B2B Leaders Report 2017

How to win the hearts and minds of the c-suite



Official partner:

clarasys
clarity through analysis

B2B Marketing
Insight · Development · Training · Events

Contents

Introduction: Why it's time for B2B marketing leaders to bridge the recognition chasm 6

Section 1: 8 reasons why B2B marketing leaders are failing to secure their place at the top table 9

1.1. Where the c-suite is going wrong
1.2. Where marketing is going wrong

Section 2: What do B2B marketers need to do about it? 25

2.1. Agree what marketing should be accountable for… and what it shouldn't
2.2. Strike the right balance between art and science
2.3. Know your internal customer
2.4. Consistently and compellingly communicate the value you deliver
2.5. Deliver market insight – challenge preconceptions
2.6. Become the hub, not the spoke
2.7. Keep up the pace and be responsive
2.8. Master the art of persuasion

Section 3: Who we spoke to 34

Section 4: Comment: Clarasys 36

About: 39
B2B Marketing
Clarasys

About this report

This report combines insight from across the c-suite to demonstrate how marketing is viewed at the top of B2B businesses and how CMOs can increase their standing at board level.

In depth interviews were conducted with six senior executives across key roles, including CEOs and CFOs, across the summer of 2017, with further analysis, writing, editing and design carried out by B2B Marketing.

Why it's time for B2B marketing leaders to bridge the recognition chasm



Joel Harrison
Editor-in-chief, B2B Marketing

It's disappointingly consistent: the biggest thing that's holding marketing back in B2B organisations is still the lack of understanding and appreciation for it at board level. This was the case 13 years ago when we launched B2B Marketing, and (unfortunately) it's still the case today.

In recent years, great progress has been made – marketing is more accountable, more relevant and responsive to the board in B2B companies than ever before. But in many instances, marketing still has a chasm to cross in order to be fully respected, recognised and valued for what it can and should deliver.

The good news for senior B2B marketers is that emerging technology, changing buyer behaviour and rapidly evolving market dynamics mean this gap is narrower than ever. In other words, there's never been a better time to bridge this chasm.

So, in this year's *B2B Marketing Leaders Report*, we wanted to address this issue head on. We wanted to not only document and explore the factors that are preventing B2B marketing leaders from achieving their potential, but more importantly, to present solutions on to how overcome these challenges.

To achieve this, we've interviewed a variety of CEOs and other senior execs of leading B2B organisations about their experiences and perceptions of marketing. And we've called upon a range of other reports and data at our exposure, pulling it all together into a coherent report that we believe will be invaluable for marketers eager to achieve the board level recognition that they and their teams are due.

This report has certainly helped us to better understand the challenges faced by B2B marketing leaders, and I look forward to discussing many of the various themes and issues raised at our upcoming Leaders roundtables. In the meantime, I hope it stimulates some new and different thinking about how to address this perennial but fundamental challenge – and seize the opportunity to bridge this chasm once and for all.

Section 1

8 reasons why marketing leaders are failing to secure their place at the top table

Section 1.1

Where the c-suite is going wrong:

There are some key reasons why marketing and the c-suite don't always see eye to eye, but fellow members of the board are just as much to blame as marketing. Here's where both sides are going wrong:

1.1.1. For CEOs, marketing is too often an afterthought

Many a marketing leader will agree their department is all too often undervalued and misunderstood, and many will recognise the struggle of getting their voice heard in the business, all the while challenging the traditional perception that marketing is not a cost centre, but a growth centre.

But misconceptions about marketing tend to come right from the top: if your CEO doesn't truly understand what marketing can bring to the business, how can the rest of the c-suite – let alone the rest of the business – be expected to understand marketing, and stand by marketing to help it succeed?

The CEOs we spoke to admitted they've come to appreciate the value of marketing over time, and hadn't always been fully cognizant of what it can bring to the business. But for marketing to truly secure respect at board level, CEOs will have to start paying marketing the attention it deserves and realise it's pretty hard to succeed – let alone fuel growth – without marketing.

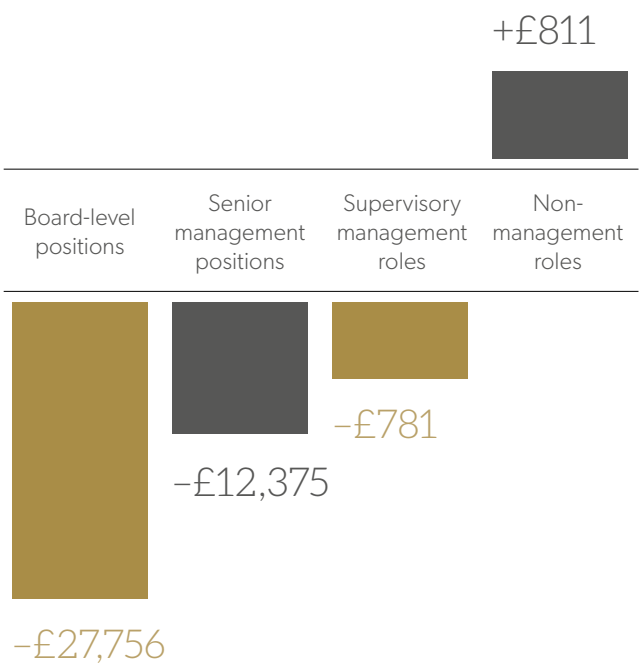
"When we started the company, our go-to-market strategy was based on direct sales. We thought we could just invest in sales people, and go after one-to-one customers. But this doesn't scale very well. So we realised – probably a little late – that we'd have to focus on marketing to grow the business."

Robin Mellstrand, CEO and co-founder, Loop54

"I've become more and more aware of the importance of marketing over time. I think this is something a lot of CEOs have started to appreciate. Marketing can't just be put in a box, like you would with some other departments. Marketing is important across the whole organisation."

Reuben Singh, CEO and founder, AlldayPA

Difference in female salaries compared with male equivalents



1.1.2. The rest of the business doesn't understand what marketing can bring to the table

Marketing's relationship with other departments across the business can, at times, be tumultuous – and we're not just talking about the never-ending sales and marketing love story. A key part of the struggle facing marketing leaders is the fact the rest of the business often misunderstands why marketing exists, coupled with marketing's own reliance on so many other departments to succeed. This was reflected in our conversations, which highlighted where key areas of tension exist and why.

In fact, beyond the basic idea that other parts of the business fail to understand why marketing exists, there's often a misunderstanding of marketing on a deeper level; even if there is a basic appreciation of what marketing contributes to the company, there's often little awareness of the detail behind how marketing produces the results it does, and the amount of work that goes into successful marketing strategies and campaigns.

Part of the problem here is that marketing no longer plays the (relatively basic) role it used to, and the rest of the business hasn't kept up since marketing has made the shift from 'art' to 'science'. Marketing is still locked away in a dark room – now playing with tech instead of crayons – and this hasn't done much to dispel the misconceptions.

> *"I would be willing to bet that in more than half of organisations, other departments don't understand what marketing does at the real granular level. Marketers are seen as the party planners – the ones who make sure articles are published, organise events or make sure the right orange is used on t-shirts. I don't think people realise there's as much science as there is."*
>
> Steven ZoBell, chief product and technology officer, Workfront

> *"Marketing's role within the organisation has evolved over time, and it's become more important as our customers have become more interested in how we can solve their specific use cases. Marketing is no longer marketing the features of the product, they're marketing the solutions."*
>
> Gary Barnett, SVP and general manager, Engagement Solutions, Avaya

1.1.3. The board doesn't know how to spot a great marketer

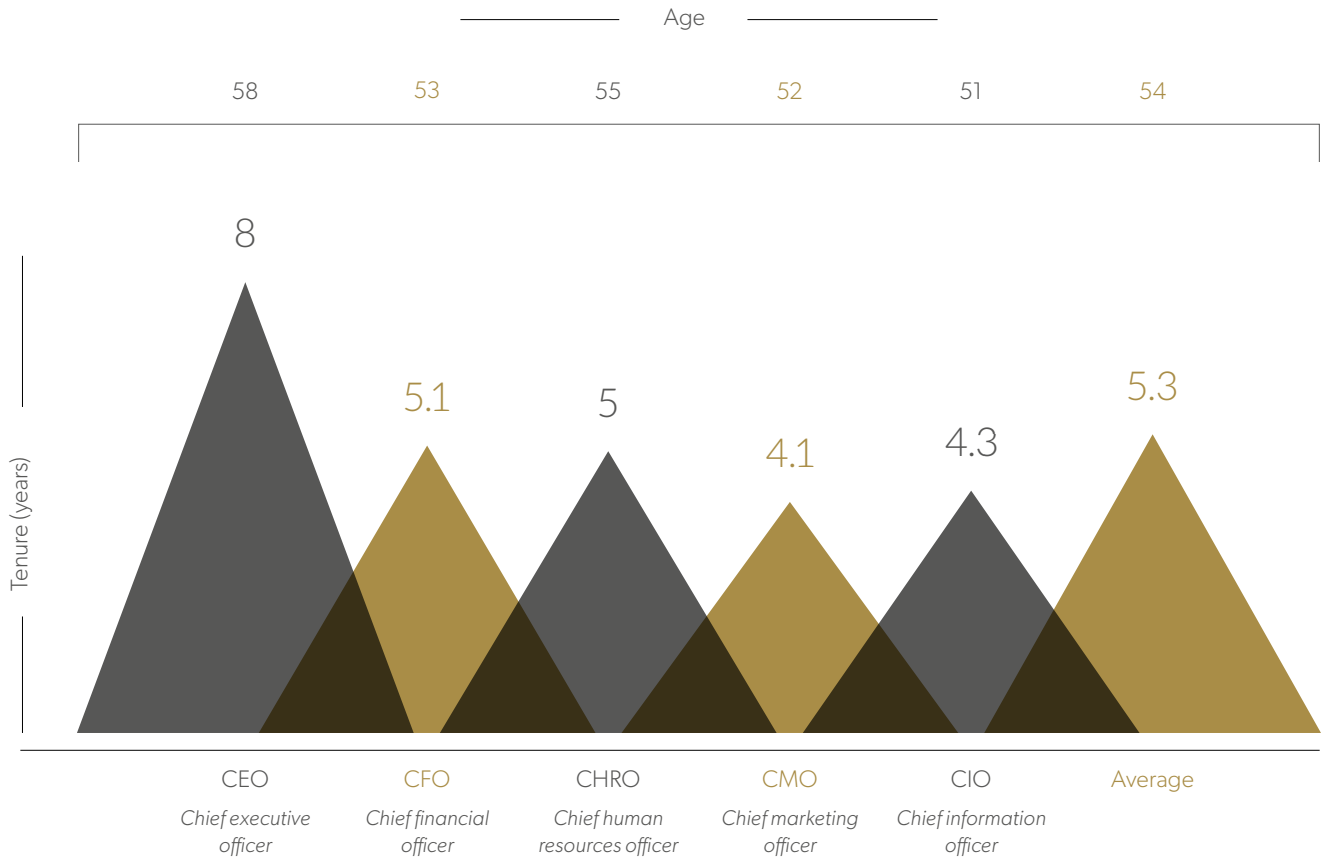
Many of our interviewees recognised how hard it can be to recruit the right person to lead marketing within the organisation, and finding someone with the perfect balance of technical skills and creativity can clearly prove a challenge. But we'd contend many board members actually don't recognise a fantastic marketing leader when there's one in front of them – potentially because there are still so few CEOs who are ex-marketers.

We also know, thanks to recent research by Korn Ferry, that marketing leaders have the shortest average tenure of the whole c-suite (just over four years, compared to eight years for CEOs and five years for CFOs). This illustrates just how hard it can be for organisations to find the right person to take the marketing reins.

The key area of debate here is the balance between creativity and science – both are important, but which should prevail? While many may argue it's all about the numbers once you get to the top – and that's true, to an extent – a few of the business leaders we spoke to highlighted the fact it's a creative mindset that sets marketers apart from the rest of the organisation. However, it's also often assumed that a creative mindset automatically means a sacrifice in terms of a numbers-oriented one – no doubt a myth that many a marketing leader is keen to dispel.



Average tenure of c-suite roles



Source: Korn Ferry

"Recruiting a good marketing director is not quite a dark art… but marketing directors' CVs are less easy to evaluate because they work in a slightly more esoteric field. It can take one or two attempts to get the right person in that role. In my experience, marketers are quite poor at the financial aspect of marketing. By their nature, creative people tend to not want to be confined and instead prefer to be doing more of what's creative rather than less; so there's that (budgetary) constraint they don't always like."

John Thompson, CFO, Infinity SDC

"You need the data and tech skills but you also need the creative to catch hearts and minds – you need the complete mixture of both. It's got to be that deep mix of art and science."

Steven ZoBell, Workfront

"I feel you need a blend of creative and technical skills in a marketer. I think the most frustrating thing about marketers is sometimes a lack of commerciality, although, it can also be the best thing – they don't necessarily look at something and think 'Will one and one make two?'"

Reuben Singh, AlldayPA



1.1.4. The CMO isn't directly accountable for revenue

An issue that links all of the above together is the fact marketing leaders often aren't made accountable for revenue (or pipeline) within their organisations, which directly impacts the respect they receive at board level. In fact, opinion was divided among the c-suite members we spoke to on this issue, demonstrating how little agreement there is on this subject.

While the view that revenue is not something that should be part of a marketing leader's KPIs is starting to dwindle, it's still uncommon to see board-level marketers with direct responsibility for revenue within their organisations. This is most likely down to the 'traditional' view that sales is the only department truly capable of bringing home the bacon, and it highlights just how much of a shift in mindset is required for marketing to truly receive the respect it deserves.

We believe the rise of approaches such as account-based marketing (ABM) means marketers will be increasingly accountable in the boardroom, and this can only be a good thing. In future, we expect marketing departments that are solely responsible for generating leads to be a thing of the past.

— *"Marketing should not be responsible for sales, in my opinion. Marketing is accountable for lead generation but it's the sales function that converts leads into sales."*

John Thompson, Infinity SDC

— *"In principal, I support the basic idea that a marketing director should be accountable for revenue. However, this accountability should only come under the circumstances that they can influence the revenue through certain marketing measures."*

Dr Frank-Stephen Hardt, director of finance, T-Systems

— *"Marketing should definitely be accountable for revenue. A great marketing team should be responsible for the entire customer journey, from prospect to renewal and advocacy."*

Robin Mellstrand, Loop54

Section 1.2.

Where marketing is going wrong:

1.2.1. Marketing departments aren't keeping up with the pace of change

Let's be honest; marketing can often be a source of frustration for other parts of the business. So what is it that gets the c-suite most riled up? A couple of areas were brought up in our conversations, including the fact much of marketing still isn't fully measurable.

But perhaps more unexpectedly, the fact that marketing isn't necessarily seen as the fastest mover in the business was also cited as an annoyance – you often don't see the results of marketing immediately, and this can at times be exasperating when other departments usually produce (almost) immediate results. This is despite or perhaps because of the fundamental changes that are currently sweeping through the marketing industry.

Marketing needs to learn to move and react more quickly in order to keep up with the pace of the business – as the market moves so quickly (especially in sectors such as tech), marketing can't afford to be left behind. Marketing leaders will no doubt be quick to say that this is easier said than done – which is true – but the rest of the c-suite (and the business) doesn't always have time to sit and wait for marketing to do its thing.

— *"My main frustration with marketing is the fact it doesn't always execute to the speed required, and it tends to run more slowly than other business functions. The speed of the business is very quick now, and it's easy to fall into the trap of marketing at a traditional speed. I would advise marketers to get out front and be more aggressive."*

Gary Barnett, Avaya

— *"Marketing is often a bit of a slow starter. You can go for months and not see any results from the money, time and effort that you and the department has spent on it, and you don't understand what's going on. Every other department can provide instant feedback, apart from marketing."*

Robin Mellstrand, Loop54

1.2.2. Marketing leaders aren't involved strategically across the whole business

One of the c-suite individuals interviewed in compiling this report told us about a disappointing experience (in a previous role) where a new head of marketing revealed an entire year of initiatives – the only trouble was, everything had been planned without a single conversation with the product team. This not only meant that every initiative dreamt up was bland, but there was nothing centered on the product or solution… which is ultimately what customers are buying. It was well intentioned, but because there hadn't previously been much focus on outcomes, and because the marketing director was so focused on the big reveal, no one was really singing from the same hymn sheet. A clear lesson for all marketers: never plan anything without making sure it's aligned with the rest of the business first.

While we'll acknowledge that few marketing directors are likely to take an approach this drastic and plan an entire year of activity without speaking to any other department, it illustrates yet again that marketing can find itself isolated as a result of a lack of communication with the rest of the business.

It's, therefore, absolutely crucial that marketing works with other key departments – even HR, if necessary – to both ensure it's not just *seen* as central to the business, but actually *is* central to the business.

— *"The edges of marketing are blurred, because our marketing team has to work very closely with our IT team, with sales, and with HR. But I would say the central part of our business would potentially have to be marketing."*

Reuben Singh, AlldayPA

— *"Marketing is a very centralised, important position, and it has to ensure that it's connected to everwwy team, whether that's finance, sales or customer service."*

Dr Frank-Stephen Hardt, T-Systems

1.2.3. Marketing leaders don't understand the board's agenda

The rest of the c-suite is unlikely to take time to see things from their CMO's point of view, so it's the CMO who'll have to adapt to the wants and needs of the c-suite in order to succeed. Understanding what the rest of the board wants – and also wants to hear – is absolutely crucial if marketers are to secure their place at the top table.

So what does the c-suite really want to hear from their CMO? If you think 'more numbers' is the answer… you wouldn't be wrong. The CEOs and CFOs we spoke to all said that the more data marketers can provide, the better, and if data isn't available then expectations have to be set out as clearly as possible.

As you'd expect, marketing leaders are expected to clearly justify what they require in terms of budget, but this is especially true as they tend to have a slightly different attitude towards spending money compared to the rest of the business. One of the CFOs we spoke to said marketing is the only department that sees their budget as something to spend, rather than something to save (and we're sure he's not the first CFO to remark this), which indicates just how different the mindset of the marketer can be.



Understanding what the rest of the board wants – and also wants to hear – is absolutely crucial if marketers are to secure their place at the top table

"I'd love to hear that we've spent £500,000 on marketing and from that we can see direct correlation between that and £10m of sales. It's difficult for us (because of the nature of our business) but it's still something I'd like to see, and evaluating budget is not as scientific as I'd like it to be."

John Thompson, Infinity SDC

"I would always like to have more information and more detail, provided more quickly. For me, information and data is really key, so I'll always be pleased if marketing can provide more of it. At the same time, as CFO, I need to be clear and precise in communicating what I'm looking for."

Dr Frank -Stephen Hardt, T-Systems

"I'm a CEO – I like things to be measurable. I like to understand how I can get ROI from an investment. If numbers can't be provided, you have to be even clearer about expectations, as it's a harder sell (to me and everyone else). If you don't do this, marketing is perceived as a big black hole that swallows money."

Robin Mellstrand, Loop54

1.2.4. Marketers are too modest

Another trait considered important by the c-suite is the ability of marketers to highlight their achievements and be persuasive about their future plans, which was mentioned by both the CFOs we spoke to. This struck us as slightly surprising – who knew that the board wants to be persuaded by marketing?

Also, considering that marketing has typically been undervalued in B2B organisations since… well, forever, it's no surprise that marketing leaders might not perhaps be used to shouting the loudest in the boardroom about their achievements (especially when they don't have the numbers to back them up).

But this is something marketing leaders need to keep in mind. They need to be passionate, persuasive, and convincing to secure that seat at the boardroom table (and stay there). We've already seen that the c-suite doesn't know how to spot a great marketer when there's one in front of them – so marketers need to leave as little doubt as possible as to what they bring to the business and where they can add value.

— *"By nature, marketers have to be extroverts. But they also need to be persuasive in terms of what we should be doing with our business and how they'd approach it, as well as give you the feeling that, from their previous experience, they can talk about what does and doesn't work."*

John Thompson, Infinity SDC

— *"In a positive way, marketers need to be very convincing. The marketing officer is always challenging for more budget – so they need to explain why the budget is needed, come up with some valid reasons behind it, and to have past evidence that they were successful with what's been done before."*

Dr Frank-Stephen Hardt, T-Systems

The average CMO

Job title

CMO/VP/Marketing director

Gender



Hours worked per week



Average age

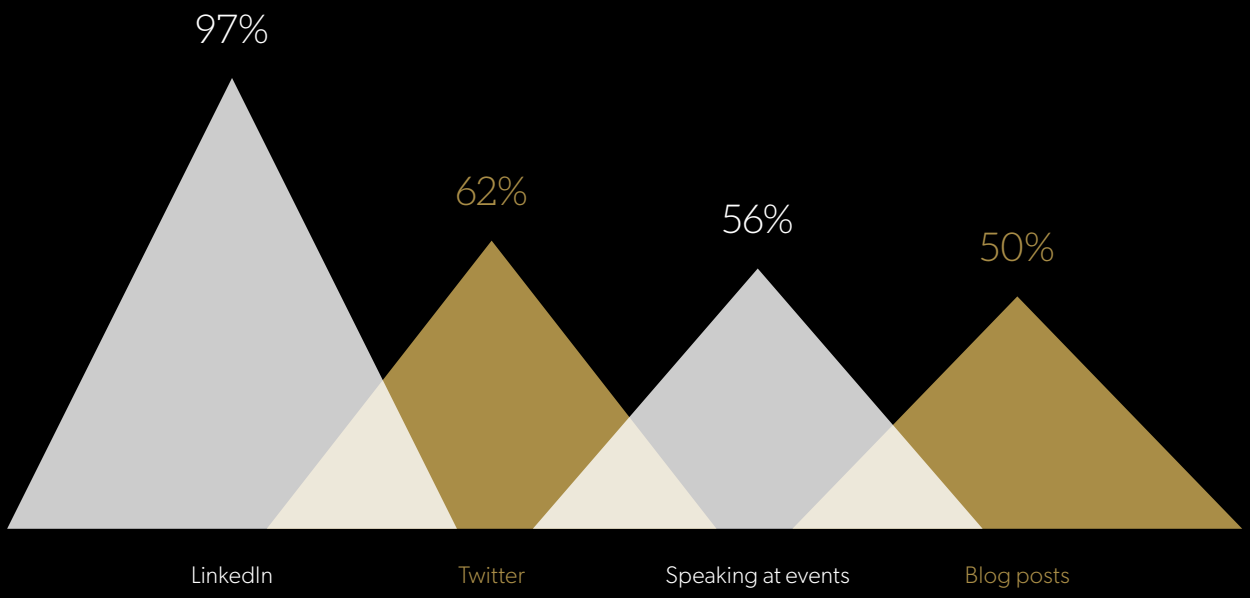
44-years-old

Skills

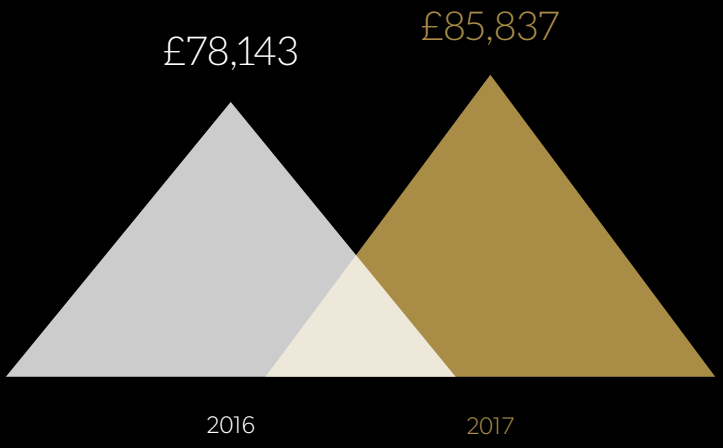
Expert in strategy, planning
and general marketing

Source: ten B2B Marketing career acceleration guide

Channels used to promote professional profile



The average CMO salary



Source: The B2B Marketing salary survey 2017

Section 2

What do leading B2B marketers need to do about it?



2.1. Agree what marketing should be accountable for... and what it shouldn't

The fact marketing directors tend not to last as long as their c-suite counterparts illustrates the difficulty that organisations face in finding marketers who can tick all the boxes. From those we spoke to it seems like it's a case of trial and error – but their assumptions that great marketers are difficult to recruit does nothing to help the profession, which some would argue already suffers from an image problem.

- **Make sure expectations are realistic.**
  For the rest of the c-suite, hiring a new CMO can at times be a leap of faith. Ensuring you understand the role, what it entails, and whether you'll have all the tools at your disposal to meet your objectives is absolutely essential. Ideally, you should look to design the role before you start to make sure everyone involved is clear about what they expect from marketing.

- **Align with other c-suite members.**
  Make sure your KPIs as a marketing leader include pipeline or sales – we know the marketers who ensure this is the case not only feel more accountable, but receive increased respect from both sales and senior management. Simply tracking marketing-qualified leads will not reflect the true contribution that marketing makes to the business.

2.2. Strike the right balance between art and science

You just can't please some people – members of the board seem to want it all: marketers who have a creative edge and can see past the usual business constraints, all while staying on budget and providing ROI in the form of detailed numbers. So, as the debate over art and science in marketing continues to rumble on, it's clear that the ideal CMO has a real mix of the two. So what should marketers be expected to do?

- **Cultivate your leadership skills.**
  According to the *B2B Marketing career acceleration guide*, the top skill that marketing leaders believe is necessary to succeed is strategy/planning, while creativity was ranked as more important among junior marketers than it was by senior marketers. But we'd encourage marketing leaders to continue to nurture their creative side – it's easy to get caught up in the numbers, but ensuring you're involved in brainstorming meetings and are pushed to come up with new ideas on a regular basis will help to make sure you don't leave creativity by the wayside.
- **Build the right team.**
  Ensure your team contains a real mix of creatives and data geeks – as is often claimed, the best leaders surround themselves with people who know more than they do, and this is truer than ever. Having a team full of complementary skills will help to balance out a marketing director who may have a penchant one way or the other.

Ensuring you're involved in brainstorming meetings and are pushed to come up with new ideas on a regular basis will help to make sure you don't leave creativity by the wayside

2.3. Know your internal customer

For the foreseeable future there's likely to be a disparity between what the c-suite wants to hear from marketing and what marketing is actually able to provide, even if marketing tech can go some way to resolving this issue. And although those we spoke to showed some level of understanding that it's not necessarily marketing's fault that it can't display clear attribution, providing them with more data and speaking to them in the language of the business are sure-fire ways to attain their support. Here are some ways marketers can satisfy the demands of the c-suite:

- **Collaborate with those who matter.**
  If you don't already have regular meetings set up with key board members, it's important that you do so. Only then will you be able to persuade and convince them in crucial situations in board meetings – for instance, when you're trying to win support for a bold new initiative.

- **Get into their mindsets.**
  Find out, as much as possible, what's keeping your CEO up at night – and figure out ways for marketing to help solve those key business issues.

In addition to regular meetings, make sure you clearly understand the priorities of different board members, but also that they understand what you're grappling with

- **Clarify your own expectations.**
  In addition to regular meetings, make sure you clearly understand the priorities of different board members, but also that they understand what you're grappling with. It may be the case that your CFO is dying for more information that you could actually provide them, but you just didn't realise they wanted it.

- **Share your insights in an accessible way.**
  Expectations need to be set in order to satisfy the CFO and the CEO – if they're expecting hard

numbers but these aren't delivered, this naturally won't go down well. One way of doing this is to make sure you're clear about what results you expect to see, and when – if you can explain that you expect to see a particular result in six months, but won't see any significant results around another initiative for a couple of years, it'll help to set expectations.

› **Maintain dialogue across the organisation.** Marketing tech can go some way to providing the data the c-suite is looking for, but it's not the whole answer (at least not yet). However, data visualisation will always help numbers to be more digestible. Continue to explore ways to visualise data in an engaging and clear way, and this will help you to communicate the numbers that really matter.

The time it takes to reach the top



Source: The B2B Marketing career acceleration guide

2.4. Consistently and compellingly communicate the value you deliver

Senior members of the board can be slow to realise how important a role marketing can play within the business – and this won't be news to many marketing leaders, who've battled for years to have their voice heard and their work appreciated. In order to begin to be seen in a different light, however, marketing leaders can take some of the following steps:

- **Understand expectations**
  Ask members of the board what they truly think about marketing and the value it can bring – if you're starting in a new role this can be a particularly valuable exercise, as it means you'll be able to identify the misconceptions around marketing and develop ways to address them.

- **Align with wider business objectives – and make sure you remain aligned.**
  Every function in the organisation needs to be clearly and demonstrably aligned with wider business objectives. If you're aligned, everything and anything that you do will not only be justified, it should also be supported by the rest of the c-suite. If you're misaligned, you'll very quickly get into difficulties justifying your existence. But every day events and tactical opportunities means it can be easy to slip out of alignment, so constant recalibration and adjustment is required to ensure you're still on the correct trajectory.

- **Cultivate and leverage your peer network**
  Genuine and candid feedback from peers is always eye-opening. Speak to other marketing directors – what have they done when they've faced CEOs or other members of the board that haven't truly understood the value marketing can bring?

Marketing simply cannot expect to receive the respect it deserves if it's not completely aligned to what the business is looking to achieve as a whole

2.5. Deliver market insight – challenge preconceptions

Marketing is often exceptionally well placed to understand what's going on in the market, and what the business can do to keep up, differentiate itself, and stay a step ahead of the competition. Marketing leaders need to remember that this insight is hugely valuable to the business, especially when it's not directly requested – the question of supporting sales is almost assumed, but it's the value beyond this that the board will really appreciate.

- **Invest in insight and analysis**
  Revisit the data you currently possess and collect. What can this data actually tell you about the wider market, and can you complement it with third-party data on your competitors or the sector? Even if you don't have in-depth insights now, think about what you can do to gather information that will help you to truly understand how the business is positioned in the market in future. Could AI help with this?

- **Keep your customers close and your competitors closer**
  Marketers need to leave the office and get out and about regularly, whether that's meeting customers or getting a better view of what the competition is doing. Staying put in the office will do nothing to help you understand the bigger picture, which is so important to the board.

- **Read and cultivate a culture of curiosity**
  The best marketing leaders stay at the top of their game by keeping abreast of changes in marketing as well as changes in their sector. Do whatever it takes to keep learning, whether that's through reading, attending events or writing a regular blog to ensure you're on top of every trend. Be sure to use both internal and external sources.



2.6. Become the hub, not a spoke

Rather than responding and reacting to agendas for change and disruptive forces emanating from elsewhere within the organisation, marketing should be seeking to work other influencers to understand these forces and determine the nature and style of change required.

- **Participate in the conversations that matter.** Senior marketers shouldn't wait to be invited into different areas of discussion – the next time a discussion around product development happens, for example, make sure you're in the room. Over time, your presence in these meetings should become normal.

- **Actively promote marketing's ability to make a difference.** Marketing should never forget to market itself – develop ways to make sure key parts of the organisation understand what marketing is doing and working towards, especially if campaigns/ projects are long-term and you don't have results to shout about on a regular basis. This will help to avoid the perception that marketing isn't pulling its weight.

- **Break down barriers and destroy silos** Set up regular meetings with leaders of other business functions, and look at doing 'job swaps' between more junior marketers and other parts of the business. This will help marketing to develop cross-departmental relationships and understand other business areas, and vice-versa.

2.7. Keep up the pace and be responsive

The pace of change within business is relentless, and the fact that marketing isn't always able to keep up can prove problematic in the eyes of other business leaders. But there are some key things marketing leaders can do to alleviate the frustrations felt by other parts of the business.

Increasingly the walls between client and agency are becoming less discernible, and in some instances are breaking down altogether

- **Review working methodologies and operational setup**
  Consider adopting a methodology like Agile in order to move more quickly – it'll also allow you to provide feedback on a regular basis, rather than wait a whole year in order to see the results of a campaign. Agile isn't for everyone, but if it's something you want to explore, check out our guide to Agile for B2B marketers.

- **Proactively and enthusiastically contribute to product or service development discussions**
  Make sure you're involved early on in product design stages if you work in a product-focused company rather than a service-centric business. This will allow you to plan ahead and make sure you're in sync with product teams right from the start.

- **Review your use of external resources.**
  Are you getting the most out of your agencies, or other partners? Are you working in a way which taps into their expertise? Increasingly the walls between client and agency are becoming less discernible, and in some instances are breaking down altogether.

2.8. Master the art of persuasion

Being persuasive – and even convincing – is considered to be a crucial trait by the board, especially CFOs. This means senior marketers need to be great communicators, as well as confident and passionate. Not much to ask, then. But there are a number of tactics marketers can employ to improve their persuasiveness – here are just some of them:

- **Identify your supporters:** pick out those who are already on your side, and use them to help you persuade those who aren't so easily swayed.

- **Pick your moment:** knowing when to bring up difficult conversations is a skill in itself, so think carefully about what else is likely to be on people's minds before you bring something up they're likely to be resistant to.

- **Be prepared:** consider what people's objections will be to what you're proposing, and make sure you prepare your counterargument in advance.

Who we spoke to



Gary Barnett
SVP and general manager, Entertainment Solutions, Avaya

"You can have companies that fail if they have good tech innovation but not good marketing innovation"



Robin Mellstrand
CEO and co-founder, Loop54

"I'm constantly surprised by the value that we get from marketing"



Dr Frank-Stephen Hardt
Director of finance, T-Systems

"I can't think of an industry or sector where marketing isn't key to the business"



John Thompson
CFO, Infinity SDC

"Marketing dictates whether you're seen as a player in the market or not"



Reuben Singh
CEO and founder, AlldayPA

"The reason many companies get into trouble is because they spend too much money on sales strategies, and not enough on marketing"



Steven ZoBell
Chief product and technology officer, Workfront

"I used to be blissfully ignorant of the deep science behind everything marketing does"

Clarasys comment



Matt Cheung
CEO and founder, Clarasys

clarasys
clarity through analysis

The role of marketing is changing rapidly, and so the role of the CMO must change too.

Perhaps the absence of commentary about customers and customer journeys in the report is an indication of what's going right for CMOs – or perhaps it's the underlying thread that links the complaints together.

Understanding the customer, their segment and behaviour has, in my view, always been fundamental to not just marketing success, but the entire organisation's success. Now though, with tech-driven upstarts disrupting the status quo across the board, it's more critical than ever. Getting it right is simply a table stake. Getting your customer journey wrong turns customers off. Take my recent example of an interaction with a health insurance firm – the interaction started digitally (I don't remember to deal with my personal admin during the day, though maybe I should), but then quickly became bogged down in PDF forms to fill in, phone calls and an unclear process. I have pretty much given up on it and we're considering moving provider.

I think the CMO needs to take charge of the customer journey, and to be successful, has to focus on two key areas:

Collaboration – There's no room for silos anymore, whether within marketing, or between marketing, sales, service and finance. Leaders need to be adept at building an atmosphere of collaboration, with peers, upwards and with their team. Empowered teams can solve the hardest problems. Agile offers a ready-made set of behaviours here that can be a quick start.

Science, empathy, art and data – To build an excellent customer journey you have to engage all the creative forces at your disposal (and I include technology, partners and the rest of the organisation). But you also have to understand the segment, needs and behaviour of the customer you're trying to engage. Understanding large datasets and behaviour become key – but also understanding the data needs of internal customers and how to progressively build the customer profile that enables a smooth onboarding of a lead.

If my health insurance provider had collaboratively designed its customer journey, using its insight and empathy, then perhaps I'd be using this article to rave about them!

b2bmarketing.net/training

B2B Marketing Training

For marketing teams in the fast lane to success

B2B Marketing

Insight · Development · Training · Events



Want to know more?

Give us a call on
+44 (0)20 7014 4924
or drop us an email at
training@b2bmarketing.net

About Clarasys

We are a dynamic and refreshingly pragmatic customer-focused consultancy, the only consultancy to solve your business pains at the pace your business demands.

Our unique Agile methodology helps us quickly identify and unlock value, providing your teams with direction and clarity. It's a philosophy we share with our clients, as we work with you to balance the quick wins with lasting transformation while we build your capability and self-sufficiency.

Ultimately, our ability to drive up customer retention, enhance customer experience and customer satisfaction is the reason the world's leaders in their sectors choose us to help them succeed. You can learn more at clarasys.com

clarasys
clarity through analysis

About B2B Marketing

With hundreds of thousands of users across the globe, we are the leading trusted voice at the centre of the B2B marketing community.

B2B Marketing members are kept up to date with the latest strategies, insight and inspiration from the B2B marketing space, through our dedicated:

- Research and analysis
- News
- Information portal
- Events
- Training
- Networking.

Why become a B2B Marketing Premium member?

Our Premium membership package delivers outstanding value, and is the go-to choice for thousands of senior-level B2B marketers, decision-makers and leaders.

Here's just some of the value Premium membership provides:

- Access to five on-demand DMA- and CPD-accredited training courses worth £875.
- B2B marketing-specific Best Practice Guides worthover £3000.
- B2B industry benchmarking reports worth over £3300.
- Business cases priced at £150 each for non-members.
- Premium research, analysis, benchmarking reports and guides published every month.
- An annual subscription to the quarterly *B2B Marketing* magazine.

Our promise to you

Things change fast in B2B. Just staying on top of the changes can be a full-time job. So we do that job for you.

With our membership, training and events we guarantee you'll:

- Put your best ever strategies in place.
- Lock down the multiple skills, tools and insightsyou need.
- Find real-world inspiration for rolling out outstanding marketing initiatives.

How to get started

- Go to b2bmarketing.net/join to set up your Premium membership.
- Check out Events, Training and Enterprise Solutions on our website.
- Call us on +44 (0)207 014 4920 if you'd like to discuss your specific business needs.

B2B Marketing

Insight · Development · Training · Events

b2bmarketing.net

9 November 2017
London
#B2BConf

The B2B Marketing Conference

Account-Based *Everything*

ABM is fast becoming the critical weapon in B2B marketers' armouries.

No matter what stage your business is at on the ABM journey you can't afford to miss the B2B Marketing Conference: Account-Based *Everything*.

With keynotes from Oracle, Fujitsu, ITSMA and more we'll bring together the leading names in B2B marketing with unrivalled experience of ABM success showing you how to get it right.

b2bmarketing.b2b-conference2017.net

B2B Marketing
Insight · Development · Training · Events

Headline sponsor DEMANDBASE Session sponsors ALIAS bray leino McDONALDBUTLER momentumabm PULSE.

B2B Marketing

Insight · Development · Training · Events

Official partner:

clarasys

clarity through analysis

