



THE ROAD TO CMO

A Marketo Series

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The CMO: Then and now	3
The fearless marketer's road to CMO.....	7
Road to 2025: People, perception, and technology ...	11

The CMO:
Then and now



THE CMO: THEN AND NOW

Hyper-adoption, also known as the emergent customer behavior of rapidly and simultaneously adopting new behaviors, has changed billions of lives. With the barriers to switching reduced, it's easier than ever for consumers that don't feel engaged to look for better solutions elsewhere. Because of this, the role of the CMO is no longer brand management. It's now about making the customer the center of their operating model. Marketing must embrace customer obsession as a part of everything they do, which goes beyond being customer aware; everything needs to be customer-led.

While most marketing teams already know who they are targeting and how to market to them, it's not

enough anymore. It's about going a step further and identifying what customers truly need and leveraging data to guide the business and product strategy, delivering solutions and services that are catered to these very specific customer needs. Nowadays, the challenge is not to accumulate enough data, but rather, extracting the right information from it and making insight-driven decisions. It's also important to move from being perfect to being fast. This doesn't mean acting carelessly; it's about being agile and incorporating testing and learning cycles so that you can move at the pace of your customers. Lastly, marketing needs to be connected to the rest of the business, with a flat, cohesive reporting structure.

The role of marketing

Marketing is the heartbeat of any customer-obsessed organization. Unfortunately, most CMOs tend to prioritize the wrong things. For instance, the idea of maximizing reach for as little cost as possible might not make sense with hyper-adoptive customers, as they can be turned off by heavy, generalized messaging. The higher-level calling should be to build a customer-centric organization, solve your customers' problems, and advocate for them. As a CMO, your primary responsibilities should be ensuring the following:



Understand your customers: Get to know the customers' needs and help advocate for them across the enterprise, providing products and services that solve their pain points and drive business success. This also entails connecting customers with a community of like-minded people.

Build a brand strategy: This is the process of defining where and how market positioning will be reinforced, which is something they should already have a handle on. Internally, this includes identifying key values and how they will be lived within the firm.

Create a brand experience: Customers experience the brand and its values anywhere, anytime, on any device. Marketing should be thinking about all customer interactions with the brand, from awareness to conversion and advocacy.

Getting to the right place

We often end up defining how we understand the customer as market research, but we may miss that there are many functions within the organization that interact with customers every day and have a different perspective. Marketing and customer success need to pull together those different insights into understanding the customer and create ideal customer profiles. This is an important aspect of the shift toward a customer-obsessed organization. Another critical piece to consider is: how well we are listening to our customers and solving their problems versus only focusing on how many clicks or purchases we can drive through a campaign.

Traditionally, marketing has owned awareness through acquisition, with sales owning conversion, and customer success managing retention and satisfaction. But now, the CMO needs to own the overall experience. Silos and misaligned incentives are always huge barriers for this to happen. Enabling this change requires senior-level commitment.



Leading through the challenge

To effectively manage this change as the CMO, you need to possess several key characteristics. The first is who you are in terms of emotional intelligence and self-efficacy. This involves understanding the soft skill elements of how your team is interacting with each other and how the customer is responding to your brand. Self-efficacy is being aware of yourself and understanding if the things you are doing are effective in accomplishing organizational goals. Next is what you say. Words matter—make sure your communication style is resonating with your stakeholders. The last dimension

is your behavior and showing your team what you care about. This can be broken down into five key CMO behaviors.

1. Measure: Have a clear definition of what customer obsession is and how to measure progress towards that vision. It's impossible to be customer-obsessed when the team doesn't know what it is.

2. Reward: Honor actions that help you reach the customer obsession goal. This could include changing priorities within the compensation structure or giving more informal rewards for people who help achieve the vision.

3. Unblock: To work differently, you have to stop current ineffective activities. Change is as much about introducing new workflows as it is about ending old ones.

4. Provide: Make assets available that allow teams to work in new ways. Without this step, it is impossible to unblock.

5. Model: Walk the walk and demonstrate how people should work. Effective leadership hinges on modelling the way; otherwise, there is no credibility.

Leading the way

It's time to make a change and achieve competitive differentiation. The idea of being a customer-obsessed organization means you can't continue business as usual. It's on marketing to lead the charge, by owning customer understanding, brand strategy, and brand experience. By adopting new habits, CMOs can help make this a reality.



The fearless marketer's
road to CMO



THE FEARLESS MARKETER'S ROAD TO CMO

We were fortunate enough to get insights from a group of fearless marketers who shared an intimate look at their career paths.



Jo Lanzarone

HEAD OF MARKETING, APAC PLURALSIGHT



Yves Calmette

CMO, WWF - AUSTRALIA



Anthony Lieu

HEAD OF MARKETING, LEGALVISION

What approach have you taken to your career that has made you successful?

Jo: I've been grateful to be exposed to excellent sales and marketing leaders while working for a large company with great skillsets. For me, it's about being authentic and true to yourself in terms of your expectations, along with having empathy with your team, employees, and customers. You also want to have a growth mindset. My advice for new marketers is to be open to new experiences and take on challenges that you normally wouldn't be ready for.

Yves: What has been important is to be in a job where I can grow. As soon as I'm not learning anymore, I change jobs quickly. The last thing you want

is to get comfortable, as learning new things can take you far quickly. When you change jobs, it's best to look for something outside of your comfort zone, whether it's a new industry or a job you don't have all the skills for. As long as you can do part of the job and stretch yourself, that's the best way to learn quickly.

Anthony: I have been successful by fostering a culture of psychological safety where the team feels encouraged to suggest new ideas without fear of punishment or humiliation. If you have a willingness to experiment and take risks, you can learn everything you need to know by being openminded and willing to teach yourself. Everything you need to learn today you can pick up by attending events, talking to people in the space, and reading books.

Have you ever had a project vetoed by key stakeholders? What did you learn from the experience?

Anthony: I was working on a big project to break into a mid-market segment that was eventually vetoed because we weren't in the best position to go ahead without working out questions around ROI and whether our sales team was ready. It's important to get the plan in place first and the right stakeholders involved early, which would have saved us a lot of time and energy.

Jo: Absolutely, I've had a couple of big above-the-line campaigns not get up because of a lack of budget or the support from stakeholders wasn't there. It's all about communication and doing that upfront prep work to look at the options and seek feedback to get advice and guidance.

Yves: The most insightful one happened in my advertising days when I was in a big agency that had won a very competitive pitch. Everyone was excited, and the whole campaign was ready to launch when we learned that there had been no legal check and we couldn't proceed. It was a massive disaster. We lost the client and a lot of money, but it never

happened again. As soon as you can engage legal to look over copy and ideas, you should. The legislation is getting tougher in every market, so you need to be very cautious.

What will be your next big technology investment?

Yves: Our next big investment will be in business intelligence to make sure that we make the most of our data, which is really essential to what we do now. Overall, we view these investments as ongoing. We used to think that once you invested in technology, it was done forever, but you actually need to keep investing and looking at new tech all the time.

It's not a one-off thing, but something we do on an ongoing basis.

Anthony: Our next investment will be continuing to integrate all our systems to talk to one another, and having our APIs communicate as seamlessly as possible. We're high on anything that has to do with automation, so getting our clients to fill out a document with certain fields will help our lawyers do their work more efficiently. Anything that allows us to automate a process will save many hours down the line. This coupled with custom integrations and connectors is our roadmap for the next two-to-three years.



Jo: We actually have so many systems to choose from and applications to use so, if anything, we'll be narrowing down which core platforms we want to support us. But as far as new investments go, I see us digging deeper into AI and seeing what the implications of that are for marketing, and how we can get closer to the customer digitally.

What is one action that marketers can start taking tomorrow that will help progress their career?

Jo: Keep connected. As a marketer, you can't underestimate the value of your network and peers, and the more you play an active role in the community, the more it gives back to you. In the last few years, I've been involved in the Marketing Academy, which has introduced me to many

fabulous people that I have coached. But at the same time, you also should network with other people to learn about their business and their work. Make a choice to connect with other CMOs a couple of times a month to be engaged with what's happening in other parts of the world.

Yves: The advice I would give is not to become too specialized, because what is hot now may not be tomorrow. For example, everyone jumped on the social media bandwagon five years ago; now you've got so many experts in the field that you could be out-of-market if it's your only specialization. Become a generalist as early as possible, and work to understand everything in the marketing ecosystem if you really want to become a marketing executive.

Anthony: Run that experiment that you've been putting off. I think risk taking is part of the job. Not every idea will work, and not every campaign will have something actionable, but you should set a time frame and build a hypothesis loop in relevant teams. Many of our biggest wins have come from tests that we didn't expect would have any impact. Take more risks, and you'll see the results come through.



Road to 2025:

People, perception, and technology



ROAD TO 2025: PEOPLE, PERCEPTION, AND TECHNOLOGY

We caught up with Abhishek Malaviya, managing director at Accenture Interactive, and Andrew Birmingham, MD & editor-in-chief at Which-50 Media, to learn what ANZ marketers are saying about the current state of their business, executive relationships, and their predictions for skills and technology in 2025.

Marketing investment priorities

Innovation in the digital space is going to change a lot of things. New technologies like blockchain are emerging and will be impactful, but there is a trust factor that will need to be built. Customer focus is an important element in building trust, but a big challenge is a disconnect with the digital and IT teams. It's important to define the key metrics

of the organization so that whether you're the CEO, CIO, CMO, or CTO, you're working towards the same customer-focused metrics. Making sure that there is a customer experience measure standard will lead to much better retention and lifetime value.

Indeed, a lot of marketers in ANZ are looking at customer lifetime value. This has been fueled by an amazing shift towards using technology platforms for marketing. In the

past, there was no way to measure marketing impact as scientifically and accurately as today. But with the new media and technology capabilities available, you can measure the customer journey across channels. This allows you to truly attribute how customers are interacting and what their value is, along with who the top customers are so that you can engage with them in the right way, at the right moment.



Key skills for the CMO

We conducted research in which we interviewed more than 200 executives to understand the CMO role and how it's changing. Interestingly, 88% of the organizations surveyed said the role of the CMO was going to change, evolving continuously over the next few years. The key takeaway was that CMOs need to be more collaborative, working across the organization along with CIOs and CEOs.

Collaboration is essential for the CMO because the reality is that we will never have one person or one team with all the skills. Nobody knows all the answers, but when coming together, we can solve even the most complex problems. They should also be open to change and be comfortable failing

fast so they can learn from it and improve.

It takes a very strong leader in the CMO role to get marketing a seat at the revenue table. They need to prove marketing's impact on the business, understand the overall business objectives, and work closely with the CIO and CRO. Their job is to educate the team on the right implementation and structure of a customer-obsessed organization and to truly collaborate and deliver that brand promise along with customer experience.

Marketing metrics & attribution

In the past, revenue has been sales' main responsibility, and there was a disconnect between how that was

calculated compared to marketing's impact on revenue. This meant you were never able to truly and accurately measure the portion of revenue attributed to marketing. But now with the tools available, you can precisely measure that.

With the increase in AI and data availability, you can personalize data management platforms, making marketing easier than ever before. Leaders are already starting to invest in getting access to the right data so that they can lower their cost per lead and acquisition and improve customer retention. If they are not investing now, they're going to miss out.

Marketing skills for the future

The vision for the future is that marketers should never have to write content anymore, which means everything will happen dynamically based on user behavior, channels and location, and past behavior. It's going to be a lot more about psychology and understanding the mind, and making sense of the data you collected, so data scientists are going to be crucial for their organizations. To prepare for the future, we need to start early to start building skills.



Marketo, an Adobe company, offers the solution of choice for lead management and B2B marketing professionals seeking to transform customer experiences by engaging across every stage of complex buying journeys. Natively supporting both lead and account-based marketing strategies, Marketo Engage, as part of Adobe Experience Cloud, brings together marketing and sales in a comprehensive solution designed to orchestrate personalized experiences, optimize content, and measure business impact across every channel, from consideration to conversion and beyond. To learn more about Marketo Engage, the vast community of passionate marketers in the Marketing Nation, and Marketo's robust partner ecosystem, **visit www.marketo.com**.