, behavior-driven one. By making this shift, your effectiveness should increase since content relevance will improve. In the long run, your marketing department will likely enjoy the efficiency of a more automated setup. If you have a field sales force, setting up automated alerts will help ensure reps are quickly notified of hot leads and can manage them accordingly.

Don't forget to plan time to develop all the tracking and reporting processes. You'll want to track the basics such as email opens and clicks, which can drive improvements in areas such as creative, deliverability and list hygiene.

In addition, you'll also want to monitor content consumption and pipeline status. If you can, consider implementing lead scoring where applicable. It can provide a dynamic dashboard of the progress you're achieving.

Last but definitely not least, you'll want to report on marketing's contribution to revenue, leads generated, cost savings and campaign ROI. Determine a revenue attribution model that makes the most sense for your business and check that you're tracking the necessary interactions and purchases to implement it. Make sure you understand the reporting capabilities your digital marketing platform offers and work with your team to set up a schedule for how frequently they'll check these metrics and report to you on them.

Remember: These "output" metrics will be of most interest to your boss and head of finance, so make sure to communicate what you'll track and report when you present your plan.

Lining Up Your Resources

Did you get approval to hire additional employees? Do you need additional head count to achieve your goals? Don't miss this opportunity to begin your internal efforts to add to your bench. Put together job descriptions and skill requirements as well as the contributions this additional resource will make to your goals. Hopefully you have an HR peer who can help you in your candidate search. You might need to present your plan to your boss (and perhaps the Board of Directors) to secure funding for your entire marketing program, including both head count and program expenses, before you can begin an official search. But if you can at least do some of the preparation work such as writing job descriptions and syncing with HR, you'll be able to move faster once the budget is approved.

If you need additional outside partners to achieve your targets, this is the time to begin looking for these new resources. You might need to do a full agency review and invite several firms to submit proposals. You may want

to share some of your assessment findings with them so that they have a complete picture of the opportunity and the market challenges you face. The more thought you can put into defining your situation and exactly what you need, the more likely you are to be happy with your ultimate partner selection(s). A thorough campaign brief (perhaps as a subset of your assessment findings described above) will help get your outside resource candidates off to a good start once the plan is approved.

Establishing Non-Priorities

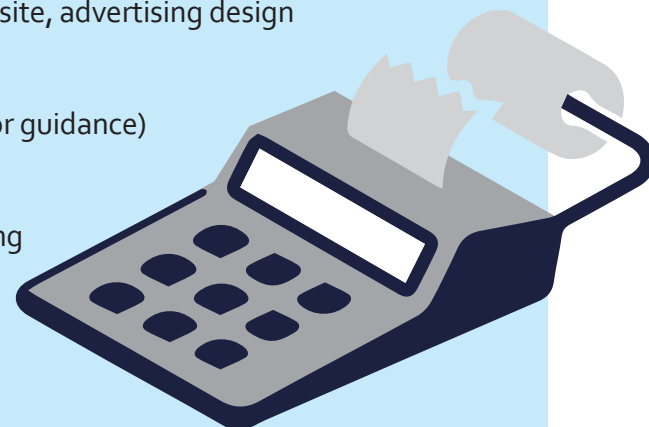
This is also the time to be clear about what you're *not* going to focus on. You can't do everything, yet some organizations expect you to do it all – immediately. Remember: the more things you try to do, the less focus you have for the items you must accomplish. By clarifying the items you're not going to do or perhaps save for subsequent time periods, you'll be making clear to your team, your leadership and your colleagues in other departments what they can expect.

Budgeting for Success

For many marketing leaders, budgeting is one of the most tedious parts of the job — but it has to be done. Hopefully you have an analyst in your group who can help, or maybe you can borrow an analyst from finance for a period of time while you build your detailed budget. You'll probably need to provide figures for each month and quarter, as well as a full-year plan. Some of the expenses will be out-of-pocket expenses, while others will be done by internal resources and not require a hard-dollar outlay. You'll want to include budgets for:

- Head count and salary requirements
- Campaigns (data/database, creative, execution, event/trade show costs, website, advertising design and placement, promotion)
- Agency and outside resources
- Technology (perhaps this is expensed over a period of time; look to finance for guidance)
- Sales enablement (if applicable)

In addition, make sure you include proper funding for formal training. Many marketing technology providers, including Silverpop, have certification courses. Also, consider including budget dollars to have team members attend industry conferences, which can be a fertile ground for training.



Moving Forward with Your Plan

Earlier you presented your assessment to your boss and other stakeholders. Your next task is to present your new plan and get the funding and go-ahead for what you want to accomplish.

Getting the Necessary Approvals

Initially you might present absolutely everything you want to do, knowing in the back of your mind that you might be forced to scale back because you get less budget dollars than you anticipated. If you think there's a decent change this might happen, be ready with several alternate plans you can fall back on. Be sure to remind folks that less investment will mean you must cut back on the scope of the campaigns, the number of tactics you can deploy, and both the aggressiveness of some of your goals and the timelines for achieving them.

Also, know that if you're new to the company, you might have to implement a few smaller initiatives to prove your effectiveness and build trust in the organization. Be prepared for this in budget negotiations as well. Hopefully you can reach a consensus between finance, executives and your colleagues that provides the resources you need to put your plans into action and exceed your goals.

Once you're through the (arduous) approval process, it's time to commence the new work with your team. Hard work lies ahead, and you must kick your leadership skills into high gear to get everyone excited and on board with the new plan.

Conclusion: Putting Your Plans into Action

If you've done a thorough job with your planning, then this is the fun part! Conduct regular, maybe even daily, standing status meetings with everyone involved. Keep a laser focus on the project plan to stay on track. Review results and metrics as soon as they are available. Don't be afraid to change course if you're not pleased with the results. The sign of a good leader is the ability to adjust people, processes or the marketing itself based on feedback and results. Set aside time to brief your colleagues and your boss on how your team is doing and the results you're achieving.

If you can use those first six to nine months to build a strong foundation and get off on the right foot, chances are you'll be around for a while. The average CMO tenure is now at 45 months, nearly double the average tenure of 23 months recorded less than a decade ago².

So while you'll need to show results quickly, you also want to build for the long haul. If you've followed the framework outlined in this ebook, you should be well-positioned to build a fantastic team, hit your most audacious goals, and achieve outstanding success in your new role for however long you're heading up marketing at your company.

Footnotes

- 1-IBM, "Stepping up to the challenge: CMO insights from the Global C-suite Study," March 2014
- 2-Spencer Stuart, "Chief Marketing Tenure Remains Steady at 45 months," March 2014

Silverpop, an IBM Company, is a cloud-based digital marketing provider that offers email marketing and lead management solutions. Silverpop Engage uses customer data and individual behaviors, collected from a variety of sources, to inform and drive personalized interactions in real time. By providing deep, behavior-based customer insights and an intuitive engagement engine, Silverpop reduces the complexity of omni-channel marketing and enables exceptional experiences for customers across the entire buyer journey. As part of IBM's ExperienceOne integrated portfolio, Silverpop will help convert prospects into loyal customers through more relevant one-to-one interactions. Silverpop is trusted by more than 5,000 brands around the globe. For more information, [view our demo](#) and visit [silverpop.com](#).