



Conquering Top CMO Challenges

**How Agile for Marketing drives
better performance**

“What keeps YOU
up at night?”

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The Agile Answer

“What keeps YOU
up at night?”

**Marketing hasn't just changed.
Marketing is in a state of constant change.**

As such, the role and responsibilities of the CMO are also in flux. While still suffering shorter tenure than other C-level officers, CMOs are expected to do more, know more and impact more of the business.

Delivering greater impact on an organization, managing a higher volume of work, and juggling the multitude of demands on today's marketer require new ways of working. To achieve the step-change in performance of the marketing team can't be about doing what you are doing better or faster. It has to be about operating differently to drive increased efficiency and effectiveness. Marketers need to adopt a more data-driven, disciplined approach to marketing operations that is centered on a test-and-learn culture, enabling companies to iterate and have the flexibility to manage change.

This E-Book shows how a new approach to marketing operations and culture, Agile for Marketing (A4M), can begin to address many of these modern challenges.

DATA

DISCIPLINE

DRIVING ROI

“What keeps **YOU**
up at night?”

Asked ‘what keeps you up at night?’
CMOs top answer: ‘Creating sustainable
and engaging customer relationships and
improving customer experience.’

- Korn Ferry Institute

We recommend CMOs **BECOME A CHANGE
AGENT FOR CUSTOMER CENTRICITY;**
equip and empower the marketing group to drive this
agenda across the organization.

- CMO Council

The biggest mistake by B2B marketers is that they don't
know their customers well enough.

- Forrester B2B Benchmark

To Understand Customers Better . . .

Walk a Mile in Their Shoes

The number of CMOs and lead marketers who name customer insight and understanding as a key challenge is staggering. We often hear about all the data available today, but marketers still struggle with making that data valuable on a customer level. Analysts foresee marketing getting more and more personalized; but to get there, we simply have to do better at understanding and addressing each customer in a personalized manner.

Agile for marketing (A4M) starts with the customer front and center with a customer discovery process that works through the customer motivations, personality and buying process to develop a clear understanding of the personas, customer journey, and how to best influence the customer to take the next step with your product or service. These

insights become the backbone of the work to be done to grow segments, achieve marketing KPIs, and set priorities that will drive value for the customer and the business. **The objective is to assure that marketing efforts will meet (or anticipate) the customer at each touch point along the buying journey.**

As part of the A4M discovery process, agile teams work to define the customer accurately through reviewing customer data, interviewing both external customers and internal stakeholders, as well as reviewing survey data to help map out what they know about the customer and to identify gaps. One of the first A4M projects may be creating an analytics solution to use thereafter.



“What keeps YOU
up at night?”

“The digital world is moving so fast—I can’t seem to **keep up with all the change** and its impact on resources.”

– CMOs in TrinityP3 Survey

Top issues in next ten years: Real-time marketing – responding to customers and changes in the marketplace faster. **DEALING WITH SPEED IS A BIG CHALLENGE** and a big opportunity.
– Gartner Digital Marketing Hype

81% of marketing leaders surveyed said their role will change in the next three years.

– Adobe Summit

To Cope with Rapid Change . . .

Be Flexible in Planning

The rapid pace of change in our world is the new normal. The immediacy of digital interactions with customers and the ease with which any news—good or bad—can be shared around the world have raised the stakes for all brands. **A4M helps you manage these challenges by breaking down your planning and delivery into shorter time frames that give the team the ability to adjust.**

With A4M, annual and quarterly plans are broken down into two-week plan-execute-learn cycles. CMOs and their teams plan for

the year only at the highest level with their vision and top-line goals. Teams then break the work product down to items that can be delivered in short time frames so you can get them into market and learn.

Shorter time frames give the team the ability to re-assess and adjust as they go. Work is prioritized, but if those priorities change, the market changes and you need to react, or your

marketing effort doesn't perform – the teams can easily change course for the next sprint. Each quarter is kicked off with clear goals and objectives and budget estimates, but how those goals are attained is flexible and can shift until you reach the optimal result.

LEARN

EXECUTE

PLAN

“What keeps YOU
up at night?”

“Companies with strong marketing and sales alignment achieve **20% annual revenue growth** vs. non-aligned which have a 4% decline.”

– Aberdeen Research

“43% of CMOs surveyed (the overwhelming top answer) said that the **inability to align department strategies and priorities** was a hurdle to success.”

– Korn Ferry CMO Survey

“32% surveyed report dysfunction and friction over priorities across the company as **A BARRIER TO BEING THE MARKETER THEY WANT TO BE.**”

– Adobe Digital Roadblock Survey

To Align with Company Goals . . .

Make Priorities a Priority

- ✓ 1. [Redacted]
 - ✓ 2. [Redacted]
 - ✗ 3. [Redacted]
 - ✓ 4. [Redacted]
 - ✓ 5. [Redacted]
 - ✓ 6. [Redacted]
 - ✗ 7. [Redacted]
- 

A4M helps your organization set priorities for the long and short term to place the most important work at the front of the line. The process helps drive alignment across departments and silos about which products, segments, and geographies are most important to the growth of the company. When strategic priorities are clear, marketing can be much more effective and efficient for you and your team. With clear direction, they can be more proactive in doing the work that will help grow the business versus reacting to the work requested by the rest of the organization.

Marketing is notorious for fire drills. A big customer, an executive, or a sales manager can run to marketing with an “emergency” that takes over the workday and disrupts the

team. A4M imposes a discipline that holds the team and leadership to the agreed upon priorities. In other words, **A4M helps you value things that matter over things that are urgent.** When teams don’t prioritize their work, the long-term initiatives that may be more innovative and create more meaningful advancements may never get off the ground.

The agile process also introduces a level of transparency that most organizations are not used to. With A4M, marketing’s work stack is clear, the rest of the organization knows what marketing is working on, and marketing is reporting out every two weeks on what they learned and where they are heading next. This transparency helps drive conversations about priorities and aligns marketing with wider organizational priorities.

“What keeps YOU
up at night?”

“Over 50% of lead marketer respondents said that **marketing should take more risks**, but only 30% consider themselves risk takers.”

– Adobe Digital Roadblock Survey

“A full 80% of marketers tap into multiple methods—**TESTING & EXPERIMENTING—LESS THAN HALF THE TIME.**”

–Adobe Digital Marketing Optimization Study

“**65%** of marketers say they are more comfortable adopting new technologies once they become mainstream.”

– Adobe Digital Roadblock Survey

To Foster More Experimentation...

Try, Try and Try Again

Most marketing leaders recognize they need to build a more experimental test-and-learn approach to marketing delivery and management. By embracing a culture of experimentation, marketing teams will be able to assess efficacy on a smaller scale and then adjust to improve and/or scale up more broadly. The smaller bets and short time frames of Agile for Marketing enable less risky trials of new technologies, new messaging or new creative. A4M is about mitigating the risk in spending too much time and effort on something when the payout is unknown.

Agile marketing fosters experimentation in two keys ways:

FORMAL REVIEWS

We refer to our A4M sprints as “rapid learning cycles” because each sprint ends with two meetings, the Review and the Retrospective, which serve as opportunities to present work, share results and re-confirm priorities. Teams present how a trial activity has gone, if and how to improve it, and whether or not to scale it. If something new was tried and failed, the amount of money and time expended are limited.

RAPID CYCLES

With the need to deliver aspects of work every 2 weeks (sprint), larger projects are broken down into smaller work product that can be delivered, put in market, and learned from more rapidly than is done today. This enables companies to test new approaches and get quick market learning that will help inform how to best proceed with the initiative.

RAPID LEARNING CYCLES

“What keeps **YOU**
up at night?”

40% of **CMOs lack the ability to prove short-term ROI**, and 34% lack the ability to prove it in the long-term.

– Duke Fuqua CMO Survey

What’s the biggest factor for low CMO tenure? 56% answered, “...inability to directly **CONNECT MARKETING EFFORTS TO TANGIBLE BUSINESS OUTCOMES.**”

– Korn Ferry Institute

60% of CMOs feel **pressure from CEO** and/or Board of Directors to prove value of marketing. 58% say that pressure is increasing.

– Duke Fuqua CMO Survey

To Measure Marketing Performance . . .

Be Accountable First

Marketing has long been challenged to prove the contribution of marketing spend to business impact. While this is not new, the sheer speed of marketing, changing customer behaviors, urgency of new requests, and competing priorities has compounded the issue. Marketing leaders frequently cite a need to keep the team focused on the things that matter, to increase accountability and to drive a performance culture within the marketing team.

Agile for Marketing aims to increase the marketing productivity of the team, but also the marketing performance.

The iterative nature of the learning cycles focuses teams on getting better over time, measuring results, learning what is working and not working, and making adjustments accordingly. It helps align teams against clear

priorities to ensure that they don't lose sight of the long-term objectives – where they need to get better and which new and innovative marketing programs to test. A4M teams build the priorities and clear definitions of what they are trying to achieve into the process so CMOs are able to drive accountability against delivery and performance.

While it's vital to have the right tools and data to prove a contribution is critical, it's also crucial to build the operating rhythm that supports a performance-driven culture. Driving accountability within the organization is a good starting point. Prioritizing data and measurement components is something that can be done over time. One of our clients has a new measurement enhancement that is completed every sprint to incrementally get

better at their measurement capability. With A4M, they have the discipline to actually use the data to enhance decision-making.

STAY THE COURSE

The A4M approach obligates companies to stay on course with the goals to which they have committed. Teams build the priorities—and their acceptance criteria—into the process.

The Agile Answer

“Brands that are nimble enough to react in real time are winning...you must now be able to ideate and execute faster and cheaper than ever in order to keep up with culture. This is a trend that will never reverse, so we better get used to it.”

– Tor Myhren, worldwide chief creative officer, Grey

The changes needed in marketing are not superficial. They are structural and cultural—one might even say transformational. It's a big shift to address the public demands of mobile, social, always-on consumers. Customers have completely changed their methods of shopping, viewing ads, and interacting with brands. Marketing needs to respond in kind.

More and more, marketers are looking at agile processes to help them act more quickly, respond more effectively to customers, and prove their value to the company and its goals. You may think agile is just a buzzword, but it's actually a proven methodology that over 90% of all software developers use to work smarter and more efficiently, and now is being used globally by pioneering marketing departments. *

CMOs who want to excel in today's market will need to stop defending their territory and working the way they always have. It's time to organize your team around clear priorities, effective ROI measurement and an data-driven customer focus. It's time for change. It's time for Agile for Marketing.



CMG Partners

CMG Partners is a marketing consultancy with over 17 years of experience leading companies to create more growth. When you are ready to get agile, we work with you to assess your marketing organization's Agile Readiness. Based on that profile, we design, coach and implement a custom A4M program to fit your current needs. It's time to perform better, accomplish more and work smarter. It's time to be agile.

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THE END

Thank you



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