How B2B marketers can do more, with a smaller team.

Really.

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It's no surprise to hear many UK businesses have felt the huge impact of COVID on their budgets and operations. It's even less surprising to hear that many companies have been forced to reduce the size of their teams. In fact, in April 2020, 31.2% of marketing businesses planned to reduce employment over the next three months[1], and it's since been reported that 612,000 UK workers lost their jobs between March and June of this year.[2]



Now, whilst this is of course a tragedy for those who have lost their jobs, businesses must still find a way to make the most of their smaller teams. It turns out, there may actually be some benefits to this way of working:

#1 Industry leaders seem to prefer smaller teams

Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos has a "two pizza rule", if a team can't be fed by two pizzas, that team is too big.[3]

#2 Engagement is higher at smaller companies

42% of employees at companies of 10 or fewer are engaged at work vs. only 30% at larger companies.[4]

#3 Streamlined teams can be more efficient

The Lego study found a team of 2 people completed a task 20 minutes faster than a team of 4.[5]

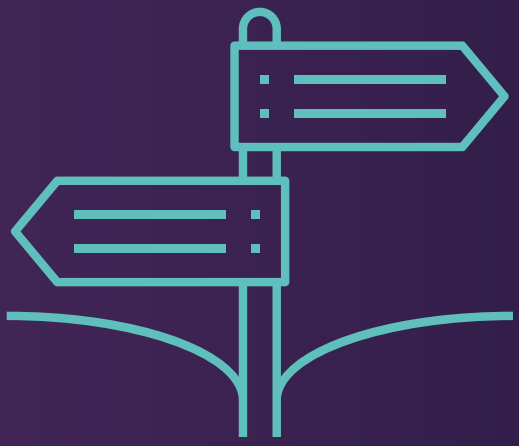
So, how can you do more with your smaller marketing team? Well, here's a few ideas to get you started...

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#1 One-stop-shop decision making

Spend time working out what types of decisions each member of the team can make on their own, what types of decisions the team can make as a group, and what needs to be escalated for more senior input. Then, fight hard to push as much of the decision-making to the team by defining very clear guidelines that give ownership and accountability.[6]

This process ensures decisions are made in the appropriate forums and employees are not wasting time discussing or debating decisions which are otherwise straightforward. It also means your team are freed up to focus on more business-critical tasks.



#2 Streamline your social channels

Don't waste your time marketing across all social media channels. Look at the social channels that currently generate relevant traffic and leads for your site, and focus solely on those. It's the same old story for marketers, why market your product/service on particular social media platforms, if your customers don't use these sites? Or perhaps they do use these sites, but not for the purpose of researching and buying.

Based on your research, you might benefit from targeting a more niche platform, rather than a popular one where costs and competition will both be higher.[7] Once you know where you customers spend their time and money – use your marketing budgets there.

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#3 Consider project management tech

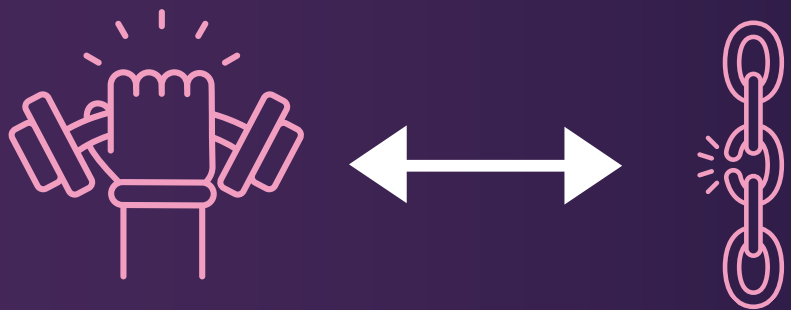
Project managers have always been seen as highly valued team members, and rightly so. However, if budgets now prevent you from employing a project manager, don't fret. Today's technology provides an ample alternative to traditional processes and offer a wealth of functionality. When choosing a platform, make sure it has the following...

- ☑ Time & expense tracking - from quoting, to keeping track of hours spent on a project through timesheets.
- ☑ Project management – task management and collaboration features such as message boards, and tools for adhering to project timelines, like Gantt charts and Kanban boards.
- ☑ Reporting dashboards – making it easy to see where a project (and agency) is at with budget, timelines, and invoicing.
- ☑ Resource management – ensures you're not understaffing/ overstaffing one area of a project.
- ☑ Invoicing – turn project reports into invoices and estimates.
- ☑ Customisable – allows you and your team to customise the software to your specific project needs.
- ☑ Real-time updates – notifications for instant updates on project statuses, deliverables, and changes to tasks.[8]

#4 Who is good at what?

When you're working with a smaller team, each individual has to take on more tasks than they usually would. So, to identify which of your people are qualified and capable of handling particular tasks, perform a talent assessment. This will enable you to identify each employee's unique strengths and weaknesses.

This also has the added benefit of driving productivity, as learning about their strengths and positive characteristics makes employees 7.8% more productive, and strengths-focused teams are 12.5% more productive.[9]



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#5 Get good at Google Analytics

Your marketing likely drives prospects to some part of your website, but what happens if they leave without purchasing, or at least contacting you? Well, it's a lost opportunity.

So, that's why website optimisation is now more important than ever. If you are operating with fewer people, you need to know every aspect of your business is operating an at optimum level, your website included. With this in mind, Google Analytics is a great starting point. When using Google Analytics, don't miss these few (free) reports that top the list for fixing traffic problems:

A path report shows the route your visitors take on your website before converting, including which path yields the highest conversion rate. Pay attention to how each path performs and use this insight to can boost conversion rates.	**Learn how each marketing channel drives conversions with a channel report. Are your social ads driving revenue? How is SEM performing against SEO? You can adjust your budgets based on the return of your best performing channels..**	**Identify bottlenecks with a funnel report, which can show where conversions are dropping off. Maybe your lead form has too many fields or the content isn't relevant to your visits. Use these insights to make smalls changes to help your customers connect.**	**A cohort report looks at how segments behave over time and which converts at the highest rate. A cohort report might reveal users are more likely to convert if they have been re-targeted within 15 minutes of leaving a site. This can help inform the best way to stay in touch with your leads.[10]**

#6 Don't panic, create procedures

With fewer people and less budget, the way you do things will no doubt change. Most likely, it will be an 'all hands on deck' approach until the initial shockwave subsides, then you'll have to work out a more suitable and long-term solution. You'll need to find answers to questions such as; What tasks do I need to do? Who needs to do them? What are the best ways to approach these tasks?

The best way to achieve this is a standard operating procedures (SOP). According to IBM, SOP are "a set of instructions that describes all the relevant steps and activities of a process or procedure." When it comes to creating these priceless guides, just follow these steps...

Step 1: Write a list of processes you think need SOP creation

Step 2: Plan the process for developing & managing SOPs

Step 3: Collect information for the content of your SOP

Step 4: Write, review and publish your SOP

Step 5: Maintain your SOP over time [11]

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The real results agency.

At Really B2B, our integrated marketing and demand strategies are built from years of audience insight and campaign performance data. We know your prospects and the channels that resonate best with them. The priority that underpins our existence is to help businesses grow by planning, creating and implementing fully accountable B2B marketing strategies that deliver return on investment.

So, if you want to aid your small team by utilising our expertise, knowledge, and experience, across the likes of marketing automation, account based marketing, and thought leadership content, simply give us a call on 0845 519 8517 or email info@reallyb2b.com.

[1] https://www.marketingweek.com/marketers-job-losses-ipa-bellwether-q1-2020/
[2] https://news.sky.com/story/coronavirus-612-000-uk-workers-lose-their-jobs-during-lockdown-12007661
[3] https://doist.com/blog/small-team-collaboration/
[4] https://www.forbes.com/sites/jacobmorgan/2015/04/15/why-smaller-teams-are-better-than-larger-ones/#243981b21e68
[5] https://www.forbes.com/sites/jacobmorgan/2015/04/15/why-smaller-teams-are-better-than-larger-ones/#243981b21e68
[6] https://sloanreview.mit.edu/article/get-things-done-with-smaller-teams/
[7] https://www.forbes.com/sites/ryanrobinson/2019/11/21/small-marketing-teams-create-content/#7c5c00c01912
[8] https://thedigitalprojectmanager.com/marketing-project-management-software/
[9] https://www.edgetrainingsystems.com/how-successful-organizations-maximize-employee-strengths/
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[11] https://blog.montrium.com/experts/5-fundamental-steps-to-creating-powerful-standard-operating-procedures