B2B Marketing™

B2B Marketing Leaders Report

Published September 2012

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In association with: Circleresearch FRESH PERSPECTIVE

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About this report

The *B2B Marketing Leaders Report* was produced by B2B Marketing in association with Circle Research in September 2012. The online survey, conducted by Circle Research in July 2012, had 102 participating marketing leaders.

The results analysis was written by Circle Research, additional observations written by Joel Harrison, director of editorial and content at B2B Marketing. Design and layout created by ICD.

In support of B2B Marketing's B2B Marketing Leaders Forum event, this report has been created to provide a unique 360-degree view of B2B marketing leaders:

- **From within** – what are marketing leaders' priorities for the next 12 months?
- **From above** – how is the marketing function perceived by the senior leadership team?
- **From below** – behaviour and attitudes towards the recruitment and training of members of the marketing team.
- **From the outside** – approaches to marketing across multiple territories.

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Dispelling five key myths associated with senior B2B marketing leaders

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Myth 1. B2B marketing leaders aren't interested in tactics

Reality: B2B marketing leaders have to get their hands dirty... whether they like it or not.

- ***When asked about their biggest marketing priorities in the next 12 months, responses were split between strategic and tactical.*** *Tactical priorities include: keeping on top of marketing trends and technology, raising funds and reducing costs, developing leads communication channels, generating leads and balancing multiple objectives.*

- ***Keeping on top of marketing trends and technology is the biggest priority.*** *This is shortly followed by 'Getting buy-in at senior level', as cited by 15 per cent of respondents.*

- ***Priorities are very different from one organisation to the next.*** *One marketer might be more focused on top line issues, and the next on actually mucking in more directly with challenges.*

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Myth 2. B2B marketing leaders don't feel respected or valued by the senior leadership team

Reality: Marketing is valued. Senior leadership is happy to give praise where it's due

- ***Eighty-eight per cent of respondents feel their senior leadership respects the marketing function.*** *The bad news is this general level of respect doesn't penetrate deeply in the organisation, with only 37 per cent feeling 'great' respect from them.*

- ***The situation is improving.*** *Seven out of 10 marketers believe the level of support and respect has improved over the last two to three years.*

- ***Alignment equals respect.*** *For marketing leaders in organisations not dominated by the sales function, the glass is very much more than half full – more than two thirds say they feel their senior leadership team greatly respects the marketing function.*

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Myth 3. Lack of digital skills is holding B2B marketing back

Reality: Core marketing skills are the problem

- ***Over a third of marketing leaders said 'core marketing skills' was the biggest weakness in their marketing team.*** *The lack of core or basic marketing skills is seen as more of a problem than digital skills – cited as a weakness by 26 per cent of respondents.*

- ***B2B marketing leaders favour informal, cheap learning experiences.*** *Sixty-seven per cent of those interviewed said they planned to solve their areas of weakness through 'mentoring and coaching'.*

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Myth 4. The CRO is the natural evolution for the marketing leader

Reality: Marketing leaders aren't interested in this completely revenue-focused role

- ***Only five per cent have a CRO, and only one per cent are considering getting one in the future.*** *Only just over half of respondents were familiar with the concept of a CRO, suggesting ignorance may in part be causing the lack of traction.*

- ***A third of marketing leaders believe a CRO could positively impact on revenue.*** *There are other actions that are felt to be more effective in aligning sales and marketing.*

- ***The majority of organisations (62 per cent) are dominated by the sales function.*** *Marketing is dominant in 16 per cent of organisations and only just one in four organisations have achieved alignment beween the two functions.*

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Myth 5. B2B marketing leaders are hell-bent on global domination

Reality: Regionalism is alive and well

- ***Bias exists towards managing marketing strategy centrally.*** *Forty-two per cent of marketing leaders say their organisation's marketing strategy is managed centrally.*

- ***Localised activity remains important.*** *Just under a quarter say they let regional teams co-ordinate both marketing activity and strategy.*

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This report will help you: *understand B2B marketing leaders' top priorities and core challenges, identify how the senior leadership team views the marketing function, comprehend conduct and attitudes towards staffing and training.*

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