



EBOOK

Running a highly efficient marketing team

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Introduction

Efficiency matters

While scale has become the key objective for the average fast-growing business, successfully doing so is no walk in the park. The quicker a business grows, the more complicated running it becomes. The door for risk becomes wider, the number of people that need to be aligned gets larger, and the amount of ROI you aim to generate gets bigger.

As a company enters that crucial period of hypergrowth, efficiency must become a top priority for marketers. Every dollar spent should generate even more revenue, so to maintain business health and weather unforeseen challenges, teams need to remain lean while increasing their output. We're especially seeing this hold true today, during a period where businesses — some of which may feel like they're still in COVID-19 recovery mode — are aware of the current unstable state of the global economy. Moments like this can make or break a business, and it's up to marketing leaders to be proactive and make crucial business decisions, including scaling back budgets, slowing hiring, and focus on programs and strategies that will bring down operating expenses in the short-term.

To truly protect your business and help it thrive, organizations need to stay ahead of the curve and invest in tools and processes that position them for long-term success. Rather than being reactive in a moment's notice, marketing leaders need to foster a culture of agility, efficiency, and productivity. Doing so will not just help teams collaborate and adapt in times of crisis — it will also position the business at large for sustainable growth.

Four Features:

“We talked to four marketing leaders with experience leading highly effective marketing teams to get their take on what it takes to build a productive team and future proof your business.”



Dan Dawson

Marketing Technologist and
Senior Manager of Digital
Properties, NCR



Aunalisa Arellano

Head of Customer
Marketing, Filevine



Wilián Iralzabal

Founder, Zabal Media



Carly Pallis

VP of Marketing,
Pavilion

Chapter 1

The common challenges facing modern marketing teams

Today's marketers are expected to be nimble and meet the moment in today's fast-paced, digital-first world. No simple task, it's one that requires teams to keep up with our outpace evolving trends and best practices, experiment, build a best-in-class marketing stack, create scalable processes, and lean on strategies that best support your business needs – often with limited resources.

The past few years have proven that every business can face unforeseen challenges and consumer needs can change in an instant. It's in these moments where your marketing team's agility – the ability to move fast and move together – becomes the defining factor that dictates whether your organization can keep pushing forward and scale.

Modern marketing teams face a wide range of hurdles, both organizationally and in their day-to-day. Several factors can impact what specific challenges they may face in a given moment, especially the state of the global economy, shifting trends, resource availability, and time.

To narrow down the list of common challenges these teams often encounter, we interviewed a number of experienced marketers with a history of building successful teams and marketing programs.

Challenge #1: Acquiring a sufficient budget

Growing marketing teams need sizable budgets to run high-performing, revenue generating campaigns, but businesses need the assurance these budgets will

generate positive ROI. However, because attribution can be difficult to measure in some facets of marketing – be it brand awareness plays or the impact of content campaigns – leadership might be wary of approving hefty budgets. During periods of volatility (like businesses experienced following the onset of COVID-19), these budgets may shrink in a moment's notice. And while [HubSpot](#) data reveals marketers have made some headway in recouping the budgets they need to run campaigns, analysts at [Gartner](#) report that marketing budgets still haven't fully bounced back to pre-pandemic levels.

Limited resources affect your ability to execute your marketing strategies, making it especially important that your budget is optimized in all the right places. As a result, ensuring you have methods for measuring impact, defining how different parts of the budget will be used, outlining startup costs, and documenting the objectives you have for bringing on more in-house or agency support can help decision makers understand how your budget requests will ultimately help the business meet its growth goals.

Challenge #2: Hiring quality talent

Building a team with a range of skills and qualifications can be a daunting task. And it's not uncommon for members of a marketing team to wear different hats: A strategist, a communicator, an analyst, a decision maker. This makes it all the more important to hire people that are the right fit – and work well together – for your team.

The labor market often dictates hiring efforts

The job market can dramatically impact hiring, and it can be difficult to determine who you want vs. who you need. Marketing leaders are tasked with deciding what headcount they need to fulfill both short-term and long-term business needs, as well as balancing what skills are a must-have vs. nice-to-haves in potential new hires.

Once you've figured out the required roles and skills you need to assemble a well-rounded team, you have to face the challenges that come with talent acquisition — particularly having the time to find candidates and having the resources needed to offer competitive compensation. If you don't strike the right balance, you may end up hiring too quickly or too slowly, which either means you've brought on an employee who's the wrong fit or you've potentially lost excellent candidates.

Hiring managers need to balance talent wants and needs

Marketing teams are often strapped for time or resources, which can make the hiring process feel daunting. That was definitely the case for Aunalisa Arellano, Head of Customer Marketing at software leader Filevine. She started her current role in February 2022 and was tasked with building a marketing team from the ground up with limited resources — a proven hiring strategy and the budget to acquire top talent in a competitive labor market.

Arellano knew that in order to build a strong, yet efficient team, she would need to think outside of the box. She didn't have what she needed to hire highly experienced marketers during a time that favored talent. Instead, she had to look for quick-minded people who potentially had less experience but could:

- ✓ Work collaboratively
- ✓ Pick up new skills quickly and learn on the fly
- ✓ Confidently make sound business decisions autonomously

She took further steps to ensure they hired the right people by creating and putting together a hiring panel that understood her goals and the skills she was looking for. She explained, "I'm a big proponent of panel interviews so a candidate can meet multiple people in the department that they'll [potentially] be working with," she explained. "I know it can be intimidating for some candidates, but I've seen other teams really silo their hiring [processes]. I like getting a broader perspective, and feel like it gives me better insights."

Challenge #3: Meeting changing consumer preferences

Nothing is stationary in marketing. Consumer needs change, and marketers have to adapt to these changes. The challenge is finding the balance between jumping on every new marketing trend and strategically adopting ones that engage your target audience.

“Marketers have to be cognizant of keeping up with consumer preferences and adapt their messaging, calls to action, and nurture strategies so they better fit how buyers want to make purchase [decisions] today.”



Carly Pallis

VP of Marketing, Pavilion

Carly Pallis, VP of Marketing of the members-only community for GTM leaders, Pavilion, understands the challenge of keeping up with and staying ahead of shifting buyer behaviors. She explained that she has intentionally built a team that looks for signals of conversion to identify key learnings they can implement into their marketing strategies. And in doing so, they are then able to create messages that truly resonate with their audience.

In Pallis’s experience, she finds adjusting to changes in buyer behavior is an evergreen challenge for today’s businesses: “Marketers have to be cognizant of keeping up with consumer preferences and adapt their messaging, calls to action, and nurture strategies so they better fit how buyers want to make purchase [decisions] today.”

Challenge #4: Aligning with key stakeholders

Everything that goes on in a marketing department doesn’t always have company-wide visibility, but typically, their projects require cross-department collaboration. A marketing team can’t make every decision unilaterally, especially if it requires a significant amount of company resources. The challenge for some teams is offering easy-to-understand information – ideally backed by data – to stakeholders and decision-makers in order to stay aligned.

Dan Dawson, Marketing Technologist and Senior Manager of Digital Properties at software company NCR, has extensive experience as an agile and creative problem solver. He says that everyone has a different

perspective when it comes to making major operational changes, investing in technology, or implementing new strategies. To gain stakeholder buy-in, he distills business objectives into actionable and deliverable goals to make his case. He also believes being an effective communicator has helped him become a self-described “consensus builder across all seniority levels and organizations.”

Dawson explained that stakeholders want to see proof — the value you plan to generate from making a particular decision — before they provide their stamp of approval, such as why you need to expand your marketing team or the benefits of adding a tool to your stack. Aligning with key people on major marketing decisions and helping them understand how it will positively impact the company as a whole can reduce friction and smooth the way to adopting new strategies, bringing on new tools, or increasing your budget.

Being agile can help today’s marketers overcome common challenges

Marketing teams don’t always have unlimited resources to address unexpected issues. That’s why being flexible and agile is so important — it helps teams transform obstacles into opportunities, keep things moving, and make difficult decisions when necessary. And while leaders need to keep their sights set on the bigger picture to keep the business running smoothly at all times, it’s important they also empower their team members to make strategic decisions in the face of new challenges as your business continues to grow.

Chapter 2

A foundational framework for high-performing marketing teams

Part of operating a fast-growing business is understanding that the door is always open to some level of uncertainty. But how well the business can respond to the unpredictable is often the true marker of success. The ability to do less with more, pivot at the drop of a hat, and be resilient in moments of crisis are all traits of best-in-class marketing teams, and the better your team is at being flexible, the better set up it will be for success.

But before a marketing team can truly be agile, it needs a strong foundation — one that is built on collaboration, leans on data, embraces experimentation, and has efficient processes in place. These are the building blocks you'll need to run a highly-effective, high-performing marketing team, and to help you kick things into high gear, we've put together a framework to help you get started.

Set the right number of key goals

Your team's effectiveness and ability to achieve goals are impaired when you're overly ambitious and try to do too much in a short timespan. Think about what goals are most important to your team and to the business in both the short and long term.

The goals you set for the marketing team should support key organization-wide objectives and can be broken down by time: monthly goals, quarterly goals, and annual goals. By doing so, your team will be able to monitor performance on a monthly and quarterly basis and adjust its strategies to course correct as needed to stay on

track. Additionally, you'll be able to determine if your goals are ambitious enough or might be moonshot goals.

Identify metrics that matter

The goals you set for your marketing team should be clearly measurable. To do so, your team will need to set key performance indicators (KPIs) to measure your goals against. And instead of using cumulative growth totals, you'll want to focus on growth over specific periods of time.

The KPIs you use will often depend on the stage of growth your business is in. A startup may focus on metrics that provide business model validation, while a more established business will look at things like LTV (customer lifetime value) or marketing revenue attribution. What matters most is identifying the metrics that are relevant to your specific business so it can grow in the direction and at the pace you want.

Test, hypothesize, and analyze

After setting measurable marketing goals, it's time to experiment. There won't always be a clear path to your desired outcome, which is why embracing a culture of experimentation is so important. Set a goal, decide how you'll measure it, and create a list of tests to run to help you achieve them.

Part of testing is nailing down a hypothesis for each test, and doing so with intention can help you determine what is and isn't working in a given experiment. Your hypothesis should be a statement that can be proved or disproved and can be as simple as, "If we change the location of the call-to-action button, we'll see a higher CTR." And whether your prediction is true or false, you'll be able to analyze performance and walk away with insights and learnings that can help inform future tests to help you inch closer to your desired marketing outcomes.

Iterate on past tests

Marketers should start with a broader set of testable theories in hopes to pare them down over time. And as your tests get more specific, your team will be able to glean learnings that inform additional tests to run. Being iterative is a best marketing practice that helps teams understand their users better and optimize performance. This can include running A/B tests, and the better your team gets at testing and learning, the more you'll be able to quickly run new experiments and implement winning marketing strategies for your business.

Start the cycle again

Part of running a high-performing marketing team means setting up an environment where everyone regularly challenges the status quo. By asking questions and closely analyzing past performance, you're able to understand where you're really generating value, if there

are gaps in your processes, and where there is potential room for growth. Marketing is an always-on effort, which means right after you tackle your first set of big picture goals, your natural next step should be to quickly move onto new ones.

Chapter 3

The tools, team structure, and processes for maximizing marketing agility

One of the core traits of best-in-class marketing teams is speed. The ability to measure performance and move quickly are essential to building for scale because it allows businesses to solve problems, as well as respond to changing market trends and conditions.

Efficiency is another hallmark quality of performant marketing departments – it's what allows the business to grow at a sustainable rate and positions the team for long-term success, even in the face of challenges.

After you've set up a foundational growth framework for your marketing team, it's important that marketing leaders consider the tools their teams will need to run effective marketing campaigns, the processes they can incorporate in their day-to-day, as well as the team structure that will best support and keep business growth on pace.

Use tools that help maximize productivity

Marketing teams need tools in place that support growth and optimize efficiency. Here's a look at some of the solutions and tech marketing teams can lean on to properly scale their programs.

- **Project management tools:**

Help capture ideas and prioritize them, encourage a collaborative environment where teammates can offer feedback, and let you plan, monitor, track, and report on team output.

- **Team communication tools:**

Provide the ability to easily communicate with members of your team, company, clients, or stakeholders asynchronously.

Tip: Set up project-specific channels to help focus collaboration and stay organized

- **Data and analytics software:**

Monitor performance, ROI, and use data strategically to iterate on past tests and predict future trends.

- **Visual CMS:**

Empower non-technical team members to own the website and rapidly iterate on marketing campaigns and messaging with a visual-first content management system (CMS).

- **Automation tools:**

Streamline marketing processes and workflows to cut down on costs and save time by automating nurture, email marketing, social, and ad campaigns.

Before choosing to bring on a new tool, determine the features that are nice-to-haves vs. must-haves, and assess how well it will integrate with your existing stack and workflows. Also consider if the benefits of the tool will outpace the learning curve it may come with.

Clearly define roles and responsibilities

Traditional marketing teams are more likely to be sorted into functional areas. This can create undesirable and unintended silos that stifle collaboration. Highly-effective marketing teams tend to have roles that are more cross-functional, fostering a culture that is more integrated and innovative.

However, building a team can be complex, especially if you are moving into a different stage of growth. Leaders have to look at their marketing goals and decide what headcount will best support the business's core needs. Pallis of Pavilion emphasized that as a company continues to grow and transform, the task of hiring becomes more complicated. "You're trying to meet your company's revenue and pipeline targets, [which means you] have to find the balance between building out a team that can solve [problems] right now, as well as building out a team that can [solve problems] for the long-term," she explained.

For both Pallis and Arellano of Filevine, autonomy is one of the most important characteristics of a quality marketer. Although teamwork is a crucial part of high-performing marketing departments, a business positioned for growth needs people who can take action without a lot of hand-holding. Pallis specified, "When you're a lean team, it's really important that you feel that whoever you're hiring can come in and work relatively autonomously. You can have your initial setup meeting and say, 'This is what I'm looking for. These are the goals. This is where I need you to focus.' And they can take that and run with it."

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VP of Marketing, Pavilion

A leaner team is more likely to require cross-functional talent (i.e. can do both content and performance marketing), while a larger team's members may have designated roles that focus on a single marketing function. Regardless, marketing teams typically own branding, content and SEO, events, paid marketing, data measurement and analysis, product marketing, and market research, for starters. Beyond these core competencies, modern marketing teams can be broken down by roles and responsibilities, such as:

Team Lead

Ensures that the team is meeting its objectives

Marketing Owner

Communicates with stakeholders and aligns with management; prevents unnecessary disruptions

Coach

Onboards new team members, creates harmony within the team, supports the team, and facilitates the agile mindset

One other strategy marketing teams can consider as a business continues to grow is whether to bring on a contractor or agency rather than fully manage a particular function in-house, such as content creation, video, graphic design, or SEO. This may be a desirable choice if you are facing budget challenges, a backlog of work, or your team lacks some areas of expertise in the short term.

Implement efficient team processes

- What workflows should be in place?
- What are our priorities?
- What can we shift to focus on our core priorities?
- How do we determine what stays or goes?

Everything should come down to understanding and meeting your customers' needs and optimizing your business's performance.

Two practices that can help answer these questions are daily standup meetings and sprint planning. Daily standup meetings are high-level project check-ins that cover what you did the day before, and what you plan to do today and address any barriers or challenges that might prevent progress. Sprint planning is a meeting that engrains agility into a team's standard processes (sprints are a length of time in which a team commits to completing a designated task or amount of work). While sprint planning, you'll take a larger project and break it down into smaller pieces to be completed over a defined timeline.

Pavilion's marketing team has a process in place where they write down their wish list of things they'd like to get done in a quarter. They decide what objectives they need to focus on to drive business growth and deprioritize anything that can't support these goals in the next three months. Pallis describes these prioritization sessions as ruthless, with an end goal of whittling down their priorities to no more than three projects or campaigns that quarter.

Build teams and programs that best support your business

When it comes to organization structure, processes, and the tools you use, there's no perfect template. Marketing leaders need to assess what's most important for their specific business, consider the pain points they are trying to solve for, and determine what success looks like in their eyes. Doing so will inform who and what to bring on in order to create a highly effective and nimble marketing team.

Chapter 4

Best practices for managing a website built for scale

The website is the foundation of an organization's digital marketing strategy. For businesses looking to connect with their customers, create memorable interactions, and move quickly, it's often the most important marketing asset of all, serving as the homebase and anchor of key campaigns.

Today, websites are no longer static; in fact, they must regularly evolve if you want them to help you generate real, measurable value. Wilián Iralzabal, founder of Webflow Enterprise Partner, Zabal Media, explains: "You have to keep up with your website even during times of economic challenge – you can't neglect it. During the pandemic, the businesses I saw suffer the most were the ones who didn't evolve their websites to meet changing consumer behavior."

Managing a website and defining a web strategy that supports sustainable growth isn't a simple task. But with the right tools, mindset, and processes in place, marketing teams can build powerful websites that evolve as their businesses grow. So when it comes to developing your own website strategy, here are some key considerations to keep in mind.

Use visual-first tools to save time and money

Whether updating site content or building a new landing page, a highly-efficient team needs to be able to quickly make changes to the website. However, traditional web models are linked to lengthy development timelines, which can stifle productivity, speed to market, and the success quotient of lean marketing teams.

"You have to keep up with your website even during times of economic challenge – you can't neglect it. During the pandemic, the businesses I saw suffer the most were the ones who didn't evolve their websites to meet changing consumer behavior."



Wilián Iralzabal,
Founder, Zabal Media

A visual development platform like Webflow puts power into the hands of marketers. It also streamlines the entire web development process, whether it's owned by an engineer, designer, or marketer with some basic development skills.

Wilián at Zabal realized what used to take him three months he could now build in three days with Webflow.

Dan Dawson, Senior Manager of Digital Properties at NCR, shared a similar sentiment, joking that he doesn't need to have 10 developers in the room anymore to get the job done. That's been the ultimate game changer for him and his team: Webflow has helped them become more productive. It has also helped them reduce friction and remove multiple steps from their workflows:

“For being agile, it's really important to find these kinds of tools.”

Consider bringing on an agency for additional or expert support

Even teams with smaller budgets can benefit from bringing on a web development or design agency to help with the website. Agencies have industry knowledge, experience, and the expertise businesses need to bring their vision to life. Collaborating with one is especially useful if you're working on a major project like a site redesign or are operating on a tight timeline.

For teams concerned about staying within a fixed or limited budget, Zabal recommends finding agencies that are flexible — ones who can identify what a client wants and come up with a plan to make it happen within a set budget. Agencies can also share expertise and best

practices with their clients, giving marketers the skills they need to take the reins and manage the website themselves over time.

Regularly audit and optimize your website

Your website should be constantly evolving. Therefore, it's important to take a step back from time to time and assess how well it's working for your business. Consider asking the following questions as a starting point:

- ✓ Is it accessible?
- ✓ Is it user friendly?
- ✓ Does the visual design resonate with your target audience?
- ✓ Is the layout and navigation intuitive?
- ✓ Is the messaging compelling, relevant, and accurate?
- ✓ Is it optimized for mobile?
- ✓ Are there clear CTAs across the site?

Once you have the answers to these questions, you can create a game plan for how to improve and optimize your website. Consider what goals and objectives are most important to the business, and prioritize updates that

will generate the most value. If you're looking to generate more traffic to the homepage, for example, consider focusing on SEO and messaging. Map out what needs to happen, who needs to be involved, what outcomes you're looking to generate, and how quickly it needs to happen. But remember: be realistic about how much you can do with the resources you have, and don't forget that your website will be a constant work in progress.

Strategic website advice from industry leaders

While there's no one-size-fits-all when it comes to website strategy, some of the marketing leaders we chatted with shared key advice they think teams should keep in mind as they focus on refining their websites.



Dan Dawson

Dawson of NCR believes it's crucial to keep the homepage and key landing pages fresh. He also shared the importance of security and site usability, likening web engineers to architects and marketers to artists. He understands that marketers want something that looks good and feels exciting, but cautioned: *"Like an architect, you still need to think about the structural elements, so that it's a safe foundation to build on."*



Willián Iralzabal

Willián of Zabal Media encourages marketers to approach their website with agility. He explains, *"Instead of attempting to create [everything] all at once, break things down into doable parts. Prioritize and focus on what is most valuable to consumers before building it out further."*



Carly Pallis

Pallis of Pavilion believes websites should sit at the center of every digital team: *"It's the core of everything you're doing and the heart and soul of your digital strategy."* Her advice for marketers is to not fall into the trap of making your website resonate with every possible site visitor. Instead, pinpoint your target audience, industry, and personas and offer solutions to their pain points through your content and messaging.

Prepare your business for changing macroeconomic conditions

Today, it's more important than ever for leaders to position their teams for sustainable, long-term success. And as industry and market conditions continue to shift, it's up to decision makers to invest in the right tools and processes that help them deliver on their goals, even in the face of unforeseen business challenges.

Webflow is a visual development platform that empowers teams to build powerful, highly-custom websites, without writing a line of code. We help organizations get ahead in today's changing macroeconomic environment by empowering marketers and designers to build and manage fully-custom websites. In turn, teams are able to redeploy their engineering and IT resources to other high impact initiatives, significantly reducing operational expenses.

We also believe bringing more marketing campaigns to market shouldn't come at the expense of quality or power. That's why Webflow helps leading companies like Shift.com, HelloSign, and Rakuten streamline the entire web development process from design to launch. We give marketing and design teams both the power of speed and the ability to push the boundaries of visual design to build more than simple landing pages — rather, impactful sites tailored to specific goals.

Rethinking your web development process won't just save money — it will also drive more revenue for the business. So if you're a marketing leader looking to future proof your business and proactively find efficient

pathways that can decrease operating costs, boost conversions, and drive top-line results, get in touch to learn more about [Webflow Enterprise](#).



Ready to maximize the power of your website?

Get in touch with our team of experts to learn how Webflow Enterprise can help you build a better website, faster.

[Learn more today](#)

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have a question?**

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and you can always contact us at contact@webflow.com