

LEADING AND MANAGING MARKETING PRIMER FOR 2018

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SUMMARY

Marketing leaders must build strategies, pursue innovation and align resources for execution that delivers measurable results. Gartner's research on leading and managing marketing provides insight, advice and tools to help you achieve these objectives.

Scope

Leading and managing marketing involves setting strategy, structuring teams, sourcing and developing talent, and aligning people, processes, partners, data and technology to achieve corporate goals.

Leading and managing marketing delivers insight and guidance on the following topics:

- Strategic management: Setting strategy, plans and innovation based on business goals
- Operations management: Allocating budget resources for operational effectiveness
- Performance management: Choosing KPIs to measure, demonstrate and optimize results
- Structure, talent and training: Designing team structure and skills in a changing environment
- Vendor management: Finding, evaluating and managing agencies to maximize capabilities and programs



Build strategies, pursue innovation and align resources for execution that delivers measurable results.

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ANALYSIS


Figure 1. Leading and Managing Marketing Overview



Source: Gartner (January 2018)

Marketing leaders face expanding, often competing, demands. They assume ever-greater responsibility for the customer journey, while feeling pressure to deliver growth and demonstrate ROI. Declining marketing budgets, which are receding for the first time in three years, put further strain on marketing leaders. These factors force the adoption of more advanced approaches to budgeting, planning and measuring marketing impact. They also reveal the importance, yet lack of skills in areas like data analytics, market and customer insights, and acquiring and managing marketing technology. Marketing leaders must improve their teams' capabilities, requiring a dramatic shift from roles that revolve around function, channel and product or brand expertise.

Innovation stands out as a bright spot among these challenges — insulated from recent budget cuts, revealing continued commitment from senior management. But if you fail to define the scope of marketing innovation, you risk investing in optimization that falls short of the transformation that senior management seeks. Without a strategy to source ideas, pilot programs and scale innovation, you risk falling behind competitors. Use this research to build marketing strategies and connect them to effective execution. Learn best practices for budgeting and resource management; identifying and developing must-have skills; leveraging marketing agencies and external partners to support your objectives; and managing and maximizing the value of innovation.

 **Without an innovation strategy, you risk falling behind competitors.**

Top Challenges and How Gartner Can Help

For marketing leaders tasked with delivering growth, use Gartner's 2018 research to develop strategies, optimize your team's capabilities and organizational success, improve marketing budgeting and measurement, and inform organization design and vendor selection. Specifically, the leading and managing marketing agenda will help marketing leaders answer the following questions.

How can you build and align marketing strategy to business goals?

Delivering measurable marketing performance aligned to corporate goals is central to your role as a marketing leader. Success depends on your ability to formulate strategies informed by corporate goals, while leveraging available market insights along with internal and external performance data. Your strategy should set clear marketing objectives: budgeting, allocating available resources, defining critical skills and capabilities, and setting consistent measures of success.

Gartner's 2018 research will provide tools to help marketing leaders develop strategic plans for their specific business context and deliver insight to compare their priorities and performance with that of their peers.

Planned Research

- **Gartner CMO Spend Survey, 2018–2019:** Our annual survey reveals marketing leaders' strategic priorities, most significant challenges and key opportunities. They show shifts in top-line budgets, as well as changes in allocation across marketing channels, tactics, tools and talent. Use the key findings from these surveys to evaluate your marketing strategy and spend, determine whether to stay the course or change direction, and make the case for additional funding needed to achieve your objectives.
- **Budgeting and cost optimization:** Gartner benchmarks enable you to compare your budget to that of your peers, while our maturity models will help you advance your team's budgeting and operational capabilities. Our tactical advice will enable you to proactively plan for cost optimization to rightsize your budget and ensure future investments are justified through the business impact they deliver.
- **Leading and managing marketing innovation:** Marketing leaders are charged with innovation, but are left to define what it means and determine how to leverage innovation to deliver value. Gartner's research examines different types of innovation, best practices to drive accountability and ways to avoid common pitfalls that can undermine their efforts.

How does marketing deliver measurable business impact?

A successful marketing strategy drives execution that delivers tangible business results. But marketing leaders struggle to tie their investments to measurable business outcomes. Gartner surveys show that marketing leaders remain primarily focused on channel performance and lack the ability to measure the return on marketing spend. Without a firm connection between marketing spend and revenue growth, marketing budgets are at risk of increased pressures on budgets and credibility.

Our 2018 research will help you identify engagements and audiences that matter most to business results, and allocate your marketing budgets accordingly.



Marketing leaders lack the ability to measure the return on marketing spend.

Planned Research

- **Building and executing marketing operational plans:** You need operational plans to connect your strategic vision to marketing execution, balance short- and long-term objectives, and identify the core components needed to achieve those objectives. Best practices, frameworks and models will show how advanced marketing organizations manage budget and marketing operations, address cost optimization initiatives, build capabilities and put these plans into action.
- **Measuring and communicating marketing impact:** Gartner's frameworks and guidance will help you demonstrate the value of marketing to the enterprise by identifying the right sets of key performance indicators (KPIs), aligning marketing KPIs to strategic goals and communicating marketing impact on business outcomes. This approach gives you an advantage in gaining support and securing funding for your programs and initiatives.

How do you organize, build and develop a team for marketing success?

As the focus of marketing expands from delivering campaigns to a wider, more holistic focus on customer experience, attention shifts from products to customer. This requires a new set of aptitudes and attitudes from internal talent. Build teams with a more comprehensive, flexible and emerging set of skills like customer analytics. Marketing technology now automates formerly manual processes and democratizes once-specialized skills, like social and mobile marketing. This requires redefined roles and expertise from other marketing team members.

Customer-focused marketers that are able to deliver projects, leverage data to communicate insight and harness established and emerging technologies, represent the new normal. Although marketing leaders are aware of the shift in talent requirements, their organizations are ill-equipped to meet these needs. Use our 2018 research to understand how the demands placed on modern marketing leaders and their teams are reshaping organizational strategy and design and require a retooling of marketing talent.



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Planned Research

- **Marketing Organizational Capabilities Survey:** Gartner's annual survey examines approaches to marketing organizational design, critical capabilities of modern marketing teams and ways in which marketing leaders leverage external service providers. Use this research to understand talent and sourcing trends and how they impact the structure and skill set of your marketing team.
- **Compendium of organizational structures:** A compendium of marketing organizational structures you can filter by business model, objective and degree of centralization helps you benchmark your current structure. Next, assess its appropriateness for your goals and consider alternatives, empowering you to devise the most appropriate organizational setup.
- **Building critical marketing skills:** Best practices on designing the modern marketing organization help you identify the right orientation and skills to cultivate in your teams. Our interactive marketing maturity model enables you to assess your organization's strengths and weaknesses, identify skills gaps and develop a roadmap for advancement.

How do you evaluate, select and manage agencies and partners?

Although marketing leaders continuously look to insource key capabilities, they still rely on agencies and other external marketing service providers. But marketers' expectations of agencies are changing. They look to agencies, not just to augment internal staff and fill skills gaps, but also to deliver a higher quality of work. The nature of agency relationships is also shifting. Marketers are increasingly forgoing an agency of record and instead assembling and managing a portfolio of partners to achieve results. This reflects the reality that, as much as marketers face challenges in supporting the broader customer experience, no single agency partner can do it all.

Gartner's 2018 research on external marketing service providers will help you better understand the landscape — from global digital agencies to midsize and independent firms. It can also help you evaluate, select and manage partners according to their unique needs.

Planned Research

- **Balancing insourcing and outsourcing:** Research and case studies on talent sourcing highlight leading approaches to leveraging external partners and blending internal and external talent. Best-practice documents identify various models, including in-house agencies and centers of excellence, to help you choose the right sourcing mix to meet your short- and long-term needs.
- **Navigating the marketing service provider landscape:** Gartner's research on the marketing service provider landscape offers a view of market direction and an understanding of different types of providers. We compare agencies, consultancies, boutique firms and freelancers to help marketing leaders choose the right type of provider.

- **Magic Quadrant for Global Digital Marketing Agencies:** Our Magic Quadrant on global digital marketing agencies offers an evaluation of leading agency providers based on their vision, ability to execute and overall fit within this evolving market. Companion research on managing agencies helps marketers get the most out of agency relationships, even as they expand the number of partnerships.

Related Priorities

Priority	Focus
Customer Experience Strategy and Design	Customer experience (CX) management is the practice of using customer insight to design and execute a cross-functional CX strategy that increases satisfaction, loyalty and advocacy.
Marketing Technology and Emerging Trends	How brands engage with people and their devices is transforming the customer journey.
Marketing Data and Analytics	Data and analytics have become the foundation of marketing, driving efficiency and effectiveness through better data collection, modeling, optimization and greater relevance to the consumer.
Multichannel Marketing and Communications	Multichannel marketing constitutes continual, orchestrated engagement across digital and traditional customer touchpoints.

Source: Gartner

GARTNER RECOMMENDED READING

Suggested First Steps

[“Use Gartner’s Marketing Strategy Framework to Build Accountable, Actionable Strategic Plans”](#)

[“Use Gartner’s Marketing Maturity Model to Build Digital Marketing Muscle”](#)

[“4 Steps for Building an Agile Marketing Organization”](#)

[“Accelerating Marketing’s Digital Proficiency”](#)

[“How to Execute Against a Marketing Innovation Mandate”](#)

Essential Reading

[“CMO Strategy Survey 2017: CMOs Go All In on Customer Marketing, but at What Price?”](#)

[“CMO Spend Survey 2017-2018: Budgets Recede Amid Demand for Results”](#)

[“Survey Analysis: What Marketers Learn From Leading CMOs and Their 2018 Spending Priorities”](#)

[“Marketing Organization Capabilities Survey 2017: Customer Insight, Martech and Creativity Are Essential Ingredients for Modern Marketing Teams”](#)

[“Strengthening Decentralized Marketing Teams: Shared Services and Centers of Excellence for Marketing”](#)

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Digital has redefined the role of marketing, adding new players and creating bigger complexities

Gartner for Marketers helps you get up to speed on and stay smarter in the eight marketing areas that matter most: social, mobile, multichannel and data-driven marketing, digital commerce, customer experience, marketing management, and emerging marketing technology and trends. Our clients say that they use our real-time, expert advice and objective research, data and tools to:

- Target the right audiences
- Choose the right channels
- Quickly shortlist marketing and technology providers
- Stay informed on market and competitors
- Save time and avoid costly mistakes

Gartner helps companies improve their business results through the use of technology. Our independent research and advice is trusted by business and technology leaders in more than 10,000 distinct enterprises around the world.

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