



The B2B CEO's Ultimate Guide to **Building an Effective Marketing Team** *in today's complex marketing world*

By Jen Kelly

Founder & CEO of New Initiatives Marketing, Inc.



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Introduction

Have you grown your B2B firm to a certain level on CEO and sales-led initiatives alone? Is hiring more salespeople or making more calls no longer working to move the revenue needle? Have you reached a sales plateau that is hard to move past?

Then this might be a sign that it's time to invest more seriously in marketing.

Like many B2B CEOs, you've grown your company to \$5+ million in revenue primarily on sales-led initiatives. This means you likely have a well developed sales organization, but haven't focused as much attention on your marketing function, and don't have a strong marketing strategy, system or foundation in place.

Instead, you've probably hired marketing agencies here and there in the past for specific tasks, like building your website, doing some SEO or writing some content. But to continue your revenue trajectory, hiring a marketing agency for one-off campaigns here and there may no longer be enough.

It might be time to get serious about taking a more strategic and systematic approach to marketing. A systematic approach that supports and complements your sales organization, helps you move past revenue plateaus, and sets the stage for both short term wins and long term sustainable growth.


You've likely installed some very effective systems and processes in your organization, including product development, manufacturing, quality control, sales, customer training/success, and finance. *So why not treat marketing as an important business system as well?*

But what are your next steps? What type of marketing support do you really need?

In today's complex marketing world, it's hard to know what the right next marketing steps are for the stage of growth you're at right now.

Should you hire in-house? *If so, what position should you hire first - a CMO? Product Marketing Manager? Do you need one person or a whole team? How long will hiring and onboarding someone take? What level of experience do they need?*

Should you engage with more marketing agencies *to create specific campaigns? If so, which campaigns should you focus on? What type of marketing agency do I need - graphic design, SEO, content, something else? Do I need one agency or multiple agencies to do different things? Do you need to have a well thought out marketing strategy first? Who is going to manage the marketing agencies?*



Should you bring on a marketing consultant for a single short term project, like creating your marketing strategy? But then who is going to implement it? Who will set up your marketing foundation and execute your campaigns?

Or should you consider starting with a Fractional CMO and Marketing Team that specializes in B2B and can give you the leadership, strategy and tactics you need right away? How do fractional models work, anyway?

That's where this guide comes in. We're going to walk through everything you need to know as a B2B CEO to choose the right next marketing steps to help you move past revenue plateaus and set the stage for long term, sustainable growth.

In this guide, we will explore:

- **When to Invest in Marketing:** *How do you know when it's time to get more serious about marketing? What are the top signs that your current strategies are no longer working?*
- **Best Practices B2B Marketing:** *What are the best practices in B2B marketing today? What does an ideal B2B marketing process look like, and what marketing steps do you need to take first?*
- **Navigating the Complexities of the Modern Marketing World:** *How has marketing become more complex, and what does this mean in terms of installing a best practices B2B marketing system in your business today?*
- **Challenges in Getting Started in Marketing:** *What are the top marketing challenges for B2B CEOs at your stage of growth? How can you overcome these challenges and choose your best marketing direction?*
- **Building Your B2B Marketing Team:** *What positions make up a best practices B2B marketing team? What are the responsibilities of each position and which ones are needed first?*
- **Hire In-House or Outsource?** *What are the marketing model options available for B2B companies at your stage? Is it better to hire in-house, outsource to marketing agencies, or hire a Fractional CMO and marketing team? They are all solid options, but what are the benefits and challenges of each, and when should each be used? More importantly, which is the right option for where your business is at right now?*
- **Choosing Your Best Marketing Next Steps and Managing Expectations:** *How do you choose your marketing next steps and what should you expect?*



1. Seven Signs It's Time to Invest in Marketing


B2B companies with quality products and services that fill a market need are often able to grow to \$5+ million on sales-focused initiatives, with some ad-hoc marketing agency support here and there. But at a certain point, you hit a revenue plateau and your current efforts stop working like they used to.

When do you know you need more than sales-led initiatives alone and some random acts of marketing? If sales aren't growing like they used to and it's taking more and more time and effort to bring in new customers, then these are sure signs that it might be time to seriously invest in marketing.

The Top 7 Signs Your B2B Company Needs to Seriously Invest in Marketing:

Here are the 7 top signs you need to more seriously invest in marketing. Note down how many of these signs apply to your business right now:

1. **Plateaued Revenue:** Your company was growing steadily, but now growth has slowed or even stalled. This can be an indication that your existing strategies have hit their limit.
2. **Sales Takes More Effort:** Your sales efforts aren't working like they used to. You've tried bringing on more sales people and making more calls, but it's not moving the revenue needle.
3. **Longer Sales Cycles:** The time it takes to close deals is increasing, as customers are taking longer to make buying decisions and buying committees are increasing in number.
4. **Increased Competition:** You're noticing more competitors in your space, and they're gaining market share. Or, a competitor that you know has a sub-par product or service is getting more attention and is better positioned than your company with higher quality products or services. Or, you're struggling to compete with larger companies in your space (and their even larger budgets).
5. **Fewer Leads are Coming In:** You used to get a steady stream of new leads in from your sales-led initiatives (such as prospecting, events and conferences), your website and some of your ad-hoc marketing agency-led campaigns. But you're noticing that these leads are becoming fewer and fewer, and it's taking more effort to bring them in.
6. **Your Lead Quality and Conversions are Declining:** When you do get leads, many are not really qualified, and it's taking more and more time and effort to convert and close the ones that are.
7. **Poor Customer Retention:** Customers are leaving or not renewing and you don't know why.



If any of these signs sound familiar, then it's likely time for you to consider investing more seriously in marketing. And *investing* is the key word. Marketing is not meant to be a cost center, it's meant to be an investment in growing your business. When done right, marketing helps you address all of the challenges listed above.

With the right marketing strategy, foundation and system in place, marketing can help you:

- Position your company effectively in the marketplace, so you aren't overlooked in favor of competitors with sub-par products and services or larger companies and their large marketing budgets
- Really understand your ideal client's buyer's journey and how your clients prefer to take in information and make decisions - and then identify exactly what's needed to move them along their journey at every touch point (which is key to bringing in the right high quality leads and increasing conversions)
- Allow your sales teams to focus on what they do best, talk to more high quality leads, and get the right materials and support to make the conversion process faster and easier.
- Understand why your customers buy from you and stay with you, so you can make sure they're happy, continue buying from you and become raving fans who refer you to others.

Now that you know it's time to invest more seriously in marketing, what is your right next step? How do you decide which marketing resources and approach align best with your business? That's what we'll explore next.



2. Best Practices B2B Marketing

What are the best practices in B2B marketing today? What does an ideal B2B marketing process look like, and what marketing steps do you need to take first?

Now that you've reviewed the top 7 signs that you need to invest more seriously in marketing, it's time to make some decisions around your next ideal next steps - so you can choose the marketing model, approach and methods that are best for your B2B business.

However, this is not an easy decision to make. Why? Because marketing today has become so complex and there are so many marketing options to choose from, it's hard to know what your best next marketing step is.

In order to make the right marketing decision for your business, *you need some more information*. You need to know:

- What an ideal B2B marketing process looks like (and the steps you need to take to make this happen)
- B2B marketing best practices in today's complex marketing world
- The top marketing challenges for B2B CEOs at your stage of growth (and how knowing these challenges can help you choose your best marketing direction)
- What a typical B2B marketing team looks like, so you understand the various marketing roles today and exactly what they focus on
- The marketing model options available for B2B companies at your stage (including the benefits and challenges and when each is ideally used)

With this information, you'll have the high level, big picture information you need as a B2B CEO to make the right strategic decisions around marketing for your organization - and avoid any costly challenges or missteps.

What Does an Ideal B2B Marketing Process Look Like?

The first important piece of information you need to help you make your best decisions around marketing is knowing what an ideal B2B marketing process looks like today, along with the steps you need to take to make this ideal process a reality.

This information will help you to assess the types of marketing skills, background and expertise you need to invest in first, as well as the marketing approaches or skill sets that should be considered as later or next step investments.



From Random Acts of Marketing to a Sustainable Marketing System

When you're at a stage of business where you've reached \$5 million plus in revenues, it means that you've likely installed some very effective systems and processes in your organization, including product development, manufacturing, quality control, sales, customer training/success, and finance. *So why not treat marketing as an important business system as well?*

When you move from random acts of marketing to treating marketing as an important business system, it changes everything. You gain a deeper understanding of your customers and marketplace, connect to your company's true core difference, and apply your core difference in a way that positions your business competitively instead of sounding just like everyone else.

A powerful B2B Marketing Process is all about turning your marketing into a system, and includes the following elements:

1. B2B Marketing Strategy
2. B2B Marketing System
3. B2B Sales Enablement
4. Thought Leadership Content Marketing


Once you have this B2B marketing process set up and in place, you'll have a sustainable marketing foundation that will not only attract and convert leads in its own right, but will serve as a launching point for any number of other specialized marketing campaigns you choose to run in the future - both online and offline.

One thing that's very important to note is that having this foundation in place is essential to the success of your future marketing campaigns, because every campaign you run will connect into your marketing system. When you run ad-hoc marketing campaigns without first having this foundation in place, you risk wasting valuable time, money and effort and often never really know if the campaign worked or not.

Let's take a look at each element of the B2B Marketing Process in more detail:

1. B2B Marketing Strategy

A B2B marketing strategy is a comprehensive plan that outlines how you will reach and engage your ideal clients to achieve specific marketing goals (which are tied to your higher level business goals) and requires a deep dive review of your business, products and services, clients, partners, competitors and marketplace. For most B2B organizations in the \$3 to \$10 million range, a comprehensive strategy can be completed in 60 days.



An effective marketing strategy should not be based on the internal assumptions of a few company executives (like most marketing strategies are). Instead, a strong marketing strategy needs to be built around what your ideal clients perceive, want and need. This requires conducting extensive client, partner, and internal team interviews. It's advisable to have these interviews done by a qualified third-party, such as a consultant or Fractional CMO, so clients feel as comfortable as possible and provide candid feedback.

Only then will you really understand:

- How your ideal clients prefer to buy and engage with your company
- How your ideal clients search for and evaluate companies and products like yours
- Why your ideal clients buy from you and stay with you
- What your ideal clients believe is your core difference, and what makes you different from your competitors

This is the information you need in order to create the right messaging, positioning, and educational information to attract, convert and retain your best customers. Without conducting client interviews, you'll only ever be making your best guess - and will be missing out on valuable insights about your company and products.

Your B2B marketing strategy should be insightful and highly actionable:

A B2B marketing strategy is not meant to be an eight month theoretic exercise or sit on your bookshelf collecting dust. Instead, your B2B marketing strategy should be highly actionable and give you valuable insight about your business, products and customers. The deliverables of your B2B marketing strategy should include:

- A summary of insights from your client, partner, and internal team interviews (note that these insights may extend well beyond marketing to impact your business in other ways)
- A competitor and marketplace review
- Insights into what your ideal clients see as your core difference, and recommended changes to your positioning and messaging
- Practical ideal client personas
- An outline of your ideal client's buyer's journey, including what information, materials or actions are needed at each step. Your buyer's journey extends into sales, so this outline should include recommended materials and actions to support and enable your sales teams through the journey
- Recommendations for the best marketing channels to reach your ideal clients
- A content plan and calendar
- An action plan outlining how to bring your marketing strategy to life in the real world, including detailed steps, budget and resource requirements.



Quick Wins

A key part of your B2B marketing strategy should also include identifying some quick wins and low hanging fruit - so you don't have to wait until your entire strategy is implemented to start taking action and seeing results. Quick wins would include any quick changes to your marketing that can be set in motion right away with a high probability of seeing some shorter term results, *while the rest of your strategy is being installed in the background.*

2. B2B Marketing System

Your B2B marketing system is the manifestation of your marketing strategy in the real world and becomes the foundation and backbone of your marketing.

Your marketing system includes all the marketing, sales and educational materials needed to move your ideal clients through every step in their buyer's journey, all linked together through your website and marketing and sales tech stack.

Installing a marketing system will help you stop doing random acts of marketing in fits and spurts, and instead create a powerful marketing engine that you can leverage for all future marketing, sales and customer retention campaigns.

Setting up a strong marketing system is the key to future proofing your business and providing the support your sales teams and channels really need.

3. B2B Sales Enablement

When your B2B sales process involves larger buying committees and long, complex sales cycles, it's essential to make sure your marketing and sales functions are aligned, not operating in silos.

In addition to installing a powerful marketing system, an integral part of your B2B Marketing Process should include focused sales enablement activities. This usually means that your marketing function partners with your sales teams, customer success, product design and channels to identify and create the marketing, sales and educational materials they need for client acquisition, retention and upselling. These are the materials that will help to change sales conversations and more quickly convert qualified leads.

Sales enablement isn't a one time activity. It requires talking with sales, channels and customer success on a regular basis to really understand what's working, what's changing and what new materials or activities may be needed.



4. Thought Leadership Content Marketing

With your new messaging and positioning in place, your powerful marketing system converting leads in the background, and your sales teams equipped with the materials they need to more quickly and easily acquire customers - you'll be ready to begin your ongoing marketing, which today is all about quality content delivered through the right channels to reach or draw in your ideal clients.

While many B2B companies use inbound and content marketing, it's important to take it a step further and infuse powerful thought leadership into your content marketing.

Thought leadership is a content marketing strategy where you position individuals in your business as thought leaders and experts in your industry. This helps to gain the trust of your ideal clients, and positions your business uniquely from your competition.

Essential to this approach is identifying several subject matter experts within your organization (from senior leadership, sales, customer success, product development, engineering and more), and empowering them to be thought leaders in their own rights. This expands the authority and reach of your messages, content and marketing.

Thought leadership is a powerful long-term foundational strategy that requires consistent effort. After all, one doesn't become a thought leader after posting a single article. Instead, they share their point of view and educational content at a steady pace over a long period of time.

While this strategy is less about quick wins and more about results over the long term, it's important to remember that results and value also accumulates over time and eventually reaches a tipping point where you start to see steady and powerful results in client acquisition and retention. Additionally, empowering your teams to become thought leaders impacts your employer branding and improves employee retention.

The B2B Marketing Foundation You Need to Power Your Marketing Campaigns

By installing the best practices B2B marketing process we've outlined above, you'll already have a powerful marketing foundation that will help you attract, convert and retain ideal clients.

Best of all, you'll have the marketing foundation in place you need to run future specialized marketing, sales and customer retention campaigns. Every campaign you run will tie back into your marketing foundation to better ensure its success.



3. Navigating The Complexities of Modern B2B Marketing

How has marketing become more complex, and what does this mean in terms of installing a best practices B2B marketing system in your business today?

Today's B2B marketing landscape is more complex than ever before. As a CEO, understanding these complexities can help you make informed decisions around your best first steps when it comes to marketing and choosing the marketing model that best fits your needs.

Here are some of the reasons B2B marketing today is more complex than ever before:

1. Explosion of Marketing Channels

The sheer number of marketing channels now available – from traditional print and broadcast media to digital platforms such as social media, search engines, email marketing, content marketing, influencer marketing, and more – can be overwhelming. Each channel requires its own strategy, approach, nuances, and understanding of best practices. Plus, the technology and requirements of each of these channels are constantly changing and evolving, and what worked last year may no longer work this year.

2. Constantly Evolving Technology

New tools and technologies are continually emerging, each promising to transform the way you do marketing. However, with so many options, it can be challenging to decide which ones are right for your business. Moreover, integrating these technologies and ensuring they work together efficiently is a task in itself.

3. Heightened Customer Expectations

Today's B2B buyers are more demanding than ever before. They expect personalized, relevant experiences that align with their unique needs and preferences. Meeting these expectations requires a deep understanding of your target audience and the ability to deliver the right message at the right time.

4. Changing Buyer Behaviour

The way B2B buyers prefer to consume information and move along the buyer's journey is changing. This means that marketing methods that worked even one year ago may no longer work today. It also means that every small marketing detail is very important. It's tough to keep up with these changes and understand what's working today, what's not working, and why.

5. Data Overload

The ability to collect and analyze data has revolutionized marketing. But with so much data available, CEOs are often faced with the challenge of identifying which metrics matter and how to use this information to make strategic decisions.

In addition, the ability to track metrics is constantly changing, and the metrics that were easy to get before may no longer be available today. Further, the availability of data can lead to too much focus on metrics when it comes to marketing, and too little focus on the creative nuances of marketing, such as messaging and positioning that often make all the difference.

5. Skill Gaps

Modern marketing requires a wide range of skills, from data analysis to content creation, SEO, social media management, and more. Building a team that covers all these areas can be time-consuming and expensive, and evaluating these skills can be challenging as well.

While an “A-player” marketer may be familiar with all of the elements of marketing at a high level, no one person can do strategy, research, client interviews, gather and explain data, link marketing to business strategy, or write compelling content (blogs/articles/white papers/landing pages/web pages/email campaigns).

Nor can any one person perform keyword research/recommend the SEO strategy/implement the SEO strategy, do the graphic design for the web and all printed materials, liaise with sales in a meaningful and supportive way, present to your board/investors/executive team, photograph needed items, produce videos, develop/test/fix/maintain the company website and know what is effective this year for the top four social channels that matter most to your business (just to name a few things!)

6. Regulatory Challenges

As privacy concerns rise globally, understanding and complying with regulations like GDPR and CCPA become critical. Non-compliance can lead to penalties or damage your company's reputation.

Understanding the Complexities of Marketing Can Help You Make Informed Decisions:

All these complexities create a challenging environment for B2B CEOs. However, knowing these complexities exist can help you, as a CEO, understand the types of marketing talent and resources you may need.

For example, you may have been considering bringing on a junior marketing generalist, but would this person have the skills, experience and deep B2B knowledge needed to navigate all of the challenges and complexities of marketing today? Or would it make more sense to invest in more senior marketing leadership first - and if so, what would that look like?



4. Challenges in Getting Started in Marketing

What are the top marketing challenges for B2B CEOs at your stage of growth? How can you overcome these challenges and choose your best marketing direction?

So now that you know it's time to invest more seriously in marketing, where do you start? Who should you hire? What position should you hire first? Should you hire internally or outsource? If you outsource, should you outsource to an agency, a consultant or a Fractional CMO?

As a B2B CEO just getting started in building your marketing function, deciding on your right next steps can be a challenge for many reasons. These reasons include:

1. Lack of Marketing Expertise: Many CEOs are experts in their product, service, or industry, but they may not have a deep understanding of marketing strategies and tactics.

Today's modern marketing world can be complex and multifaceted, with different approaches suited to different stages of business growth, different industries, and different target audiences. This can make it difficult to know where to start when it comes to adding marketing to your growth strategy.

2. Determining the Right Marketing Approach: From content marketing and SEO to social media and paid advertising, there are many different marketing tactics available which are easily chosen once a marketing strategy is in place.


Each approach has its pros and cons, and the best strategy for any given company will depend on a variety of factors, including the industry, target audience, and specific business goals. Determining the right marketing approach and channels can be challenging.

3. Finding the Right Talent: Marketing requires a wide range of skills, including strategic planning, creative development, data analysis, content writing, campaign development, technical skills, and more.

Finding individuals or agencies who possess the right mix of these skills can be a difficult and time-consuming task - one that could be worth the effort if building an in-house marketing team is the best option for your business - but what happens until you get the right talent in place? Nothing happens - which means you're losing out on an opportunity you don't have to be missing out on.

4. Budget Constraints: Developing and implementing a marketing strategy requires an investment. But what should that investment be? You need to determine how much you're willing and able to spend on marketing, and then ensure that you're getting the best possible return on that investment.

This can be particularly challenging for companies that have been operating without a marketing budget up to this point, or don't have an experienced marketing leader on board who knows how to track and determine what the return on investment should look like, and how long it may take to realize.



5. Measuring Marketing Success: Unlike sales, which can be directly tied to revenue, the impact of marketing can be harder to measure. It can be a struggle to determine whether marketing efforts are paying off, especially in the short term. Establishing clear metrics and analytics for evaluating marketing success is a critical, but often challenging, step in the process.

6. Integrating Marketing and Sales: For companies that have been primarily sales-led, integrating marketing into the existing organizational structure can be a challenge. Sales and marketing need to be closely aligned, with clear communication and shared goals, in order to be effective.

Moreover, if a company has a strong sales organization and leadership, it may be difficult for marketing people who are more junior or lack leadership skills to give marketing the strong voice it needs to be successful.

Overcoming Challenges to Get Started in Marketing:

When you're ready to invest more seriously in marketing, it's difficult to choose the best way forward when you don't have a background and expertise in marketing. That's why taking the time to find and bring on someone with a strong history in B2B marketing at a leadership level, such as a Fractional CMO may be an ideal first step. This person can support you in making informed marketing decisions and avoid any missteps.



5. Building Your B2B Marketing Team: Who Does What?

What positions make up a best practices B2B marketing team? What are the responsibilities of each position and which ones are needed first?

Gone are the days of a single marketing generalist who can do everything. In the modern marketing world, a well-structured B2B marketing team often includes a variety of roles, each contributing unique expertise to achieve your company's marketing goals.

Below is a comprehensive list of the typical marketing positions in a B2B marketing department. Depending on the size of the company, one person may have to roll up their sleeves and handle more than one of these functions, or often some of these functions are managed in house, and others are outsourced.

Understanding these different marketing roles will help you to better gauge which roles you need first, which roles can be combined, and what type of experience your in-house hires or outsourced marketing people need to bring to the table.


Here are some of the typical marketing roles you'll see in a best practices B2B marketing team today:

- 1. Chief Marketing Officer (CMO):** The CMO is the strategic head of your marketing department. They are responsible for understanding the business landscape, identifying opportunities, and crafting the overarching marketing strategy that aligns with company objectives.

They work closely with the other leaders in your organization, including sales, customer success and product development to stay on top of what's happening with prospects, clients, the product and marketplace, and make sure this is reflected in the marketing strategy and initiatives.


The CMO also manages the other other marketing roles in the organization and ensures all marketing activities align with the company's overarching marketing strategy. In smaller companies, this role may be called VP of Marketing or Director of Marketing.

- 2. Product Marketing Manager:** This role focuses on understanding the product or service from a branding, messaging and market perspective. Product Marketing Managers are responsible for positioning the product, understanding the competition, and creating the messaging and content



that communicates the value of your product to the target audience. Larger companies will have more than one Product Marketing Manager, each assigned to a specific product or service area.

3. **Demand Generation Manager:** The Demand Generation Manager designs and implements campaigns to drive awareness and interest in your products or services. They often work closely with the sales team to ensure marketing activities translate into actual leads and revenue. Other position titles that may perform the same function include Digital Marketing Manager and Marketing Manager.
4. **Marketing Operations Specialist:** A Marketing Operations Specialist oversees the systems, tools, and data that power your marketing efforts. They handle the tracking and analysis of marketing performance, process optimization, and technology management to ensure efficiency and effectiveness. This role is sometimes called marketing project manager.
5. **Digital Marketing Specialist:** Digital Marketing Specialists focus on online marketing channels to drive brand awareness, generate leads, and increase customer engagement. They develop and manage digital marketing campaigns, including search engine optimization (SEO), pay-per-click (PPC) advertising, email marketing, social media marketing, and content marketing. Digital Marketing Specialists track and analyze campaign performance, optimize digital channels, and stay updated on the latest digital marketing trends and tools.
6. **Content Marketing Manager:** Content is the fuel that drives many modern marketing strategies. A Content Marketing Manager plans, creates, and manages the content that attracts and engages your target audience, from blog posts and whitepapers to webinars and videos.
7. **Social Media Manager:** This role manages your company's presence on social media platforms. They create engaging content, foster community interaction, respond to customer inquiries, and monitor online reputation.
8. **SEO Specialist:** An SEO Specialist is focused on optimizing your online content to improve visibility in search engine results, making it easier for potential customers to find you when they're looking for the solutions you offer.
9. **Graphic Designer:** A Graphic Designer is responsible for creating visually engaging content that aligns with your brand identity and enhances your messaging. This can include everything from website visuals and social media graphics to brochures and product packaging.
10. **Website Designer:** A Web Designer is a creative and technical professional responsible for designing and developing visually appealing and user-friendly websites. With a keen eye for aesthetics and a deep understanding of user experience, the Web Designer collaborates with the marketing team to create websites that align with the brand identity and marketing objectives.


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11. **Writer:** You will often need more than one writer as different pieces of content will require different skills in writing. Blogs, articles, press releases, case studies, application notes, data sheets, webinar scripts, white papers, landing pages, webpage writing, social media posts. All of these items require writing that is in the brand's voice and matches the format of the content piece. Some writers work best writing first, others operate more like journalists and want to interview and be more client facing. Both styles work well and are needed.
 12. **Marketing Project Coordinator:** A larger marketing team will often have one or more project coordinators to liaise between the more strategic roles and the tacticians getting things done. For example, with a web design project, the project coordinator may coordinate the efforts of the web designer, graphic designer, writers, content managers, and the marketing or content managers in charge of the strategy.

Some B2B companies with regions, territories or channel partners will also have a need for two additional roles:

- **Field Marketing Manager:** Field Marketing Managers play a crucial role in planning and executing marketing activities at the regional or local level. They develop regional marketing strategies that are aligned with the overall marketing objectives of the organization.
- Field Marketing Managers are responsible for coordinating local events, trade shows, and sponsorships to drive brand awareness and generate leads within their specific regions. They work closely with sales teams to support regional lead generation and pipeline development, ensuring effective collaboration between marketing and sales to drive business growth in their target markets.
- **Channel Marketing Manager:** A Channel Marketing Manager is a strategic role responsible for developing and implementing marketing programs and initiatives that support the organization's channel partners. The Channel Marketing Manager works to build strong relationships with channel partners, providing them with the necessary marketing support, training, and resources to effectively promote and sell the organization's products or services.

As you can see, the types of roles that can make up a typical B2B marketing team reflect how complex marketing is today, and the specialized skills that are needed. And while this is an exhaustive list of the types of roles that are included in a typical best-practices B2B marketing team, it doesn't mean you need to hire for all of these roles right away.

In fact, there may be other ways to start out and get the marketing skills and talent you need at the beginning without having to hire in-house at all. For instance, companies building their first B2B marketing team may choose to outsource their entire marketing function to a Fractional CMO and an expert B2B marketing team.



This approach provides the advantage of accessing seasoned professionals who have extensive experience and knowledge in B2B marketing. A Fractional CMO can help craft your marketing strategy, provide guidance on the roles needed, and oversee the outsourced team's activities. This allows your company to benefit from specialized expertise while maintaining flexibility and scalability.

There are many ways to approach building your first marketing team, so let's now explore which positions to ideal bring on first.

Building Your First Marketing Team? Here Are The Positions to Hire First

So now that you know the different positions that make up a typical best-practices B2B marketing team, and understand that you can take various approaches to begin building this team, which may include hiring in-house or outsourcing, it's time to look at which roles and skills sets are important to bring on first.


When you're building your first marketing team, it's important to focus on hiring key roles that can help you create your marketing strategy and build a solid initial foundation for your marketing.

Here are the initial positions you should consider:

CMO/Marketing Leader: Bringing on a strategic marketing leader is a crucial first step to building a strong B2B marketing team. This person will shape your overall marketing strategy, make sure it aligns with your business goals, and oversee the marketing team. They bring expertise, vision, and leadership to drive marketing success. In smaller companies, this role may be called VP of Marketing or Director of Marketing, and this position can be an in-house hire, or outsourced to a Fractional CMO or similar.

Content Marketing Manager: Once you have senior marketing leadership in place along with a comprehensive marketing strategy, an ideal next role to consider is a Content Marketing Manager. Content is a powerful tool in B2B marketing, and a Content Marketing Manager with a solid understanding of thought leadership is instrumental in creating and disseminating your ongoing thought leadership content. Their expertise in storytelling and content distribution helps drive brand awareness, thought leadership, and customer engagement.

Digital Marketing Specialist: With a strong marketing leader in place, and a content marketing manager creating ongoing powerful thought leadership content to support your marketing strategy, the next ideal position to consider is a generalist Digital Marketing Specialist. This is a position that can help you leverage your content through a variety of digital channels. A Digital Marketing Specialist brings expertise in various online channels and tactics. They manage digital campaigns, including search engine optimization (SEO), pay-per-click (PPC) advertising, email marketing, social media, and distributing



content marketing through a variety of channels. Their deep understanding of digital platforms and trends enables effective customer targeting, lead generation, and brand visibility in the digital landscape.

Demand Generation Manager: Another key role to consider once you have a senior marketing leader in place is a Demand Generation Manager. This position raises awareness and creates interest in your products or services. They design and execute campaigns that generate leads and contribute to revenue growth.

By closely collaborating with the sales team, they ensure that your marketing efforts translate into tangible business outcomes, such as qualified leads and increased customer engagement. Their expertise in demand generation strategies helps fuel your company's growth. When you're just building your marketing team, the Demand Generation Manager and Digital Marketing Specialist roles will often be combined or overlap.

Product Marketing Manager: A next role to consider is a Product Marketing Manager, especially if your company sells a number of unique or specialized products or services that each require attention to messaging and positioning. A Product Marketing Manager focuses on understanding your product or service from a branding and market perspective.

They position your offering, analyze the competition, and create compelling messages and content that communicate the value of your product to your target audience. Their deep understanding of the market landscape ensures that your product resonates with customers and stands out in a competitive environment.

While this list represents the typical first positions to focus on when building your first marketing team, it's important to keep in mind that the specific expertise you need will vary depending on the nuances of your business.

That's why it's important to make sure you begin with hiring a CMO or engaging with a Fractional CMO first. This is the position that will help you create a comprehensive marketing strategy which will then inform you of the exact talent, skills and expertise you'll need to execute that strategy.

Typical Hiring Mistakes & How To Avoid Them

When B2B CEOs are building their first marketing team, they can make some common mistakes that can cost valuable money, time and resources. Understanding some of these common mistakes, and why they happen can help you avoid these missteps early on.



Here are some of the common mistakes B2B CEOs make when building their first marketing teams:

- **Not hiring a strategic marketing leader right away:** One big mistake is not hiring a senior marketing leader like a Chief Marketing Officer (CMO) or a VP/Director of Marketing early on. Without a strategic marketing leader, there may be a lack of clear vision, direction, and oversight for the marketing efforts.

This can result in disconnected tactics, not aligning with business goals, and missing out on opportunities as well as thinking that marketing doesn't really work for your business. While you might not be ready to hire a CMO in-house right away, there are other options, such as Fractional CMOs that can help you get the strategic and leadership support you need.

- **Assigning the role of a CMO or marketing leader to the VP of Sales and turning it into a joint role:** One mistake B2B CEOs sometimes make is combining the responsibilities of the CMO or marketing leader with the VP of Sales role.

While the VP of Sales may possess some marketing knowledge, merging these positions can lead to a lack of dedicated focus on strategic marketing initiatives. It's important to have a separate marketing leader who can provide expertise, vision, and leadership to drive marketing success, ensuring that marketing efforts are aligned with business goals and objectives.

- **Hiring tactical or specialist roles without a strategy:** Another mistake is focusing on hiring (or outsourcing) tactical positions or specialists like social media managers or content writers before having a well-defined marketing strategy in place or a marketing leader to manage these functions.

When tactical roles are prioritized, it often leads to disconnected efforts without a strategic foundation. It's important to establish a clear marketing strategy first and then hire or outsource to specialists who can effectively execute that strategy or run specialized campaigns.

- **Over-reliance on marketing agencies:** While marketing agencies can provide specialized expertise, relying too much on external agencies without having a marketing leader or strategy in place can be a mistake.

Many B2B companies in the early stages of marketing tend to outsource to multiple different agencies for various tactical areas, such as SEO, website design, content writing, PPC ad campaigns, social media and more. This results in several disjointed marketing efforts operating in silos.

- **Ignoring marketing operations and technology:** Marketing operations are crucial for optimizing performance, managing data, and ensuring efficiency. However, some CEOs underestimate the importance of marketing operations or investing in marketing technology.

This can result in having many different marketing technologies for email, social media, CRM, analytics, project management, lead generation, and more. Not having these technologies integrated and managed can lead to inefficiencies, lack of data-driven decision-making, and missed opportunities for optimization and automation.

- **Underestimating content marketing:** Content marketing is a crucial part of B2B marketing strategies. However, CEOs may overlook the need for a dedicated content marketing manager or fail to allocate sufficient resources for content creation and distribution and instead focus on ad-hoc lead generation campaigns hoping for quick wins. This can lead to inconsistent messaging, low-quality content, and missed opportunities to engage and educate the target audience.
- **Lack of collaboration between marketing and sales:** Building a successful B2B marketing team requires close collaboration with the sales department. However, some CEOs may not give enough importance to fostering strong alignment and communication between the two teams.

This can result in missed opportunities for lead generation, ineffective campaigns, and a lack of shared responsibility for revenue growth. It's important to bring on a marketing leader or Fractional CMO who has a deep background in B2B marketing, including partnering with sales teams in order to make sure marketing and sales don't end up operating in silos.

How to Avoid Early Hiring Mistakes:

To avoid early hiring mistakes, we recommend that you:

- Prioritize hiring a strategic marketing leader that is a separate function from the VP of Sales
- Develop a clear marketing strategy before hiring specialists
- Invest in marketing operations and technology
- Find the right balance between in-house expertise and outsourcing
- Prioritize content marketing over quick win campaigns
- Foster collaboration between marketing and sales

Most importantly, to avoid costly missteps and hiring mistakes, it's important to bring on an experienced marketing leader and strategist early on, whether that's an internal hire or a Fractional CMO. By doing so, they can provide the guidance you need to build a strong in-house or outsourced marketing team that drives business growth and achieves long-term success.

6. Hire In-House or Outsource?

Comparing Marketing Models and Options

What are the marketing model options available for B2B companies at your stage? Is it better to hire in-house, outsource to marketing agencies, or hire a Fractional CMO and marketing team? What are the benefits and challenges of each, and when should each be used?

Now that we've explored the positions that make up a best-practices B2B marketing team, reviewed which skill sets and roles bring on first, and how to avoid some common mistakes, it's time to explore the various marketing models and options available, and determine which option is right for you.

Here are some of the most common approaches to consider:

1. Hiring an In-House Marketing Team
2. Outsourcing to Marketing Agencies
3. Hiring a Fractional CMO & Expert B2B Marketing Team
4. Hiring Contractors and Freelancers
5. Do It Yourself


Here is a quick overview of each marketing model options:

1. Hiring an In-House Marketing Team: This involves recruiting and hiring a full-time CMO and team of marketing professionals. The CMO will create the marketing strategy and build and lead the team. The team might include a range of specialists in product marketing, demand generation, content marketing and digital marketing.

The advantage of this approach is that the CEO has direct control over the marketing team and its activities. The challenge is that hiring and managing a full in-house team takes a lot of time, it's tough to find and retain highly skilled marketing talent, it's an important longer-term investment, and can be costly.

2. Outsourcing to Marketing Agencies: A marketing agency is a business made up of multiple employees focused on a specific area of marketing. Some B2B companies choose to outsource their marketing functions to various marketing agencies instead of hiring in-house.

The challenge with this approach is that marketing agencies tend to focus in specialized areas, and few truly focus on strategy. This means you often have to find an agency or consultant to create your marketing strategy, and then hire various agencies in different specialized areas to execute on the strategy.



Without a CMO or marketing leader in place, someone in the company has to manage all of the agencies, and this often falls to the CEO or VP of Sales. While it may make sense to hire a marketing agency here and there for a specialized campaign, turning to marketing agencies for all of your marketing will become expensive, disjointed and hard to manage over time.

3. The Fractional CMO Model: This approach involves hiring a part-time or "fractional" Chief Marketing Officer (CMO) on a contract basis who can provide strategic marketing leadership. Some Fractional CMOs operate as independent contractors to provide strategic guidance and leadership, and can also support the company in building an in-house or outsourced marketing team.

Other Fractional CMOs offer both the strategic leadership and an outsourced marketing team of specialists to help implement and manage the strategy. In this model, you get an instant marketing leader and team. The Fractional Model gives CEOs access to senior marketing expertise without the full-time cost, and is a great option for B2B CEOs who want to get started on marketing right away.

4. Using Freelancers or Contractors: In this model, the CEO hires freelance marketing consultants or contractors to handle specific tasks or projects. This can be a cost-effective way to access specialized skills on an as-needed basis. However, managing freelancers can be a complex task, especially if they're working on interconnected projects.

Similar to marketing agencies, if you don't have a senior marketing leader in place to set the strategy and manage freelancers and contractors, your marketing can become disjointed and hard to manage over time.

5. Do-It-Yourself (DIY) Marketing: In some cases, particularly in smaller companies or startups, the CEO or other team members may take on marketing tasks themselves. While this can save money in the short term, it can also be extremely time-consuming and may not yield the best results if those involved don't have a strong marketing background. Another challenge is when marketing is added to the responsibilities of the sales team, which can lead to less focus on sales along with disjointed and ad-hoc marketing.

Which Marketing Model is Right for You? The Pros and the Cons:

Hiring an in-house marketing team, outsourcing to marketing agencies, or engaging a Fractional CMO and Expert B2B Marketing team are the three most common options for B2B companies at 5+ million in revenue. Using freelancers and contractors or do-it-yourself marketing is usually not recommended for companies of this size, but may be an option for start-ups and smaller firms.

Next, we'll explore the benefits and challenges of the top three marketing model approaches in more detail, along with when to use and not use each option.



1. Hiring an In-House Marketing Team:


Hiring an in-house marketing team comes with its own unique set of challenges and benefits. For B2B CEOs who have scaled to over 5 million through sales-led initiatives, the decision to build an in-house team should be made after careful evaluation.

Challenges of Hiring an In-House Marketing Team:

- **Cost:** Building an in-house marketing team can be expensive. This includes not only the salaries but also employee benefits, hiring costs, training, and investments in marketing software and tools. These costs add up and can be a significant financial burden, especially for smaller businesses or those with tight budgets.
- **Recruitment and Retention:** The process of finding, hiring, and retaining the right talent can be difficult and time-consuming. The marketing field is highly competitive, and attracting the right mix of expertise and cultural fit can be a challenge.
- **Management and Oversight:** If marketing isn't the CEO's core strength, managing an in-house marketing team can be challenging. It requires time and attention to ensure that the team is working effectively, fits into your company culture, and that marketing activities are aligned with business objectives.
- **Keeping Pace with Marketing Trends:** Marketing, especially digital marketing, is constantly evolving. Ensuring the team stays on top of industry trends and changes can require significant investment in ongoing training and education.

Benefits of Hiring an In-House Marketing Team:

- **Alignment with Business Goals:** An in-house team is immersed in your company's culture, goals, and strategic direction.
- **Control and Flexibility:** These are your people. Sometimes it is very important for a company to have all of their functions in-house, this is a valid goal and can help with the harmony of the organization. Having an in-house team gives you direct control over your marketing activities. Changes can be implemented quickly, and the team can easily adapt to new business developments.
- **Availability:** An in-house team is always accessible for meetings, urgent requests, or brainstorming sessions, making communication and collaboration easier.

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- **Deep Understanding of Your Business:** Over time, an in-house team can develop a profound understanding of your business and your customers. This intimate knowledge can enhance the quality of your marketing strategy and execution.

When to Choose an In-House Marketing Team:

- **You Have the Money & Resources:** You have the financial resources to hire, train, and retain a full team of marketing professionals along with a human resources team to support you.
- **You Can Take Your Time:** Your marketing needs aren't immediate, and you can take the time you need to find and hire the right talent to match your skill needs and your company culture.
- **You Prefer to Have Control:** If you prefer to have direct oversight and control of all marketing activities, an in-house team may be the best fit.

When Not to Choose an In-House Marketing Team:

- **Limited Resources:** If budget is a constraint, or you don't have a human resources team to support your efforts, hiring a full in-house marketing team may not be the best option. You might find better value in outsourcing to a marketing agency or hiring a Fractional CMO.
- **Rapid Scaling Needed:** If you need to scale your marketing efforts quickly, hiring an in-house team may be too slow. In this case, leveraging an agency or fractional CMO, who can bring an immediate increase in capacity, might be a better choice.
- **Lack of Marketing Leadership:** If you lack in-house marketing expertise or don't have the budget to hire a CMO to create your strategy and lead the team. Without strategic marketing leadership in place, building a full marketing team could be a risky move.

You might benefit more from hiring a Fractional CMO who can provide strategic leadership and guidance first or consider a Fractional CMO & Expert B2B Marketing Team so you can get going with both the leadership and specialized expertise you need right away.



2. Outsourcing to Marketing Agencies


Outsourcing marketing functions to specialized marketing agencies can be an alternative to building an in-house team. It comes with its own set of advantages and considerations. Here are some factors to consider when deciding whether to outsource to marketing agencies:

Challenges of Outsourcing to Marketing Agencies:

- **Lack of Strategy Focus:** Marketing agencies often specialize in specific tactical areas, such as branding design, content development, social media or SEO and don't provide comprehensive strategic guidance. This means that you either need to have a marketing leader in place, or you may need to engage a separate agency or consultant to develop your marketing strategy, and then hire various agencies for different specialized areas to execute the strategy. This fragmented approach can result in disjointed campaigns and may require additional management effort.
- **Expense and Disjointed Costs:** Relying solely on marketing agencies for all your marketing activities can become expensive over time. Each agency has its own pricing structure, and managing multiple agencies can lead to increased costs and complexities. It may be challenging to maintain a clear overview of the budget, and the expenses can become disjointed, making it harder to track the return on investment.
- **Management and Coordination:** Without a dedicated marketing leader or CMO in place, managing multiple marketing agencies can be demanding. The responsibility often falls on the CEO, VP of Sales or another team member, requiring time and effort to coordinate and align the activities of different agencies - and taking time away from the real focus of their position. Effective communication, collaboration, and oversight become critical to ensure the agencies are working together cohesively and delivering results.
- **Potential Lack of Integration:** When working with multiple marketing agencies, achieving seamless integration across different marketing channels and campaigns can be challenging. Agencies may have different approaches, tools, and processes, which can result in inconsistencies and dilution of your brand messaging. Ensuring a cohesive and unified marketing strategy becomes more complex when multiple agencies are involved.

Benefits of Outsourcing to Marketing Agencies:

- **Specialized Expertise:** Marketing agencies bring specialized skills and expertise in various marketing disciplines. By outsourcing to agencies, you gain access to professionals who excel in specific areas such as content marketing, SEO, social media management, or PPC advertising. This expertise can enhance the quality and effectiveness of your marketing campaigns.
- **Scalability and Flexibility:** Marketing agencies offer the flexibility to scale your marketing efforts based on your business needs. They can quickly allocate resources and adapt to changes in



demand, allowing you to respond to market opportunities or seasonal fluctuations without the burden of managing an in-house team's capacity.

- **Access to Diverse Perspectives:** Engaging marketing agencies provides an opportunity to benefit from their diverse experiences and perspectives. Agencies often work with multiple clients across industries, giving them exposure to different market dynamics and innovative approaches. This fresh perspective can bring new ideas and insights to your marketing strategies.
- **Efficiency and Time Savings:** Outsourcing to marketing agencies can save time and effort in recruiting, training, and managing an in-house team. Agencies are equipped to handle marketing activities efficiently, allowing you to focus on core business functions. Additionally, agencies have established processes and tools in place, reducing the time required for trial and error.

When to Consider Outsourcing to Marketing Agencies:

- **You Have A Marketing Leader and Strategy in Place:** Because marketing agencies typically focus on a specific tactical area of expertise, it's important to already have a CMO, in-house marketing leader, or Fractional CMO in place to manage the agency's activities and ensure they are aligned with the company's comprehensive marketing strategy.
- **Specific Expertise or Campaigns Needed:** Marketing agencies typically provide specialized expertise you don't have readily available in-house for a short term project. This could include building a new website, running a PPC campaign, creating a suite of marketing materials, or developing some content.

Once a marketing leader or Fractional CMO is in place, they can engage agencies to bring in-depth knowledge and experience to tackle specific marketing challenges or campaigns effectively.

- **Budget Flexibility & Short Term Project Costs:** If your financial resources are limited or you prefer a more flexible cost structure, outsourcing to marketing agencies allows you to control costs by engaging their services on a project basis or through retainer agreements. This provides better cost predictability and allows you to allocate your budget efficiently.
- **Immediate Capacity Boost:** When there's a need to rapidly scale your marketing efforts or execute time-sensitive campaigns, marketing agencies can provide an immediate increase in capacity. They have the resources, infrastructure, and expertise to handle demanding projects without the lead time required to hire and train an in-house team.



When Not to Consider Outsourcing to Marketing Agencies:

While outsourcing to marketing agencies can bring several benefits, there are situations where it may not be the most suitable option. Here are some instances when you might reconsider outsourcing to marketing agencies:


- **Lack of Strategic Direction or Marketing Leadership:** Marketing agencies are ideal to engage for specific specialized projects once you have a comprehensive marketing strategy in place and a marketing leader to manage the activities of the agency. Because agencies provide tactical expertise for shorter term projects, they rely on the company to tell them what they need and make sure it aligns with the overarching marketing strategy.

This means it's essential to have a marketing leader in place to guide the marketing agencies and make sure everything they do is aligned with the marketing strategy. Without a marketing leader in place, it falls to the CEO or another internal team member to manage the agency's activities and provide them with company and strategy information.

- **Need for Deep B2B Expertise and Business Understanding:** If your business operates in a complex industry or deals with highly specialized products or services, engaging with a Fractional CMO or hiring an in-house marketing leader that is able to intimately understand your business and industry dynamics can be beneficial.

Agencies may not possess the level of industry-specific knowledge you really need, or have the time to invest in learning the nuances of your business as they have to juggle multiple clients and are focused on more short-term projects.

- **Cohesion and Brand Consistency:** Maintaining brand, messaging and positioning consistency across all marketing channels and campaigns is crucial for building a strong brand identity. If your marketing activities require a high level of cohesion and integration, relying on multiple agencies with different approaches and processes may lead to inconsistencies in messaging, design, and overall brand experience. This can confuse your ideal clients, which can in turn lead to a lack of trust in your company or products.
- **Limited Budget and Resource Constraints:** While outsourcing can be cost-effective in certain situations, it may not be financially feasible if you have limited resources or a tight budget. Hiring and managing multiple marketing agencies can lead to fragmented costs and potentially exceed your budget. In such cases, exploring alternative options like hiring a fractional CMO or utilizing internal resources may provide better value for your investment.
- **Lack of Collaboration and Cultural Fit:** Collaboration and alignment between your internal team and marketing agencies are crucial for successful outcomes. If your company culture values close



collaboration, creative brainstorming, and cross-functional teamwork, the dynamic of working with external agencies may not align with your preferred way of working. In-house teams may offer better opportunities for seamless integration and cultural fit.


3. Hiring a Fractional CMO & Expert B2B Marketing Team

The benefits of working with a Fractional CMO & Expert B2B Marketing Team:

- **Strategic Marketing Leadership:** A Fractional CMO brings strategic marketing leadership to your organization, right away. They have worked in companies at a leadership level before, and are used to partnering with the CEO, sales, customer success, product development and other internal teams. They have also hired and managed internal marketing resources, vendors and contractors and will be able to recommend and manage the right resources to execute on your marketing strategy.
- **Strategic Alignment and Expertise:** Fractional CMOs have the experience and expertise to develop a comprehensive marketing strategy aligned with your business goals. They understand the importance of positioning your products in the market, targeting the right audience, and developing effective messaging. Their expertise allows them to provide valuable strategic insights, identify growth opportunities, optimize marketing tactics, and deliver measurable results.
- **Deep B2B Industry & Corporate Operations Knowledge:** Fractional CMOs are unique to marketing agencies in that the individual Fractional CMO has held leadership positions in corporations before and therefore has a deep understanding of corporate operations and the needs of different departments.

By hiring a Fractional CMO who has held previous positions in B2B organizations, you gain an instant leadership resource who understands the complex needs of B2B companies who often operate in complex, technical industries and deal with large buying committees and long sales cycles. They understand the challenges and issues you are facing right from the get-go.

- **Ability to Partner With Sales:** Because a Fractional CMO has worked in complex B2B organizations before, they have partnered with sales teams and understand the need for sales and marketing to form a partnership and not operate in silos. They also understand how B2B sales tend to operate, what their needs are, and how marketing can powerfully enable the sales process.
- **Long Term Focus & Commitment:** Unlike a marketing agency which is usually engaged on a short term project basis, which makes it difficult to fully understand a business at a deep level, the



mandate for a Fractional CMO is to dive deep into understanding your business, develop a marketing strategy that's aligned with business and sales goals, and execute on that strategy through their own fractional marketing team, or other in-house or outsourced resources.

A fractional CMO engagement typically lasts a minimum of six months and can extend for years depending on the needs of the organization.


- **Time Sensitive & Cost-Effective:** Whereas hiring a full-time CMO and marketing team tends to be a longer-term project that can take months and years to build, engaging a Fractional CMO gives you the senior leadership and strategic support you need right away.

Even if your long term plans are to hire internally, engaging a Fractional CMO is a great way to get started, and can give you valuable information that can help you hire the right in-house resources later on. Additionally, hiring a Fractional CMO allows you to access senior marketing expertise without commitment of investing in an in-house resource, which often includes additional costs in benefits and training.

- **Flexibility and Scalability:** The Fractional CMO model provides flexibility in terms of time commitment and scalability. As your business grows, you can scale up the engagement to meet evolving marketing demands. This flexibility allows you to have a high-level marketing leader when you need them the most.
- **Instant Marketing Team:** In some cases, Fractional CMOs also offer a fractional team of marketing specialists to help execute the marketing strategy. This eliminates the need for you to build and manage an in-house marketing team or engage multiple marketing agencies. With an instant marketing team at your disposal, your Fractional CMO can leverage their expertise and resources to implement campaigns, manage digital channels, create content, and optimize marketing performance.

The Challenges of Hiring a Fractional CMO & Expert B2B Marketing Team:

- **Shifting Mindset and Culture:** Transitioning from a sales-centric organization to one that embraces marketing requires a shift in mindset and culture. It can be challenging to instill a marketing-focused mindset throughout the company and get buy-in from all stakeholders, including you, the CEO, along with your sales team, and other employees.
- **Establishing Marketing as a Revenue Driver:** Demonstrating the value of marketing as a revenue driver can be a challenge, especially if the organization has primarily relied on sales-driven initiatives in the past. When you decide to invest more seriously in marketing, it means creating a marketing strategy, installing a strong marketing system and foundation, and introducing new ways to generate and convert leads.



This is a process that requires some trust and patience because results may not be seen as immediately as you're used to with your sales-driven initiatives and tend to build and become more effective and powerful over time. As the CEO, you may face skepticism from stakeholders who question the ROI of marketing investments and its impact on revenue generation.

- **Integration with Sales Efforts:** Aligning marketing and sales efforts is critical for driving business growth. However, integrating the Fractional CMO with the existing sales team and processes can be challenging. Overcoming any historical friction between marketing and sales and fostering collaboration is essential for maximizing the impact of both functions.
- **Managing Budget Allocation:** Determining the appropriate allocation of the marketing budget can be challenging, especially if there isn't a clear understanding of the expected return on investment. The CEO will need to work closely with the Fractional CMO to develop a strategic budget allocation plan that maximizes the impact of marketing initiatives while balancing financial constraints.

When to Hire a Fractional CMO & Expert B2B Marketing Team:

- **Need Strategic Marketing Expertise:** If you lack senior strategic marketing expertise within your organization, engaging a Fractional CMO can be a valuable choice. They bring years of experience and a fresh perspective to guide your marketing strategy, identify growth opportunities, and make data-driven decisions.

Fractional CMOs are used to coming into an organization with the mandate to build from the ground up. They know how to get things started and are not expecting to walk into a well-oiled machine, but instead to build one.

- **Immediate Marketing Leadership:** If you need marketing leadership and guidance right away but don't have the time or resources to hire a full-time CMO, a Fractional CMO can step in quickly. They can assess your current marketing efforts, develop a roadmap, and provide the necessary leadership to drive marketing initiatives forward and identify and manage marketing resources when needed.
- **Committed to Building a Sustainable Marketing Foundation:** Fractional CMOs are strategic marketing leaders who understand the value of a strategic approach to marketing and building the right marketing foundation for long-term, sustainable growth. If your organization is looking for a quick campaign to bring in some short term leads or someone to complete a short-term project or execute on a campaign, then you'd be better off engaging with a marketing agency who specializes in a tactical area.

- **Looking to Partner with a Marketing Expert:** A Fractional CMO brings years of marketing leadership experience and expertise to your organization. However, in order to get the most out of a Fractional CMO, you need to see them as an expert partner to your organization's success, and not a vendor that needs to be directed and managed.


If you're not looking for a partner and expert guidance, then a marketing agency that can execute a specific project for you may be a better alternative.

- **Need an Instant Marketing Team:** Fractional CMOs have worked in the marketing industry for years and often bring a valuable network of pre-vetted marketing specialists and tacticians to the table. They have also had years of experience in selecting and managing marketing agencies, resources and internal team members, which means they can quickly identify the resources you need and don't need, saving you valuable time and money.

Some Fractional CMO's also offer their own expert B2B marketing team that can be brought in to immediately execute on your marketing strategy. It's like gaining an instant marketing leader and team.

When Not to Hire a Fractional CMO & Expert B2B Marketing Team:

- **Existing CMO and Marketing Team in Place:** If you already have a CMO and a strong in-house marketing team with the necessary expertise and resources, engaging a Fractional CMO and Expert B2B Marketing Team may not be necessary. A marketing agency that can support your in-house team with specific campaign support may be a better option.
- **Lack of CEO Commitment:** Hiring a Fractional CMO and Expert B2B Marketing Team requires strong commitment and support from the CEO. If the CEO is not fully invested in marketing initiatives or does not provide the necessary resources and authority to the Fractional CMO, it can hinder the effectiveness of the engagement.
- **Limited Buy-in from the VP of Sales:** Collaboration and alignment between the marketing and sales teams are essential for driving business growth. If the VP of Sales is not on board with the Fractional CMO and does not support the marketing efforts, it can create internal conflicts and hinder the success of marketing initiatives.
- **Sales Organization Disregards Marketing:** In some organizations, there may be a lack of understanding or respect for the role of marketing in driving revenue. If the sales organization does not recognize the value that marketing brings and fails to collaborate effectively, it can create friction and undermine the effectiveness of the Fractional CMO and the marketing team.

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- **Don't Value a Strategic, Sustainable Approach to Marketing:** If your organization is more focused on quick results and happy with doing ad-hoc and random acts of marketing, then a Fractional CMO may not be for you.
 - **Looking for a Vendor, Not a Partner:** A Fractional CMO is a partner committed to providing leadership, expertise and guidance around marketing. If you are at a stage of your business where you simply need a vendor to execute on existing projects, or you're not open to receiving marketing guidance and expertise, then a marketing agency may be a better fit for you right now.

Now that we've explored the benefits and challenges of each marketing option, along with when to choose or not choose each one, which model stands out as being the best fit for your business?

7. Next Steps - Choosing Your Marketing Model

Remember, in this guide we've looked at:

- When to Invest in Marketing
- What a Best Practices B2B Marketing Process Looks Like
- How to Navigate the Complexities of the Modern Marketing World
- Challenges in Getting Started in Marketing
- Options for Building Your B2B Marketing Team
- Whether to Hire In-House or Outsource

When choosing the right marketing model and next steps for your business, it's important to make sure you begin with hiring or outsourcing a strategic B2B marketing leader who is capable of creating your marketing strategy, building a best practices B2B marketing foundation, and guiding you in making your best decisions around hiring and building your marketing team, whether that's in-house or outsourced.

A Fractional CMO can guide you to make the best marketing decisions for your B2B firm:

If you don't have a senior marketing leader in place to guide your decisions, one of your best next steps might be to talk with a Fractional CMO who has a deep history in working in B2B organizations and hiring and leading marketing teams.



Is a Fractional CMO and Expert B2B Marketing Team Right for Your Business?

Book Your Consultation Now:

Book Your Consultation

At New Initiatives Marketing, our Fractional CMOs have deep experience in B2B, including creating marketing strategies, building strong marketing foundations, and hiring and managing internal marketing resources, marketing agencies and contractors.

Our Fractional CMOs can help you take your ideal first steps in marketing, avoid making those common miss steps and guide you in building the right in-house or outsourced marketing team to match the needs of your business.

Best of all, in addition to our Fractional CMOs, New Initiatives Marketing also provides you with an instant expert B2B marketing team, consisting of all the specialized tactical expertise needed to bring your marketing strategy to life - all under the guidance of your Fractional CMO.

To learn more about how our Fractional CMO and Expert B2B Marketing team can give you the instant marketing leadership and team you need to install a sustainable marketing foundation and move past sales plateaus, book an initial consultation with New Initiative Marketing's Founder & Fractional CMO Jen Kelly on our website at www.newinitiativesmarketing.com/consultation or email Jen directly at jen@newinitiativesmarketing.com.



Meet Jen Kelley, NIM Founder & Fractional CMO

Hi, I'm Jen Kelly, the founder of New Initiatives Marketing Inc. (NIM). Following my corporate marketing career with companies like Siemens, Motorola, and Future Shop, I launched NIM in 2009, became a Certified Marketing Consultant in 2015, and a WBE Canada Certified Women-Owned Business in 2019.

For 14+ years, our team of senior marketing leaders & expert specialists have helped B2B firms with the strategic direction & real-world execution they need for practical, long-term results.

We're not a marketing agency that simply executes one-off campaigns. Instead, we offer a Fractional CMO and Expert B2B Marketing Team to help you build a best-practices marketing foundation that will enable your sales teams to meet revenue goals and set your business up to be competitive and resilient over the long term.

So if you're a B2B CEO looking for a more strategic approach to marketing to move past sales plateaus, but don't have the in-house senior marketing expertise to guide the ship or the expert marketing resources to make it happen, we can help.

**MEET YOUR FRACTIONAL CMO & GET STARTED
NOW WITH A FREE STRATEGY CALL**