Marketing leaders must marshal and optimize organizational resources to deliver measurable value. This is done by aligning the marketing organization, talent and outsourced partners to the strategic goals that matter. This research provides insight and advice to help you achieve these objectives.

**Scope**

Marketing organization and talent focus on optimal capabilities, structures and outsourcing models. Use our research to map abilities to goals, adjust your talent mix and develop your team.

The topics we cover include:

- **Marketing organizational structure and effectiveness:** Defining the most effective organizational structures and operational models to deliver against your business goals.
- **Marketing talent management:** Understanding, evaluating and developing the roles and skill sets of your internal team.
- **Agency and service provider management:** Understanding, evaluating and effectively managing marketing service providers, from global agencies to midsize and boutique firms.

*Note: Content may not be available without a Gartner subscription.*
Analysis

The vision and scope of marketing have shifted, requiring marketing leaders to rethink vital questions about how they design their organizations, develop their teams, and select the right agencies and partners based on their objectives. Evidence of the rate and pace of change can be seen in Gartner’s “Marketing Organizational Survey 2019”. This survey documents an accelerating effort from marketing leaders to achieve agility and responsiveness by reshaping team skills, structures and partnership models.

Identifying, acquiring and advancing essential skills are now core components of the marketing leader’s role. This starts with an understanding of the skills and talent that support the delivery of strategy informed by a realistic view of the competitive environment. Building an organizational structure that optimizes resources, fosters collaboration and enables capabilities to be efficiently executed across the enterprise is key. Marketing leaders must define the structures, skills and external partners that underpin marketing success.
To build the optimal organization, marketing leaders must look beyond their in-house talent. Marketing teams still rely on agencies and vendors to complement and support their strategy. Gartner’s CMO Spend Survey 2019-2020 reports that, despite shifts toward in-housing, almost a quarter of the marketing expense budget is still allocated to agencies and other marketing service providers (see “CMO Spend Survey 2019-2020: CMOs Double Down on Digital Channels and Analytics, but Fail to Plan for Tough Times Ahead”).

Understanding the discrete value that different types of marketing service providers offer enables marketing leaders to ensure they deliver the optimal mix of in-house talent and outsourced expertise that can flex and scale as needs change. However, the increasingly complex marketing service provider landscape can make this a challenging endeavor.
Marketing leaders tasked with delivering growth must be able to operationalize marketing strategic plans. They must gather and deploy the resources, people, processes and tools that power marketing capabilities. Use Gartner’s 2020 research to optimize your team’s capabilities and organizational success and to inform organization design and vendor selection.

Our research centers on the following topics:

• Agency and Service Provider Management
• Marketing Organizational Structure and Effectiveness
• Marketing Talent Management
Agency and Service Provider Management

The marketing agency landscape continues to evolve. Marketers still rely heavily on agencies and other marketing service providers, but their strategies and expectations of agencies are changing, especially as many marketers build in-house capabilities. Consequently, marketing leaders are increasingly assembling a portfolio of partners, both internal and outsourced, to achieve results. They are looking to agencies not just to augment internal staff and fill skills gaps, but also to support strategic projects and bring fresh perspectives to key challenges. At the same time, cost optimization across agency engagements is increasingly critical. We provide guidance on how to make your relationships cost-effective without losing the strategic value of external partners.

Questions Your Peers Are Asking

- How do I choose the agency or partner that’s right for my organization?
- How do I ensure I get the most out of my agencies and marketing service providers?
- How do I structure and leverage an in-house agency?

Recommended Content

- “Magic Quadrant for Global Marketing Agencies”
- “CMO Insight: Justify Benefits and Choose the Best Model for Building Your In-House Agency”

Planned Research

- Achieving the right balance between in-house and external agencies and partners
- Building and managing an in-house agency; understanding how and when to deploy, and how to integrate with the marketing organization and external agencies
- Navigating the marketing service provider landscape, understanding the market direction and identifying different types of providers
- Comparing the benefits and considerations of working with agencies, consultancies, boutique firms and freelance marketing resources
- Evaluating global marketing agencies; Gartner’s Magic Quadrant on global marketing agencies compares leading agency providers based on their vision, ability to execute and overall fit within this evolving market
- Applying cost optimization best practices to agency roster management and consolidation

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Marketing Organizational Structure and Effectiveness

Successful marketing leaders build and organize teams capable of executing and delivering against their strategy. They start with a pragmatic view of the capabilities that are essential to meet their goals. They then plan for the scope and scale of capabilities required, focusing on how they recruit and hire skills and aptitudes that are aligned with changing customer expectations. They look to new structures and models (such as centralized or distributed marketing teams, centers of excellence and in-house agencies) that allow capabilities to scale across the span of the marketing organization — maximizing flexibility, efficiency and results. Harnessing the right mix of service partners enables their teams to collaborate and deliver efficient, effective outputs.

Questions Your Peers Are Asking

- Which organizational structures and workflows work best based on my circumstances?
- How do I understand and develop the capabilities required to support my marketing strategy?
- How do I develop the right operating models — centralized versus decentralized, insourced versus outsourced — for my marketing organization?

Recommended Content

- “Marketing Organizational Survey 2019: Marketers Aspire for Agility and Control but Fight Operational Challenges”
- “Organizational Design: How to Plan, Implement and Roll Out While Minimizing Risk”
- “Assess and Upskill Your Marketing Team Capabilities”

Planned Research

- Understanding how and when to deploy different organizational structures
- Understanding the marketing organizational environment: How are marketing leaders tackling the challenges within the marketing organization?
- Designing marketing teams, growing critical internal capabilities and leveraging external service providers
- Assessing marketing maturity, assessing organizational strengths and weaknesses, identifying skills gaps and developing a roadmap for advancement

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Marketing Talent Management

Traditional marketing skill sets continue to evolve, driven by a heavier reliance on technology, a critical need to understand data and its associated privacy considerations, and a slew of ever-changing content types and marketing channels. Marketing leaders must understand, evaluate and continually develop their team’s collective and individual skills and contributions to the organization. Marketers recognize the business value of diversity and inclusion efforts, and must remain steadfast in their commitments to those efforts. Accomplishing these goals while cost optimization efforts impact staffing models and hiring opportunities is no small task.

Questions Your Peers Are Asking

• How do I evaluate my existing team’s skills and identify gaps I must close in order to meet our short- and long-term objectives?

• What are the hard and soft skills required for my marketing team’s success?

• How do I leverage the freelance market to fill gaps in my team’s skills?

Recommended Content

• “Assess and Upskill Your Marketing Team Capabilities”

• “Emerging Marketing Leadership Roles”

• “Use Gartner’s ESCAPE Model to Lead Organizational Change in Marketing”

Planned Research

• Understanding when to invest in building capabilities internally versus outsourcing

• Taking advantage of freelance resources to fill talent gaps

• Learning the value of marketing soft skills such as leadership, collaboration and adaptability

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Suggested First Steps

• “Marketing Organizational Survey 2019: Marketers Aspire for Agility and Control but Fight Operational Challenges”: Use this research to gain insights of what other marketing leaders are doing within their organizations.

• “Assess and Upskill Your Marketing Team Capabilities”: Actively develop your marketing teams by identifying and focusing on the areas in greatest need of enhancement.

• “5 Steps to Working With Your In-House Agency to Achieve Best Outcomes”: Manage your in-house agency like an external agency to yield better ideas, work and results with less friction.

• “Follow 4 Steps to Find the Right Agency”: Use Gartner’s four-step approach to finding the right strategic partner for your organization.

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Essential Reading

• “Magic Quadrant for Global Digital Marketing Agencies”: Use this research to guide agency selection when seeking a partner for global marketing strategy and execution.

• “Marketing Organizational Structure: What Should Marketing Leaders Centralize or Decentralize?”: Use this research to inform decision making about organizational design and address this timeless and complex issue.

• “Gartner’s Guide to Build, Lead and Optimize Effective Agile Marketing Teams”: Use this research to build team capabilities that meet expanding responsibilities and keep brands competitive.

• “Why You Need Marketing Operations”: Use this research to understand the foundational capabilities of marketing operations.

• “Marketing Work Management: How to Control Chaos, Streamline Workflow and Gain Efficiency”: Understand how to implement work management processes and solutions to increase efficiency, effectiveness, visibility and control to attain high-performance teams.

• “Modern MRM: The Evolution of Marketing Operations Management”: Understand the landscape and solutions that deliver improved marketing operational efficiency and business impact.

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Gartner for Marketers provides the objective, expert advice and proven tools you need to seize the right opportunities with clarity and confidence and stay ahead of the trends that matter. Benchmark your performance with data-driven insights. Prioritize investments and areas of improvement. Execute your mission-critical priorities with speed and confidence.

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