

INTRODUCTION

Preparing to Make *The Shift*

Do you recall any of these *Advertising Age* headlines from the past few years?

“CMO Leaving Home Depot.”

“CMO Leaving Microsoft.”

“CMO Leaving Chrysler.”

“Wendy’s Changing CMO again.”

“Domino’s CMO Leaving.”

“Dow Jones CMO Resigns.”

What was your first clue that marketing priorities were shifting? Maybe it was the astonishing number of op-ed pieces, articles, discussion panels, and features written about the phenomenon; the pace reminds you of the Breaking News scroller at the bottom of

CNN's nightly news. You might think Spencer Stuart should publish its survey tracking the average CMO's tenure not just annually but as a weekly box score within the business section.

Is your first reaction to these many notices, *How do I save my job?* Good question. Here's the answer. You need to be more accountable while doing more with less. You need to actively collaborate with your peers and stop acting so independently. You also need to engage strategically as well as creatively. And all of that needs to happen within a culture that continues to remind you to do your day job while providing space to try something new.

Voices from the Front Line

Unfortunately, many CEOs and CMOs have historically placed Marketing in a small box with a narrow set of responsibilities. As a result, a circular mentality continues to dominate most executive perceptions about what Marketing is doing versus what it should be doing. But why does that circle go unbroken? If you listen to some of the conversations that CEOs are having with heads of marketing on a daily basis, you can better understand why this circular mentality exists:

“What font size are you using in our catalogue? And why is the font of our phone number a smaller size than the rest of the text?”

“I just gave the go-ahead for Sales to hire its own agency. Not a problem, right?”

“You lost the battle when you started talking about changing our logo.”

“There's nothing wrong with Asia-Pacific naming everything [every product, service, feature, benefit]. Doesn't hurt our effort. Stick to your job.”

“Don't talk to me about segmentation! You know that more feet on the street trumps some fancy segments with names like 'price shoppers' or 'value seekers.'”

“I want your report tonight using customer stats to tell me whether it costs more to keep the old customer or buy a new one.”

“Listen, I saw another journal report about the effectiveness of catalogues and direct mail versus your so-called website click conversion rates. So get off it, and write the damn letters.”

“Where is our Facebook page?”

Why do all of these conversations feel so tactical in nature? Why do executive teams stick to deeply engrained opinions about marketing’s role and its overall readiness to become a strategic asset? Why don’t all CEOs see the need to make a shift?

The Reason Most CEOs (Including Yours) Don’t Shift

Many companies and their CEOs continue to operate in a time warp when it comes to the value that Marketing can bring to the organization. The reality is that some of this devaluation is self-inflicted. Adam Stotsky, former SVP of Marketing of the Sci-Fi Channel and current President of Marketing for NBC Entertainment, concurs: “Far too many CMOs come to the role with only knowledge about communications and advertising.” Becky Saeger, CMO of Schwab, admits, “If you are on the team as just a traditional marketer, then you will never be viewed as a critical strategic player. You have to plug yourself in as a person running a business.”

To be fair, many marketers complain they cannot shift into a strategic growth mode because they’re buried under the overwhelming amount of work they’re supposed to accomplish. Many say they have enough time only to remain in the control tower directing traffic—time for some strategic efforts, but mostly tactical. And when they do attempt to offer strategic opinions, they are not always effective. Steve Meyer, whose head of marketing roles have included Dell Services and Trilogy Software, says, “We’ve all been in meetings where traditional ‘marketing experts’ try to make a key

point and eyes roll because there's not much depth or operating insight."

In a corollary to this problem, the strategy of many marketing executives to advance their careers by owning the concept of brand has begun to backfire. Too often, CEOs misunderstand the word *brand* as a logo or tagline. In other words, CEOs think brands are all about marketing communications. To put it another way, Marketing is doing a terrible job of marketing itself.

Similarly, there has been some misalignment between corporate and business unit marketing, which causes confusion, distrust, and budget battles that corporate marketing rarely wins, reinforcing internal negative perceptions. If the two marketing groups can't align, how is the rest of the organization supposed to view them as having strategic perspective?

This internal marketing difficulty often pales in comparison with the great divide that still exists between Marketing and Sales in many companies. Steve Meyer puts it this way: "Every company wrestles with the Sales and Marketing divide at some level. It's universal. No matter what organizational structure you have, you have to bridge that gap." Beth Comstock, CMO of GE, agrees: "There will always be tension between the two groups, although time, clarity in roles, and over-communication helps to ease that tension."

Russ Klein at Burger King Corporation adds, "I appreciate the dynamic that 'this may be an engineering- or a sales-driven company' with Sales as the alpha dog, but the marketing professional can't accept that as a reason not to roll up his sleeves and change the dialogue!"

If CEOs Do Not Want to Shift, How Can We?

Of course, a shift is difficult to do, and it doesn't happen overnight. But marketers like Klein and Meyer manage to do two important and successful things to get out of these traditional traps and seize

the growth agenda. First, they shift marketing's profile, as a function and as individuals, to a more strategic one. Once the profile shifts and Marketing becomes a key strategic driver of the growth agenda, it becomes easier to be the strategic partner to the CEO and an undeniable asset to the organization.

The new formula for success starts with a new imperative. Marketers must become deeper strategic thinkers and bring that capability to bear across more of the business landscape. Those who contribute strategically and use their skills, capabilities, and knowledge will accomplish both shifts. That's the path Mark Waller, Senior Vice President of Marketing and Sales of the National Football League, has been taking.

His responsibilities build on each other: "First, I'm charged with having absolute clarity of consumer understanding. Second, I must translate that understanding into brand and business building strategies, and finally, I have to have a plan to commercialize those strategies in the market."

Waller's on to an approach that can be leveraged for you to become the guru of growth in your company. Visionary Marketers who have made *The Shift* agree that there really is only one purpose in making a shift: to help drive the company's growth goals and agenda—in effect, becoming the CEO's partner.

Visionary Marketers' Recipe for Success

The marketer who aspires to become the CEO's true partner in growth needs to bring together a balance of hard and soft skills. Think of this as akin to a recipe at a five-star restaurant where the chef carefully blends ingredients. The aspiring Visionary Marketer must:

- Consistently exceed expectations for marketing excellence.
- Build operating credibility with the CEO, CFO, and the rest of the C-suite.

- Show capability and muscle in driving strategic discussions at the corporate level.
- Consistently innovate across the enterprise.
- Lead by example, and inspire the organization to deliver results based on world-class marketing and business strategies and plans.

Of course, the basic ingredient—exceeding your company’s expectations for marketing excellence—is a prerequisite to earning the right for a more strategic profile. If you can’t handle the responsibilities you already have, then why should the CEO think you’re ready for more? That’s the stark, realistic situation at the top—CEOs will bring the right marketer into the inner circle, but that marketer must be proven. By successfully executing a world-class marketing plan, intimately tied to the company’s strategic growth plan, and delivering quantifiable results, you will make a convincing argument that you as a marketer can play two roles simultaneously: that of a great strategic thinker and that of a great in-market executor.

Stephen Quinn, CMO of Walmart, admits that early in his tenure as CMO, he did everything, big and small, with a purpose. If he needed to write the weekly circular, he had no issue with doing the task himself. Although he had aspirations for the role that went far beyond the circular, he also knew that he would be judged as much on executing in a manner that would delight the 1.5 million store associates and 140 million weekly shoppers as he would be on thinking strategically.

Some CMOs with successful backgrounds as operators or business strategists are accountable beyond delivering on their marketing communication goals. Meyer, for example, believes “there’s no substitute for putting real points on the board—led by analytics focused on true business impact rather than just traditional brand metrics like advertising tracking and equity studies. You can earn a real seat at the table.”

Move from the Expected to the Unexpected—From Tactician to Visionary Marketer

Fully embracing *The Shift* helps to take the marketer's role from Tactician to Facilitator to Leader to Visionary (Figure I.1). Each role has specific attributes, and each allows marketers to see, much like a great brand identity is earned over time, that they can follow an aspirational path, earning their way to the leadership position they know they should possess.

As Tactician, the marketer is responsible for succeeding at delivering on a set of tactics or programs required to fulfill a strategic imperative. The Tactician, in effect, operates with a checklist or a to-do list of activities to achieve over a calendar year, and their value is often measured by the amount of “stuff” checked off. The Tactician tends to stay in the traditional marketing box, playing the functional role well, but is not viewed as an important or critical asset across the organization.

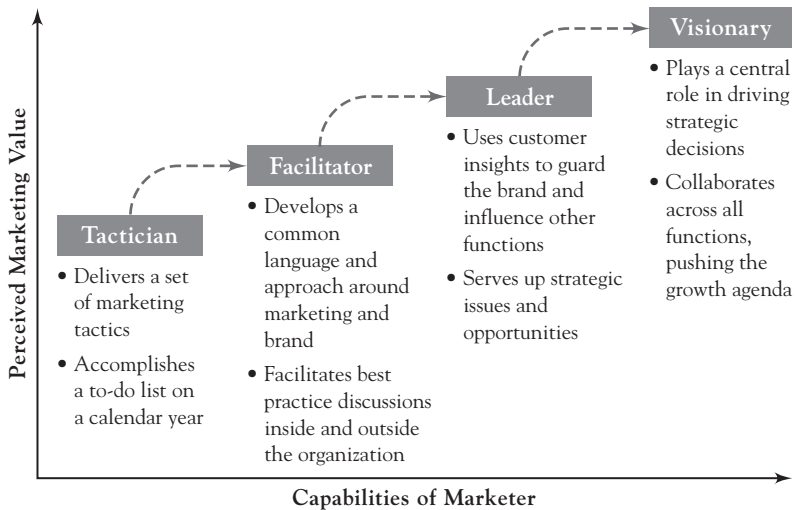


Figure I.1 The Evolution of the Marketer's Role

The Facilitator incorporates all of the Tactician responsibilities while also beginning to help the organization as a whole develop and leverage shared approaches to traditional marketing communications and sales. This role develops a common language around marketing and brand and develops approaches, tools, and methodologies. The Facilitator starts to lead discussions around best practices inside and outside the organization. Although Facilitators are not usually viewed as strategically as their peers, they are starting to play on a broader platform and building a voice within the organization.

The Leader carries out all of the Tactician and Facilitator responsibilities and uses customer insights and knowledge, beginning to show Marketing's customer-led strategic muscle throughout the organization. The Leader is known as the guardian of the brand, the keeper of the customer, a savvy marketing return-on-investment investor. The Leader lives up to this title primarily within Marketing, while recognizing the need to become more influential with other functions, such as Human Resources, Finance, Operations, and Sales. Although not always expected, the Leader looks to serve up strategic issues, opportunities, and dialogues across the organization, and drive toward customer-insight-led opportunities (in the broadest sense of the word) that can move the whole organization forward.

The Visionary Marketer encompasses all of these other roles and also plays that central role in driving strategy—from eliciting imperatives to tiering them, prioritizing them, and putting economic values around each. In addition, the Visionary Marketer proactively collaborates across all functions, consistently pushes the growth agenda, has deeply seeded relationships with the CEO and the Board, and is always commercially oriented.

Ultimate success comes from recognizing the importance of achieving each aspect of each type of marketing role, as well as recognizing that each role builds on successful achievement of the responsibilities housed in the previous one. You need to accumulate, and perhaps disperse or delegate responsibilities within each role to others.

Take Yourself and Your Company into Account

To a large degree, the ability to shift from Tactician to Visionary Marketer depends on your company's point of view on Marketing and the level of strength, influence, power, experience, and skill that the marketer demonstrates. In fact, a real debate is underway about whether it is the company or the marketer who has to make *The Shift*. But it may be that the debate is over, because, without a doubt, it is both.

Consider the following composite job description from a variety of CMO searches for Fortune 500 companies:

Strategic Growth-Oriented Marketing Executive

Board seeks new role for high-growth, global organization. Individual needs to focus on profitable growth and customer acquisition, be the brand champion, have the ability to manage between and across all 4 P's while collaborating with the executive team. We are looking for someone with operating credibility, someone adept enough to incorporate a P&L mind-set into every decision he or she makes. Impact, influence, and accountability will be hallmarks of success for this newly created position.

Traditionally companies looking for this type of marketing executive start their search internally, but they often find that their marketers are defined in traditionally narrow ways. The organization has created a self-fulfilling prophecy that prevents it from promoting a marketer from within. At the same time, the organization had created a strategic, customer-led vacuum, pointing to the fact that the company needs to make *The Shift*.

Several influencing factors foreshadow the environment in which a marketer can end up merely operating at the Tactician level versus thriving at the Leader or Visionary Marketer level. In our experience with numerous companies, we've seen that some



Figure I.2 Success Enablers

organizations are more aggressive or strategic in their belief about marketing's role, and others fall back on conventional norms. We have seen four success enablers that dictate the degree to which marketing's success across the four roles will flourish or flounder (Figure I.2):

- *Board and CEO disposition toward Marketing as visionary.* Some Board and CEO dispositions enable *The Shift*. If the Board or CEO starts with an operational or traditional quarter-to-quarter financial mind-set, the odds are against the company's agreeing to a more expansive marketer role at the Visionary level. However, the Board (or CEO) may be willing to lead with a greater customer orientation if their backgrounds are in that area of business. Brian Swette, former Chairman at Burger King and a former eBay and Procter & Gamble marketer, increased the odds that Burger King would welcome an expanded notion of Marketing: "When BK was in the foxhole, we talked about what parts of the organization were

required to have the absolute best and brightest staff, in a turn-around situation like ours, and Marketing rose to the top. We didn't compromise, and we recruited the best, gave Marketing the head count, the dollars, and the mandate to change the trajectory." As a result, through an increased focus on Marketing, Burger King has taken off again after several underperforming years.

- *Organizational history and industry dynamics.* Dynamics can enable or inhibit. If the organization, or the industry as a whole, has not appreciated or experienced the value of marketing, then a different kind of challenge is presented to the aspiring senior marketer. Pam Butcher, currently Vice President and General Manager for the Adhesives and Sealants Business at The Dow Chemical Company and Dow's former Corporate Vice President of Marketing and Sales, states, "Dow is traditionally known as an operationally excellent company—science and technology based—but lacking the desired level of customer intimacy. I was named to lead Marketing to really restructure Marketing within the organization. While we are considered to be the best in marketing within the chemical industry, we are not where we want to be relative to leaders in other industries. We are still in our infancy across Dow relative to marketing but beginning to make some significant progress." The dynamics of both the organization and the category or industry it competes in often dictates how steep the climb will be for an aspiring marketer eyeing a more visionary profile.

- *Previous marketing success within the organization.* Success is enabled by the company's previous marketing success or constrained by the lack thereof. Five years ago, Sean Burke, former CMO of GE Healthcare's Diagnostic Imaging Business and current CMO of GE Healthcare, Americas, working without a dedicated marketing budget, muscled his way into creating the business's first true customer segmentation; he knew that without deep customer insight, the business would never hit its growth aspirations. With minimal resources, he led the creation of a robust segmentation of one of the business lines. Showing the business line leaders growth opportunities,

as well as savings opportunities due to inefficiencies in how marketing dollars were being allocated across the business, earned him credibility. Burke's success has allowed marketing to continue to be viewed as a true growth catalyst for the company.

- *The expertise, experience, track record, and humility of the individual marketer.* The likelihood of success of the marketer as growth champion also depends on the individual's background and balance of modesty and tenacity.

Consider this story. A few years ago, a major Fortune 500 technology solutions provider brought in its first high-profile marketing executive, partly to address a board concern about the lack of marketing muscle at the company and partly to help drive new leads. This high-profile executive, with a CPG background, came into the company demanding a CMO title instead of the Vice President of Marketing title offered. Within months on the job, he had fired and hired new agencies and tactical partners to redo the logo, the color scheme, and the advertising. In addition, this CMO butted heads with the CEO and the Senior Vice President of Sales, as well as several Board members. Although a few memorable ads were created during his tenure and the color palettes are now standardized throughout the organization, this CMO drove no noticeable top-line value to the organization. In addition, he burned bridges across the C-suite and became famous for everything that the twenty-six-month-tenured CMO usually becomes famous for: no demonstrable value added (and when he was subsequently let go, he walked off with an exit package that left everyone with a bad taste).

Compare that example to the approach Yvonne LaPenotiere took when she moved into her CMO role at Carlson Hotels Worldwide, ultimately becoming the President of the largest operating unit and, culminating her career at the company, running all demand generation as Global Brand Officer. She believes her success stems from the

fact that she spent the first year driving overall corporate strategy within the company:

I came in with credibility tied to my CPG background and having run a P&L before. Early on, I forced uncomfortable conversations about what we wanted to become three to five years out from a brand and strategy perspective. I made sure I showed some early wins (some segments that were not being picked off by the competition), and I built a dialogue with both internal and external operators. Most important, this was never about marketing first; it was about strategy first. Also, I never underestimated how little I knew about the industry at first and how much I needed to partner with others to get to a win-win for the organization.

LaPenotiere clearly knew her strengths and weaknesses and showed respect and humility to the rest of the organization. She recognized her liabilities as an outsider but also leveraged her rich experience and expertise from previous roles. Ironically, her outsider humility quickly paved the path forward, and she became one of the most valued insiders as she helped drive RevPAR (the hotel benchmark for revenue per average room) up by ten points.

One indicator of your potential success in making *The Shift* is where you reside on the continuums in Figure I.2 (p. 10). Another important indicator will be the archetype of your organization.

Can You Shift? Look First at Your Marketing Organization Archetype

The CEO and Board's disposition to Marketing is a powerful enabler or disabler of *The Shift*. As such, to truly understand the potential for a marketer to move from Tactician to Visionary within your company, you need to identify your marketing organization archetype.

Every organization has one. The five described here embody the range of marketing profiles in existence today; your current or prospective organization will most likely align with one of them. Answering the disposition question will help reveal how difficult it will be to shift your profile, as well as the steps you should take to make *The Shift*—and the challenges you might face in doing so.

Archetype I: The Instinctive Marketer's Organization

When a company's founder is an instinctive marketer, it often enjoys phenomenal success. This archetype is exemplified by instinctive marketers such as Howard Schultz of Starbucks, Michael Dell of Dell Computers, Steve Jobs of Apple, Arthur Blank of The Home Depot, Martha Stewart of Martha Stewart Living Omnimedia, Charles Schwab of Charles Schwab Corporation, and Phil Knight of Nike. Each came up with a great, single idea and persevered against the greatest of odds to create world-class, customer-led organizations that disrupted their existing categories through new products, services, or customer experiences.

Interestingly, all of these CEOs tried to turn their companies over to another CEO, often with a financially oriented, operational mind-set. The failure of follow-up CEOs to push their companies to the next level of growth is as legendary as the lives of their founders. In the recent past, we can think of Arthur Blank ceding control to Bob Nardelli at The Home Depot and Steve Jobs's handing off to John Sculley. Because these new CEOs came in with a cost-oriented, operational focus, the organizations lost the passion and inspiration that came from the founders. Eventually many of these legendary CEOs, like Steve Jobs, Howard Schultz, and Michael Dell, came back to run, inspire, innovate, and transform their companies a second time, seeking to add to their market leadership position and ultimately their overall legacy as true visionaries. Only time will tell whether all of these marketing and business legends are able to reclaim their companies' former status . . . and what the impact will be on their own legacies.

Archetype I companies never think about whether Marketing is important to growth. They just know it is. More important, they prove that company leaders can be visionary idea and marketing leaders and great executors simultaneously. To demonstrate that the instinctive phenomenon is not a thing of the past, consider Zappos, a newer company that fits this archetype. CEO Tony Hsieh uses any opportunity to go on record to say that his company is a “service company that happens to sell shoes and clothes” and to inspire the rest of his organization. He spends money on improving the customer experience and ensuring he maintains an inspired culture before he’ll spend money on traditional marketing and branding vehicles. Hsieh knows what the brand needs to stand for and continues to build brand equity with a laser focus on the customer and employee base, realizing that “everything else will fall out from there.”

Although you may never own the label of Instinctive Marketer, you can borrow many of the concepts that make Instinctive Marketers and their organizations so successful: dogmatic belief in the customer; commitment to an original, disruptive vision; continuous innovation and improvement; cultural leadership; and a support group made up of leaders aligned with your own set of values.

Implications of an Instinctive Marketer’s Organization. Perhaps you’d like to jump into an Instinctive Marketer’s Organization. Be forewarned, though, that these CEOs will have strong, preconceived notions of their brand and what role Marketing should play, and they often get directly involved in the tactics. Your chance to make your mark will be directly tied to the strength and evolution of your relationship with an Instinctive Marketer CEO. He or she will be your harshest critic and biggest fan, possibly at the same time.

Archetype II: The High-Powered Marketing Organization

These organizations view Marketing and strategic leadership as one and the same. Stereotypically found within classic CPG companies,

the High-Powered Marketing Organization generally arrives at the same result from two different starting points.

One starting point may be that the company's CEO is a former marketing star. This is best exemplified by Meg Whitman, formerly of eBay, A. G. Lafley of Procter & Gamble, Bob Harris of LendingTree.com, and Tom Long of Miller. Because many of these stars' original companies were rooted in classic CPG environments, these leaders started out as brand, category, or divisional managers and understood that brand management and business management were one and the same—tied to successfully running a business and delivering the numbers. These senior marketers have always been seen as a natural part of their respective leadership teams, regardless of where they have been employed. Cammie Dunaway, another Visionary Marketer, has an expansive CMO position at Nintendo, as she did at Yahoo! and as she did before that when she ran a major division at Frito-Lay, managing volume and profit growth for a \$3.5 billion portfolio. Marketing executives like Dunaway work hand-in-hand with the CEO, executive team, and often the Board, always entering the conversation with a strategic, customer-first mind-set. Based on others previously discussed with her same pedigree, perhaps Dunaway is destined to play a CEO role.

Another, more recent starting point may be that the company's CMO previously ran a P&L. This newer phenomenon may represent a blueprint for the future. Dan Henson ran Sales for GE Commercial Finance before becoming CMO of GE Corporate and, finally, President and CEO of GE Capital Solutions. Similarly, Ranjana Clark, a twenty-year Wachovia star, was plucked from running the Treasury Business to become Wachovia's CMO. In discussing why she moved from line to Marketing, Clark explains:

Our CEO stretched the marketing responsibilities and the vision of Marketing to include Insight and Innovation, Global Branding, Customer Experience and Loyalty, Marketing Infrastructure, and E-Commerce,

all built on the discipline of marketing excellence. He wanted to bring in an insider for the CMO role, someone who was a critical thinker, knew the company and culture and the mind-set of our businesses.

Implications of a High-Powered Marketing Organization. The organizational expectations here are high. A strategic mind-set is the conversation starter; being a driver of growth is expected. These are the companies everyone writes about. Marketing as a core, strategic asset is the norm, not the exception. These marketers are generally immune from the CMO “26-month tenure affliction.” In fact, they are on most headhunters’ lists as candidates for future high-profile Marketing and CEO positions.

Archetype III: The Aspiring Marketing Organization

Rediscovering or discovering for the first time, the power of Marketing, Aspiring Marketing Organizations often receive Board-level approval to ratchet up investments and look for the right leader to help transform the organization. Marketing is often a strategic driver for future success, and finding the right individual is vital.

Burger King is a good example of an Aspiring Marketing Organization. Brian Swette, its former chairman, looked at Marketing as a strategic imperative that the Board and CEO had to get right. He explained, “We brought in Russ Klein as the CMO, and Russ took this charter seriously.” Swette likes to tell the story:

Russ’s marketing group clearly understood that we were going through the phase of getting the company going in the right direction after several years of decline. They did anthropological work (into our core customers’ likes and dislikes) that went against trends. Based on this work, they created an innovation group that drove a lot of great products and new revenue streams.

Eventually Burger King Corporation and Klein began to make *The Shift* toward becoming a High-Powered Marketing Organization, one in which the marketing function, which they'd always had, was now the growth champion too.

Like Klein and Burger King, many others in the Aspiring Marketing Organization archetype are given more responsibility and organization-wide accountability. This is exemplified by James Farley at Ford, who demanded responsibility for Sales and Marketing in the United States to be in the same pressure cooker as his peers, as well as Rob Malcolm from Diageo, who earned the title of President of Global Marketing, Sales, and Innovation.

In making Marketing a strategic imperative, the Board and CEO of Aspiring Marketing Organizations bring in the best talent, supported with the right level of resources, to lead their organization on a customer-inspired journey. While an Aspiring Marketing Organization today, Walmart is well on its way to becoming a High-Powered Marketing Organization, with Quinn at the marketing helm. As Quinn noted, "If other CMOs knew how much Walmart's Board and executive team were committed to deepening its marketing commitment, I might have had to fight harder for the job."

Implications of the Aspiring Marketing Organization. These organizations provide the greatest number of stretch opportunities for the marketer, as Quinn has realized. Of his company, he admits:

Walmart was not a strong customer-centric company, but was clearly operationally oriented. After years of studying the customer, we had the courage to boldly drive initiatives. We argued that we knew the customer better than at any other time in Walmart's history. This knowledge gave us the power to define a road map for growth: answering the key questions of which customers to make our focus and what we had to do to serve

them better. We could see the intersection between what shoppers hired us to do and the capabilities of our company. More important in the short term, we began to kill bad ideas. The company was still approving programs that rated a 5 out of 10 by customers. With our customer knowledge, we could make certain that we only focused on programs rating 9 out of 10.

Like Walmart, other Aspiring Marketing Organizations give their marketers a fairly wide playing field, as well as a longer time frame in which to achieve expected results and the right amount of resources to support success. They can prove to be among the best workplaces in which an aspiring marketer can make his or her mark.

At the same time, of course, these organizations also have the highest expectations and yield the highest risk-return quotient. The Board is watching, the CEO is as accountable for success as is the marketer, and *Advertising Age* is watching closely to see if it should be running a new headline story about CMO attrition anytime soon.

Archetype IV: The Disciplined Marketing Function

As *disciplined* implies, a strong marketer, determined to drive a marketing-led transformation, leads marketing for these organizations. Often the marketer will unleash the power of marketing in a company without a tradition of marketing prowess. Here, the marketer can truly make a mark. When Ruth Fornell ran marketing at Teradata from 2000 to 2003, she helped transform the organization from a sales-led to a customer-led broader-platform organization. Eventually Teradata went from being a successful business unit of NCR (run at the time by Mark Hurd, current CEO of HP) to an incredibly successful spin-off initial public offering tied to its business and brand strength.

Despite the initial lack of marketing acumen, many of these companies realize that Marketing is critical for future growth. As a result, they often look to a marketer to help figure out exactly what

the role can become, largely based on the marketer's experience. This senior marketer will drive the marketing agenda, largely from scratch. These marketers will have to frame everything for their respective organizations, from the exact nature of the CMO job description, to the CMO's accountabilities, to the parameters for measuring success.

Not surprisingly, this archetype is often found in sales-led organizations or older-line business-to-business manufacturing and industrial companies that grasp the need for a high-profile, disciplined marketer to lead them on a marketing journey, without exactly knowing where they are going. Pam Butcher was brought into a new corporate marketing role for old-line Dow to shake things up. Even as Butcher has moved out of marketing into a business unit leadership position, many of the recommendations she made in her previous role for advancing marketing are being adopted—clearly a sign of success.

Butcher truly could carve out her own way since this was a new role. As the marketing leader, she could experiment and go where no other Dow marketer had ever gone before. Butcher began to find success in an unlikely place:

The R&D leaders really get Marketing. Marketing is their license to operate. We now tag-team with R&D to define needs and discuss and prioritize new product opportunities. Our motto is that "Marketing times Technology drives Innovation and Growth." You can't just have Marketing; you also need Technology for the differentiation. We operate as "two in a box"; Marketing and R&D align, and we agree on what needs to be worked on.

Implications of the Disciplined Marketing Function. This archetype, more than any other one, depends on the personality, talent, and tenacity of the leader. The marketer must take on the

characteristics of successful growth-oriented marketers, as well as the roles of teacher, leader, “tour guide,” and inspirer.

Archetype V: The Old School Marketing Function

In the Old School archetype, the lead marketer is stuck in the traditional marketing role. Often he or she chooses to define marketing’s value and success in terms of the old “tagline/logo redo” effort. Ultimately this archetype will most likely continue to reinforce the company’s narrow definition of Marketing and thus will be seen as “a success” because the organization gets exactly what it asks for: a strong Marketing Tactician.

Implications of the Old School Marketing Function. If tactical marketing communication execution is seen as a win-win, this may work for this company and the marketer. The Visionary Marketer can never win in this company, regardless of how hard he or she pushes, because the organization has been normed into an old-school way of thinking about Marketing. Only a complete organizational overhaul can change this entrenched point of view.

Table I.1 summarizes the archetypes.

Archetypes and Success Enablers Combine to Show the Best

By integrating your judgments about your company’s enablers and archetype, you can get a glimpse of your potential: the level of marketing success you are likely to reach, as well as the type of marketing leadership required to reach each level of success (Table I.2). You can also begin to surface hypotheses to address questions that may arise where different archetypes prevail—for example:

“Can the marketer in Archetype IV shift his organization’s marketing perspective based on lessons learned from the other marketing archetypes?”

Table I.1 Organizational Archetypes

Archetype	Characteristics	Implications for Head of Marketing
Archetype I: Instinctive Marketer's Organization	<p>Organization is driven by the original marketer</p> <p>Marketing is defined by the original vision of the Visionary CEO</p> <p>Dogmatic belief in the customer</p>	<p>Difficult to break free of expectations set by Visionary CEO</p> <p>Must have a positive relationship with Visionary CEO</p>
Archetype II: High-Powered Marketing Organization	<p>Marketing and strategic leadership are equally valued</p> <p>CEO is a former or established marketer, or CMO formally ran a P&L</p>	<p>Expected to have strategic /P&L conversations</p> <p>Drive growth within the organization</p>
Archetype III: Aspiring Marketing Organization	<p>Organization discovered or rediscovered the power of marketing recently</p> <p>The Board and CEO have prioritized Marketing as a strategic imperative with Board approval and resources</p>	<p>Given a wide playing field yet narrow time frame to achieve results</p> <p>Under strict watch to meet expectations</p>
Archetype IV: Disciplined Marketing Function	<p>Marketing function is driven by a strong, individual marketer who is determined to lead change</p> <p>Marketing is new to the organization</p>	<p>Must teach and lead the organization</p>
Archetype V: Old School Marketing Function	<p>Narrow definition of Marketing, defined by traditional marketing communication responsibilities</p>	<p>Responsible for traditional marketing communications tactics</p> <p>Not likely to elevate role beyond these responsibilities</p>

“What can marketers in Archetype III do to succeed and help their companies turn into Archetype I or II companies?”

“Can a marketer in Archetype I really succeed given the omnipresence of the Instinctive Marketing Leader within the organization?”

The answer to these questions? “Maybe.”

Even with this transparency into what your success profile might be, something is missing from this discussion—something that will guarantee that the marketing profile will forever shift and something that will help to turbocharge the elevation of Marketer as Tactician to marketer as Visionary, possibly cutting through all the archetypes.

There are five shifts that will change the marketing dialogue forever and entrench the term *Visionary Marketer* into the marketing lexicon for good. These shifts, as previously surfaced, include:

- *Shift One: From creating marketing strategies to driving business impact.* Chapter One discusses the importance of elevating the marketing dialogue to a strategic dialogue, inspired by the organization’s longer-term goal and objectives. It also suggests several strategies that Visionary Marketers can employ immediately to alter the dialogue permanently.
- *Shift Two: From controlling the message to galvanizing your network.* Chapter Two discusses the importance of recognizing that controlling the customer experience and perceptions of your brand is no longer the end game for marketers. Visionary Marketers recognize that customers reside within a complex web of influencers. The objective now is to control what you can and influence all else.
- *Shift Three: From incremental improvements to pervasive innovation.* Chapter Three explores how Visionary

Table I.2 Leadership Profiles

	Archetype I: Instinctive Marketer's Organization	Archetype II: High-Powered Marketing Organization	Archetype III: Aspiring Marketing Organization	Archetype IV: Disciplined Marketing Function	Archetype V: Old School Marketing Function
Success Enablers	CEO/Board is in full support; original marketer is often the founder or CEO who has defined the brand and role of marketing for the company	CEO/Board is in full support, as Marketing and strategic leadership are valued the same	CEO/Board has recently discovered marketing and has prioritized marketing as a strategic initiative	CEO/Board sees the potential for Marketing to contribute to growth but relies on the marketer to define that role	CEO/Board has a historical mind-set and limits the definition of marketing to traditional marketing communication role
	Organizational history/industry dynamics	Organization embraces Marketing and its role in strategic discussions	Organization is aware of the value of Marketing and is actively seeking the best marketer for the role	Organization is aware of the value of Marketing but does not know how to define the role	The organization or the industry (or both) has yet to see the value that Marketing can add

Success Enablers						
Previous Marketing success	Organization has seen the value of Marketing in its bottom-line results	Organization has seen the value of Marketing in its bottom-line results	Organization has led successes in other companies and is ready to invest its resources	Organization has yet to see robust results from marketing efforts but is open to a broader role	Organization has yet to see bottom-line results from marketing efforts outside marketing communication results	
Individual marketer traits	Strategic Visionary Influencer Risk taker	Strategic Visionary Influencer Risk taker	Collaborator Pragmatic Resourceful	Collaborator Resourceful Results oriented	Results oriented Task oriented Short-term mind-set	
Most probable leadership profile	Visionary: leads strategic growth discussions; however, may still need final approval by founder/CEO	Visionary: leads strategic growth discussions, which is in line with CEO/board expectations	Leader: serves up strategic issues and opportunities since Marketing is prioritized as a strategic initiative	Facilitator: develops a common language around brand and facilitates discussions around best practices	Tactician: focuses on traditional marketing communication responsibilities, which is in line with the CEO/board expectations	

Marketers can help lead their organization's desire to continuously innovate across all aspects of the business, leveraging all internal and external assets on an ongoing basis and keeping the business fresh and relevant in the minds of all customers and influencers.

- *Shift Four: From managing marketing investments to inspiring marketing excellence.* Chapter Four looks at how Visionary Marketers have to be focused on maximizing their investments across all of Philip Kotler's 4 P's of Marketing, appropriately dialing up and down all investments made to win over customers' hearts and minds.
- *Shift Five: From an operational focus to a relentless customer focus.* Chapter Five discusses how Visionary Marketers can inspire their organizations to lead, manage, and influence with the customer at the center of their organization's universe—in effect, disregarding traditional organizational silos and history.

Each of the five shifts is powerful and game changing for marketers and their organizations. Taken together, these five shifts provide an organization with a source of competitive advantage that may become insurmountable for the competition.

THE FIRST SHIFT

From Creating Marketing Strategies to Driving Business Impact

Ranjana Clark, former CMO at Wachovia and now Head, Wholesale Customer Experience Group at Wells Fargo, shared her story about her realization that a shift was going to occur at the bank. She knew that the company needed Marketing to play more of a strategic role. But what did that mean?

My first charge was not to freshen up the brand or build a new campaign. I realized then and there that my charter would be different from that of my predecessors and that I was going to be counted on to be one of the architects of business strategy for Wachovia.

Ultimately Clark made *The Shift* to business impact, pulling out all of the stops to become a strategic architect for Wachovia. How did she make this shift—and how can you?

She began in a way that you as an aspiring Visionary Marketer can learn from. By working your way through a definable set of

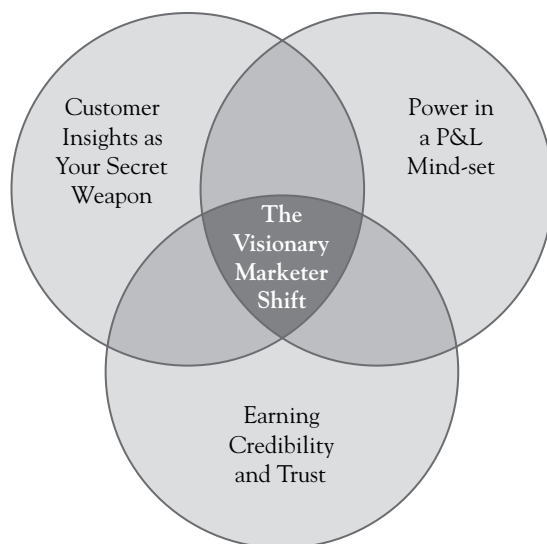


Figure 1.1 The First Shift

actions, with an awareness of your organization’s receptivity to change, you can develop the mind-set, track record, and capabilities necessary to prove your abilities to tackle business strategy—not just marketing strategies—and drive business impact. Three critical elements are needed to start to make this shift from creating marketing strategies to driving business impact: leveraging customer insights as your secret weapon, always operating with a profit-and-loss mind-set, and earning organization-wide credibility and trust (Figure 1.1).

Insights: Your Secret Weapon

In order to make this power shift toward driving the growth agenda, most of the senior marketers interviewed for this book said they believed they benefited from knowledge they had that no one else in their organization understood. “Our secret weapon,” Barry Judge, CMO of Best Buy, called it. “Customer insights are used as a catalyst for a marketing revolution.” Fully owning this secret weapon means both knowing your customer better than any other

executive *and* consistently translating this knowledge into actionable consumer insights and in-market execution. You can wield this tool in every discussion and debate on strategy as well as tactics, and in the process, you will gain respect as well as an enhanced organizational profile.

At Staples, CMO Shira Goodman uses customer insights to drive decision making across every functional area, including nontraditional areas such as operations and merchandising. The powerful “hassle-free shopping” insight was translated into an enormously successful “easy” strategy that Goodman then used to collaborate with her peers and guide all aspects of the business. Customer knowledge and insights have changed how Staples is run, from advertising and communications messages to store layout and product assortment.

Stephen Quinn, CMO of Walmart, began from a similar base:

We knew early on that if we didn't start with the customer and enter into every strategic and tactical discussion grounded in customer insights, then we would not move the needle. This was tough, as Walmart had not been all that customer-centric, having made Operations the backbone of the company. Customer data and insights gave us courage and a convincing hand in determining what was fact and what was fiction. And it drove ideas for growth. For example, when we discovered that pharmacy customers routinely broke pills in half because they couldn't afford their full prescription, we developed the very successful \$4 prescription program. With knowledge, we had the power to define growth in a much more relevant way. The use of insights was more powerful than I had ever hoped it could have been at Walmart.

The importance of customer insight helped Barry Judge begin to make his mark on Best Buy. As he remembers, “They were having difficulty operationalizing the customer-centric

strategy . . . generating growth through a customer lens.” Judge stepped in because he had a “different point of view on growth” from anyone else in the company at that time. Once he harnessed the customer insights, he helped Best Buy develop “a unique perspective, looking across all of our segments and all of our product categories and all of our geographies. Instead of looking for product categories to add in or expand to, we are now always looking at the needs our consumers are trying to fulfill and what the benefit is that they can’t seem to get to.”

Bob Harris, now President of the LendingTree Exchange, concurs and has been able to reflect back to his own tenure as a marketing officer at LendingTree, The Coca-Cola Company, and elsewhere. Harris’s perspective is that the marketing leader needs to see new opportunities for growth based on customer insights . . . and needs to see that sooner than the CEO does. They must have a strong voice and sense of responsibility for providing deep knowledge and insight into making all major strategic decisions, from new products to acquisitions to new segments to pursue.

Based on their customer knowledge, marketers have an opportunity now to enhance their power. They can use this asset to reposition Marketing to drive enterprisewide growth and conduct customer-led strategic discussions and debates.

Of course, it isn’t easy to instill customer insight as an asset into an organization that is not predisposed to thinking about Marketing as the repository of customer insight. In some companies, customer insight teams are positioned as lower-level, analytically oriented teams reporting up to the marketing communication group, tied only to improving its tactical strategies. You will need to reposition these teams based on a new asset-oriented view of these insights.

As these examples suggest, Marketing at a minimum should become the repository, integrator, and ultimately disseminator of all proprietary and syndicated data, research, and tracking studies across the organization. The best CMOs turn this minimum

expectation into an insight machine, cutting through all of the data and reports that most others never read. In fact, no other function but Marketing comes closer to the customer, with a deep, intertwined perspective across all segments, needs states, geographies, and demographics. Visionary Marketers recognize they must not only provide the economic rationale for building a world-class insight team but also outline the economic opportunities tied to each of the insights they are bringing to the organization.

Just as these executives recognize that data without insights are meaningless, they also recognize that insights without economic perspective will not be valued. This reality leads to the need for a P&L mind-set.

Power in a P&L Mind-Set

Must you own a P&L to establish credibility and drive true peer-to-peer relationships, or can you develop a P&L mind-set without ever actually owning an income statement? I argue that you do not need to own a P&L in order to succeed. What really matters is that day in and day out, you consistently have a perspective and action orientation based on an understanding of how the company makes money, how investment decisions in one area impact others, and always bring a top- and bottom-line perspective to the decisions at hand. That is what we mean by a “P&L mind-set.”

Stephen Quinn at Walmart is emphatic that growth-oriented marketing leaders need a P&L mind-set, but they do not necessarily need to own one to have this mind-set. Quinn effectively articulates this difference between having a P&L mind-set versus actual P&L ownership:

In many packaged goods companies, the P&L is jointly shared, but there is a P&L for each brand, and the brand manager runs it. So I grew up with the belief that running a P&L is part of being a marketer. However, at the

time I was considering taking a position at Walmart, I read an article by brand marketing guru David Aaker [Vice Chairman of Prophet] about the average twenty-six-month tenure of CMOs. He predicted that P&L owners would continue to struggle. However, those who were freed up from running the P&L and allowed to truly focus on the customer could add so much more value to their company. Time spent on forecasts, financial planning, reporting systems, and the like could be allocated to becoming leaders of the customer inside their organization. From my perspective, the customer will always be more important than controlling the P&L, but without mastering the dynamics of the P&L, you will not have the credibility to initiate the types of conversations that you really need to grow the business.

Other CMOs embrace owning P&Ls as an important part of their job description. Nabil Shabshab of JohnsonDiversey, Becky Saeger of Charles Schwab, and Ann Lewnes of Adobe believe that owning a P&L is a natural extension of Marketing's go-to-market strategy, one that helps build growth credibility. Lewnes is passionate about this:

I own traditional marketing, and I also have P&L responsibility for the education segment, which is the largest vertical at Adobe, as well as the P&L for e-commerce. That puts me on the hook in a big way, and I am okay with that, as I think having P&L responsibility makes you more credible. More important, owning a P&L forces you to be more conversant in your own business, diffusing any complaints that Marketing just doesn't get it or doesn't have business acumen. Bottom line, you need to be able to understand the product and the customer in an

intimate way to be a credible resource for the business. Owning a P&L helps you get there.

Whether or not you've owned a P&L, it's most important to understand your organization's P&L, buy into the importance of the accountability level expected of those running the P&Ls, have the ability to drive profitable programs, and know how to help prioritize and drive success in the target customer segments that ultimately help to drive margin.

If you are still a Tactician or Facilitator Marketer, it's time you started to understand the need to adopt a different profile and mind-set in order to become a Visionary Marketer. By having a P&L mind-set, you will make it harder—nearly impossible—for your peers to dismiss you. They will see you permanently through a different lens that says “enterprisewide leader.”

As Dennis Cary, Chief Marketing and Customer Officer at United Airlines, put it, “A P&L orientation will always enhance the credibility and support you receive from your executive peers.” Cary explained how he shifted his own mind-set:

When I took this job, I didn't have as much accountability for revenue as my sales or revenue management peers. Having a commercial lens, using data and insights to build loyalty and attract new customers, was my mind-set. However, having customer needs tethered to a clear pathway for how these insights affect revenue, profitability, and ultimately shareholder value, it changes the conversation between Marketing and the rest of the organization, including the CFO, CEO, and Board of Directors, in a very healthy way. We are now more involved in every aspect of demand generation and top-line growth. In fact, my boss is the Chief Operating Officer, and Marketing is one of his primary enablers.

As a corollary to the P&L discussion, whichever side of ownership you and your company land on, the importance of understanding the language of, and collaborating with, the CFO cannot be underestimated. Beth Comstock of GE believes strongly that marketers must connect strategy and vision to financials and the P&L: “I am a fan of marketers partnering with the CFO. The CFO wants to grow and will be your best friend if they think you are helping them.”

This Visionary Marketer is clearly on to something. According to an article by B. Johnson in *Advertising Age*, “Survey Finds CFOs Skeptical of Their Own Firms’ ROI Claims,” six in ten financial executives believe their companies’ marketing departments have an inadequate understanding of financial controls, and seven in ten said their companies don’t use marketing inputs and forecasts in financial guidance to Wall Street or in public disclosures.

Yvonne LaPenotiere, of Carlson Hotels, combats this prejudice by starting a different type of dialogue—a strategic one:

Throughout our strategy development, my marketing team and I always tied our recommendations to a pretty rigorous business case and the commensurate financial results. Metrics such as revenue per average room index [RevPAR] was the language of our CFO and CEO, and any other measure or metric-like language would never have passed the C-suite test. We engaged them in their language, not traditional marketing-speak.

At the end of the day, marketers who have made *The Shift* will consistently make sure Marketing is contributing to the P&L. They will recommend and push marketing programs and efforts that help the business, and they will want their performance metrics and bonus payouts tied to business performance measurements, just like any other senior executive. Steve Meyer of Dell Services says Dell Marketing is “incented on business, return-on-investment-type

metrics.” LaPenotiere said that when she was with Carlson, “70% of her bonus was based on the financial results of Carlson Hotels Worldwide”—the same as the CEO.

With these first two pieces in place—strategic insights and a P&L mind-set—you will have begun to redefine the role of Marketing within the organization and transform Marketing from not just enabling growth through world-class marketing but driving it. You will become one of the true reasons to believe within the organization and you will have successfully started on the road to earning organizational credibility and trust.

Cementing the First Shift: Earning Organizational Credibility and Trust

Now that you’re ready to become a marketing leader, there is no better advice than that of Adam Stotsky, President of NBC Entertainment Marketing and former Senior Vice President of Marketing for the Sci-Fi Channel. Stotsky has become a marketing leader by virtue of his success in driving his company’s growth agenda. He speaks from experience:

The only way marketers are going to get that seat at the [CEO] table is by building and earning credibility and trust. They need to understand the totality of the business, have a deeply informed opinion, and look at different ways of adding value beyond the sphere of marketing. Far too many CMOs come to the role with only knowledge about communications and advertising. Credibility and trust are built through in-depth [knowledge] throughout the value chain—from the customer to product development to the supply chain and everything in between.

In some ways, cultivating this new mind-set runs against the grain of most marketers. You will have to succeed at basic

marketing communication tactics *and* show muscle in resolving complex business issues. You must unemotionally analyze your budget to make trade-offs within the context of the goals of the overall organization. At the same time, you'll have to be comfortable in driving or codriving all of the elements of the traditional purchase funnel, from awareness through loyalty, incorporating all of Phil Kotler's 4 P's.

For the first time within many organizations, marketing's play-book will include objectively making trade-offs on whether the company should initiate a print campaign, hire more sales representatives, invest in greater innovation efforts, or expand into a new geography.

Leveraging customer insights and having a P&L mind-set will start the transformation. Visionary Marketers have used these weapons wisely to earn organization-wide credibility and trust, cementing their position with the broader leadership team.

Becky Saeger agrees that this is the best way to get where you want to go: "I had to run a strong team, grow the business, and show results. If you are on the team solely as a marketer, then you will never be viewed as a critical strategic player unless you have that credibility and trust." Bob Harris put it this way: "I have always tried to be viewed as someone who can take strategy and execute against it. The credibility comes from execution so that you are not perceived as coming up with only strategy or only execution. You can do both. You can integrate insights from the marketplace into in-market strategies and tactics, which gave me more credibility and, in turn, helped me build trust throughout the organization."

Obviously the gap between where you are today and building credibility and trust tomorrow can be quite wide depending on your company's archetype and your position on the Visionary Marketer spectrum—like having the right mind-set, skill set, strategic awareness, and desire to address the challenge head on. Visionary

Marketers agree that in the quest to garner credibility and trust, there are four success factors to help change the dialogue and shift marketing's overall profile:

1. *Understand the business inside and out.* “Become” an operator: spend considerable time in the field with both employees and customers, and understand the inner workings of every functional area and how they make money. The deeper your understanding is of the profit pools from an internal and external perspective, the more strategic you will appear.
2. *Conduct any business dialogue from a strategic, not a tactical or even marketing, perspective.* Be ready to demonstrate precisely how your ideas will enhance and drive specific growth imperatives.
3. *Form the right alliances.* Recognize that strong Sales, Finance, Human Resources, Information Technology, and business unit relations can help to raise your credibility.
4. *Search for small wins; put skin in the game.* Both Best Buy and Carlson have diverted traditional marketing funds into enhancing the customer and employee experiences when those were determined to have the greatest impact on business results.

The Visionary Marketers we spoke with were quick to stress the importance of these, with none more important than the obvious, yet not so easy, “Understand the business inside and out.”

Steve Meyer of Dell was clear that there are definite boundaries on a marketers' impact if one stays in the insular realm of outbound communications. Tom O'Toole's experience at Hyatt reinforced this perspective. As the former CMO and CIO of Hyatt said, “My personal credibility grew enormously when I had a deep understanding of the business, how we made money, who our customers and operators were. This dramatically changed the dialogue.”

Barry Judge makes an important distinction between the traditional marketing mind-set and that of the Visionary Marketer:

Once you understand the business and how you make money, you will start to become immune from grandstanding for what Marketing just does. You will start labeling your budget as a growth budget—and not an advertising or marketing communication budget. You will assert that you will deploy those dollars to drive the business—by pilot testing, doing more training, putting up new stores, killing initiatives. I put our money where we have the best chance of improving the overall business.

What Meyer, O'Toole, and Judge are speaking about is earning the credibility and confidence a marketer must have to engage in a more growth-oriented dialogue about the business. For each, the ability to start to engage at this level started with an understanding of the organization from the bottom up, inside and out. Each spent time in the field “working the registers,” understanding the economics, and having well-rounded discussions about what is best for the company and how to consistently balance the need for short- and long-term success.

A case study on the following page brings all of these elements together: insights, P&L mind-set, credibility, and trust.

How to Set the Growth Agenda

“Any strong head of marketing wants to own the growth agenda,” says Steve Meyer, “exploring where we have the best market opportunities, where we have permission to play, and how we can win.” If you buy the premise of *The Shift*, then you most likely buy Meyer’s words. You know that in every company, Marketing must earn the right to be at the strategy table and help set, or own, the growth agenda. This rite of passage extends from proving you can

A Case Study: Shift from Creating Marketing Strategies to Driving Business Impact

Historically Wachovia viewed customer knowledge as a marketing communications asset—something without significant strategic value. But during her tenure as CMO, Ranjana Clark changed this by elevating the perceived value of Marketing. She recalls, “Our ultimate goal was to create an insight-driven culture. The Marketing Division needed to become the funnel for taking all the external information and knowledge, along with our own experiences and observations, [and] turn all of that into customer insights that could help drive strategic decisions.”

Clark accomplished this goal by creating three different marketing teams, or “pods”:

One pod was business-facing, delivering marketing to our different lines of businesses.

The second pod was called Marketing Centers of Excellence. Within this second pod, there were three areas of focus:

- Insight and innovation (customer analytics, targeting). We took all of the insights and drove them into business strategies and executional programs. It also included innovation as a small piece. We didn’t feel [that] innovation could be driven centrally, but we certainly knew we could be an innovation catalyst through our insights.
- Global branding—traditional elements such as advertising, media, sponsorships, brand management. This is still important to our business but could not define Marketing on its own.
- Customer experience and loyalty. Since our brand is the experience you are delivering at different customer touch points, we wanted to make sure that we were both tracking the touch points and coming up with different experiences to increase loyalty.

The third pod was marketing infrastructure. Marketing excellence is what we do with all of the information we gather on our clients, and the infrastructure is how we actually get the data. So much of this is increasingly becoming online, so e-commerce became part of our sphere of responsibility.

The reality is that we restructured the marketing group and created this three-pod structure to mirror our strategy. In my first sixty days in this position, we developed the marketing and business vision and strategy. We wanted to be the industry leader in innovation, brand differentiation, and loyalty. When we set that vision, we knew the structure needed to follow.

execute the basics flawlessly; to earning respect and trust from your peers for the depth of customer insights you bring to the table; to gaining credibility with large and small marketing wins; to being seen as a visionary, risk taker but not as an isolationist.

To earn that seat at the C-table, you will need to spend years within the business or in similar roles in other businesses, or, as Pam Butcher from Dow says, spend a significant amount of time with your customers: “A single year engaging with customers equals a lifetime of other types of learning.”

Once you’re at the table, you are likely to wonder:

“What role should I play?”

“How can I add the right amount of value to the organization without stepping on toes?”

“What role do the Board and CEO consider the most helpful in driving the organization forward?”

The best marketers know that together, the Visionary Marketer, the CEO, and the Board will ultimately determine what role they see Marketing playing in setting the growth agenda.

Should Marketing own the growth agenda? A range of opinions on this question came from the interviews. Russ Klein of Burger King Corporation may offer a rare point of clarity in the debate. His role, in effect, is to be Chief Growth Officer. He also “believes the premise of [this] book is being lived at Burger King Corporation.”

Klein sees himself as a true partner with the CEO, John Chidsey. His expansive purview gives his team and him the stature and recognition to support broad-based growth. Not coincidentally, like all other officers in the company, Klein receives a bonus based on EBITDA (earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation, and amortization) goals and, thus, is motivated to constantly think about cash flow drivers and company performance, both within and outside a traditional marketing lens.

Bob Harris has moved in this direction at LendingTree:

The buck stops with the CEO. However, the marketing leader should be part of the CEO’s inner circle, with a strong voice and sense of responsibility for the knowledge and input required to make key strategic decisions based on customer insights. In the end, marketers should see the big growth opportunities sooner than the rest of the organization, including the CEO, with an eye on what the company should do to be relevant in the future. The CEO needs someone like this because the CEO has too many other tasks on which to focus, both near-in and further-out.

Do Harris and Klein reflect a trend? It depends on your point of view. Meyer observed that “there appears to be a strong movement within many CEO and Board ranks, tied to wanting stronger marketing insight in strategy. . . . While Marketing might not lead the growth agenda alone, it definitely should be a co-conspirator.”

Becky Saeger truly believes in the need for marketers to make a shift by changing their profile and becoming much more engaged

in strategic discussions. However, she is also quick to add that she thinks complete ownership of the growth agenda takes it too far:

At Schwab, you can't rely on one person. Sometimes I read this stuff about making the CMO the Chief Growth Officer, and my strong belief is that you need to have a management team in place that can own growth together. It is the same debate that CMOs will often wrongly get entangled in by saying they own the brand. They can't own the brand alone and manage it any more than a marketer should own the growth agenda alone.

To Saeger's point, it would be foolhardy to assume Marketing should be the primary or singular engineer of growth, exclusive to other core drivers of the business, such as the business unit and functional heads. Companies live and die tied to the quality of their offerings, the services surrounding those offerings, the market conditions, and the successful execution of their strategy. That's the reason that many of the marketers interviewed for this book had a visceral aversion to the idea of becoming the sole owner of the growth agenda or the singular co-conspirator alongside the CEO.

Regardless of which of these perspectives you adopt, the ownership for growth has to be shared across the organization, and the Visionary Marketer needs to be a core facilitator of this co-owned growth perspective in the organization. As one CMO aptly put it, "I would be fearful of marketers owning the growth agenda on their own, as it would totally undermine the idea that you live and die with the success of your executive team. Similar to sports, where it is rare for the Most Valuable Player to come from a last-place team, it is rare for a strong marketer in a successful company to be seen as the singular growth partner for the CEO."

If you want to be part of the growth agenda, your next job will be to figure out how best to enter the strategic dialogue.

Aligning Business and Marketing Strategies

You cannot join the growth agenda discussion unless you have something to contribute. The Visionary Marketers interviewed for this book discussed a variety of avenues and conversation starters by which Marketing can credibly open the door and make the most of the opportunity. Remember, you are trying to go where few marketers have gone in the past.

To this point, research has proven that Marketing does not ordinarily speak this growth language, nor does it come naturally to most marketers. A recent study conducted by the Association of National Advertisers/Booz Allen found a significant misalignment between the priorities of chief executives and those of their Chief Marketing Officers. The study showed that while CEOs continue to focus on top- and bottom-line growth and operational efficiencies, CMOs listed four out of their top five priorities as grounded in tactical goals, such as setting global branding guidelines and standards. The study basically concluded that many marketers continued to drift further from influence and, ultimately, the CEO.

This gap was revealed also in Prophet's recent *State of Marketing Study* in which marketers acknowledged that they continue to play a minimal role in the areas of the business that most closely touch the customer—the ones considered integral to continued business growth. As a result, and in order to become part of the growth discussion, there needs to be a realignment, or a first-time alignment, of business strategy and marketing strategy.

If you accept the observation that business strategies and plans and marketing strategies and plans do not often align then you will likely also agree that for marketing to help ultimately drive business impact, it needs to work backward, beginning by aligning growth and marketing objectives. In other words, start with the longer-term goal in mind first and then work back to what that means from a marketing strategy and planning perspective. This is new territory for most marketers, who rarely set their marketing objectives by

working backward from macro business objectives like building a presence in China or raising customer retention rates by 20%.

More often than not, marketing strategies and budgets are built and allocated based on a percentage of sales and an increase of x% over last year's budget. As such, most marketers work on a go-forward basis, starting the dialogue around this question: "What do we, as marketers, want to get done next fiscal year, based on what we accomplished last year?" They rarely connect their ideas with the goals housed in the longer-term growth strategy.

Once the disconnect is discovered, usually after the fiscal year has started, marketing executives often scramble to shift spending and strategy to align more closely with the business strategy and objectives, attempting to get air cover. So they respond like this: "Oh, you want to build a presence in China this year? Then let me shift some of my brand and marketing dollars to China." The usual result is that although dollars and priorities may shift, Marketing's reputation of being disconnected from the business gets solidified. By contrast, working backward sends a clear change signal to peers, the CEO, and the Board that your marketing strategy and commensurate plans, activities, and tactics will be directly tied to the growth agenda and priorities.

Capturing the CEO's Imagination

By connecting Marketing to corporate strategy, marketers can capture the imagination of the C-suite. Many CEOs have a narrow idea about what Marketing should do, and therefore would not consider marketers to be part of the strategic dialogue. As we discuss throughout this book, this presents a great opportunity for marketers to step up.

Ranjana Clark did just that as Wachovia CMO, engaging the CEO and C-suite in a much broader strategic dialogue—most likely because that is where she came from prior to taking the CMO position:

My team brought in fresh ideas of what Marketing could become by leading a strategic dialogue to suggest aligning

corporate-marketing and corporate-strategic objectives, as well as becoming a leader in the more pervasive and broader dialogue at the corporate strategy level. We proved that Marketing could step up and use consumer insights, competitive intelligence, and its broader understanding of the business to drive the dialogue on what the strategic priorities should be.

As you think about engaging your CEO and C-suite in a broader strategic dialogue, you should consider your areas of expertise, the unique knowledge you bring to the table, and, most important, the type of dialogue in which the CEO engages at the Board level, which generally revolves around five macro objectives:

- Increasing shareholder value
- Driving smart and efficient growth
- Improving operational efficiency
- Inspiring the talent base
- Reinventing the business

The more you are able to connect to the Board-level agenda, the more you will help to shift traditional perceptions around what Marketing can, and should, do. To start, the CMOs we interviewed suggest twelve strategic growth topics that could “easily” be marketing led, and all ladder back up to a broader, more macro-level Board dialogue.

Visionary Marketers' Twelve Strategic Growth Topics

The following twelve strategic growth topics, set out in Table 1.1, will allow you to enter into deeper, strategic discussions with your C-level peers and help your organization align on what the priorities should be that Marketing or another function or team should take on. If you start any dialogue around growth with one of these twelve, your strategic profile will change because each is directly

Table 1.1 Categorizing the Twelve Strategic Growth Topics

Increase Shareholder Value	Drive Smart and Efficient Growth	Improve Operational Efficiency	Inspire the Talent Base	Reinvent the Business
<p>1. Building a superior reputation</p> <p>2. Bridging the today-tomorrow growth gap: balancing growth in the core and planting seeds for the future</p>	<p>3. Optimizing Marketing across Kotler's 4 P's</p> <p>4. Focusing the organization by building deeper relationships with the highest-margin and highest-potential target customer segments</p> <p>5. Exploiting intelligent, real-time, customer-data technologies</p>	<p>6. Rationalizing the brand portfolio to focus on building fewer, stronger brands</p> <p>7. Simplifying and coordinating the selling process</p>	<p>8. Inspiring the organization with a world-class marketing strategy and engagement plan</p>	<p>9. Managing the innovation pipeline as a true portfolio</p> <p>10. Cultivating a broad internal and external network</p> <p>11. Inspiring the marketplace with a galvanizing platform and big idea</p> <p>12. Putting the customer at the center of the universe</p>

tied to one of the five Board-level imperatives mentioned above. Therefore, each is valued at the top and will help to showcase marketing's wider strategic aperture. Quite literally, you can open the conversation, within the C-suite, by stating, "We could drive greater business impact by . . ." and then finishing the sentence with one of the following Twelve Strategic Growth Topics:

1. Building a Superior Reputation

Strengthening the preference for and opinion of the company while insulating it from the impact of negative events tied to all of its stakeholders is of utmost importance for all companies. Very few companies have a single person directly accountable for managing and leading this. It therefore clearly presents an opportunity, and a challenge, for Marketing.

Suzanne McCarron, General Manager, Public Affairs, has to think about Marketing and corporate reputation at Exxon Mobil every day. Managing Exxon Mobil's CSR (corporate social responsibility) is one of the toughest jobs around, but her job helps to remind stakeholders about the good the company is doing. McCarron states, "In many ways, a company's CSR efforts are directly related to corporate reputation or brand reputation—without a doubt, the single most important element of how your company is viewed by customers, employees, potential employees, business partners, and more." She constantly makes sure the world knows about the positive developments in reducing emissions that Exxon Mobil is exploring, while working with *American Idol* to fight malaria in Africa (*Idol Gives Back*) and supporting the Educating Women and Girls Initiative to investments in education and development in Third World countries. Importantly, she is as concerned with Exxon Mobil's corporate reputation as she is with its brand positioning and business line positioning. And, like a strong brand positioning, she believes that a corporation's long-term, lasting reputation is observable, measurable, and directly related to business performance.

2. Bridging the Today-Tomorrow Growth Gap: Balancing Growth in the Core with Planting Seeds for the Future

I noted in my previous book, *Brand Asset Management*, that Marketing has an opportunity to help fill in the growth gap—the difference between revenues today, aspirational revenues tomorrow, and expected declines within the base business—by precisely detailing the strategies that will help fill in the gaps. Whether you build your plan around new segments, new geographies, new offerings, mergers and acquisitions, or increasing the sales force, Marketing has an opportunity to lead the organization through this exercise. If done well, the exercise can act as a prelude to a longer-term strategic discussion or be a by-product of a well-articulated five-year strategy.

The topic of the growth gap will be discussed in more detail in the Third Shift.

3. Optimizing Marketing Across Kotler's 4 P's

At the end of the day sophisticated marketers know that their number one job is simultaneous retention of current customers, acquisition of new customers, and building share of wallet. There must be a constant search for new ways to deliver the necessary financial results. Marketing's responsibility is to have an impact on all sales drivers by holistically understanding what drives awareness, consideration, preference, purchase, and loyalty across segments to ultimately leverage the right set of marketing and selling tools across the 4 P's and maximize return on investment. Chris Gibson, CMO of UnitedHealthcare, is a growth-oriented marketer. She is equally motivated to add fifty sales reps in the western region, fund a sponsorship important to the agent base, look at new product offerings, or support aggressive pricing strategies. Gibson's goal is world-class customer acquisition and retention, not world-class marketing creative and communications.

This topic of optimizing marketing across the 4 P's will be discussed in depth in the Fourth Shift.

4. Focusing the Organization by Building Deeper Relationships with Your Highest-Margin and Highest-Potential Target Customer Segments

The analysis of this growth topic should include needs, wants, attitudes, behaviors, spending patterns, decision-making criteria, brand perceptions, and size of the prize opportunity for all customers, housed within specific customer segments. Such sophisticated segmentation is one of the most underused and underappreciated assets in organizations; however, dividing the customer world into simple yet powerful segments has proven to be an invaluable exercise for countless companies.

Such segmentation, done well, provides organizations with a deep and accurate customer understanding and targeting tool. Companies such as Best Buy and Staples are famous for clearly articulating what it will take to win with each customer segment and what one more share of wallet point means for each of their high-profile segments. The real objective behind this growth imperative is tied to the marketing priorities of focusing on attracting and retaining profitable customers and achieving a greater share of wallet by deeply understanding these customers, what they want and need, and what it will take to wrestle them away from the competition.

Too many organizations conduct a segmentation exercise and then treat it as just that, an exercise, ultimately creating an incredibly expensive PowerPoint deck. If you are going down the segmentation path, leading to, in effect, building your organization around the segments that drive margin, be ready to execute against the recommendations or fear being accused of wasting a lot of your company's valuable time and resources.

5. Exploiting Intelligent, Real-Time Customer-Data Technologies

These technologies can help monitor customer activity, provide real-time information about different marketing tools and efforts,

allow you to make real-time decisions and take real-time actions, all potentially leading to increased sales and greater loyalty. You want to become the company that knows more about the customer than your competitor does. This is how Harrah's has done it, with CEO Gary Loveman, a former Harvard Business School professor, leading the charge. As Loveman outlined in Larry Kahaner's book *Competitive Intelligence*, Harrah's can track, monitor, assess, and influence each of its customer segments as it moves through casinos, knowing the specific customers on whom to focus and those who drain money from the casinos. Similarly, Capital One tests tens of thousands of distinctive credit card offerings each year, using the latest technology and people to target the right offers to the right segments at the right time. These companies say that they know more about their customers than the customers do themselves. These in-house capabilities, once seen as the domain of the head of information technology or systems, arguably present an opportunity for Marketing and Information Technology to become one and the same.

6. Rationalizing the Brand Portfolio to Focus on Building Fewer, Stronger Brands

Leveraging Marketing's deeper understanding of the equities tied to each brand in the portfolio will help in sorting out which brands (or, more likely, names) the company should capitalize on, which should be built out, which should be migrated to other brands, and which should be eliminated altogether. In addition, the leading marketer will identify holes in the brand portfolio and suggest ways to fill them organically or through merger and acquisition efforts. A strong and smart brand portfolio has distinct roles set up for each brand, with clarity, differentiation, and customer value being the hallmarks.

This aspect of your strategic agenda must be handled with diplomacy since the brand portfolio can prove to be one of the most emotional, yet strategic issues on the table. To quote one of our client executives with brand portfolio responsibility, "Everyone with

a dollar and a dream wants his/her own brand.” Said another way, although it is relatively easy to create a brand, it is far more difficult for organizations to regularly and systematically review and invest (or divest) in their portfolios to determine whether they have the right mix of brands, maximizing customer and prospect value. As BP, UBS, Ingersoll Rand, Tyco, Emerson, Sara Lee, and Procter & Gamble know, companies can thrive if Marketing uses its insights to help their organization focus on fewer, more strategic, and powerful brands.

7. Simplifying and Coordinating the Selling Process

Giving the sales force more prescriptive selling tools—a deeper understanding of the segments and corresponding typing tools; a data-led customer relationship management warehouse of information about their customers; refreshed and revitalized value propositions tied to your major market offerings—will continue to help them be more effective. In addition, as Steve Meyer of Dell Services mentions, “You need to make sure that Marketing . . . is aligned with how your sales force is organized.” The bottom line is that Marketing is on the hook for as many sales support tools as anyone else in the organization, from talking points and benefit drivers to segment-specific information—in other words, as a pharmaceutical sales rep puts it, the challenge of “what do I say when I only have the doctor’s attention for thirty seconds?” Sean Burke states, “We once had a meeting of top sales and marketing employees in which we had the sales force critique every single piece of sales collateral created in the prior twelve months—rating each piece red, yellow, or green and explaining why. It was an incredibly eye-opening dialogue for both functions, but also demonstrated that the two functions depend on each other to ensure the organization’s overall success.”

In addition to helping simplify the selling process, Visionary Marketers should play a lead role in identifying and facilitating cross-selling opportunities across the enterprise, helping to realize synergies that most companies rarely achieve by developing a cross-pollination mind-set across all business units. Beth Comstock sees

this as one of her core roles as GE's CMO: "For a company like ours (multimarket, multibusiness), at the corporate level, you have to prioritize what is good for everyone and help to customize programs and tools for specific business units. We plant the seeds and give the businesses the coaching, tools, and understanding to create their own capabilities. We do try and employ a GE way of doing things, but still allow the practical nature of running separate businesses around the world to adapt the GE way to their specific needs."

Regarding cross-selling synergies, Shira Goodman has made a science of using the wealth of customer insights gathered from all Staples stores to drive cross-functional decision making, even in operations and merchandising. After five years, Goodman and her team get a lot of the credit for pushing Operations to use customer insights as a tool to drive sales and better levels of customer service.

8. Inspiring the Organization with a World-Class Market Strategy and Engagement Plan

While most consider this topic to be the CEO's job, it also provides another opportunity for Marketing to go well beyond the norm and own the job of galvanizing the employee base. Give employees a sense of purpose and aspiration, and customers will likely follow. Sean Burke, while in charge of marketing at GE Healthcare's Diagnostic Imaging (DI) Group, had been charged with not only reinventing (or reimaging) how DI goes to market—in a clear, distinct, customer-led, competitively advantaged way—but also to bring this new approach to twelve thousand employees to help carry the message externally. He worked with DI's CEO, Mark Vachon (now GE Healthcare President and CEO, Americas), to completely transform DI's product development and go-to-market approach, cutting across areas as diverse as product management, organizational design, training, and sales leadership. He was *given* this permission and license because he drove the discussion through a customer lens, incorporating this with GE's DNA. He took the opportunity to the organization because he views his role, and that

of Marketing overall, to be growth drivers for the organization, not just marketing communications executors.

9. Managing the Innovation Pipeline as a True Portfolio

This is an area that every company seeks to upgrade by identifying white-space opportunities, capitalizing on unmet needs or underdeveloped categories, looking at the next generation of products and services and keeping its current portfolio fresh by identifying additional uses for existing products. As a senior marketer, you can drive the process of balancing risk and reward, as well as long-term and short-term needs, using customer insights as your secret innovation weapon.

For many companies where innovation does not have a natural home, marketing can credibly take on a leadership position because great innovation is ultimately insight led. Andy Stefanovich, founder of innovation consultancy PLAY (now a Prophet company), agrees. “Marketers should exist in the central and honorable position of driving the growth agenda at their company, tied to the inherent qualities of the topic: passion, seeing possibilities, driving insights and analysis, and encouraging risk taking, all at the core of any Visionary Marketer.”

It is both the long- and short-term perspective and the ongoing assessment of opportunities, as well as the recognition that there will be innovation investments that have big payoffs and others that have smaller ones (or none at all), that makes innovation leadership more like managing an investment portfolio than simply monitoring a pipeline flow. In this type of scenario, the leadership that is necessary is that of the Visionary Marketer, who can bring business acumen as well as deep customer understanding to bear.

The concept of pervasive innovation is discussed in depth in the Third Shift.

10. Cultivating a Broad Internal and External Network

From an internal perspective, this means inspiring and motivating perhaps the most important source for new ideas that a company

has at its disposal: its employee base. This means building networks within the organization to engage employees on the innovative ideas they have, as well as their ability and help in delivering the brand experience at the moment of truth.

American Express, Staples, and Best Buy use their internal networks on an ongoing basis. Jim Blann, former SVP Premium Value and Brand at American Express, noted that CEO Ken Chennault had set up an internal innovation fund and then encouraged all employees to submit proposals for innovation. All were evaluated and prioritized, and some eventually were funded. With two thousand stores globally, and fifteen hundred of those in the United States, Shira Goodman has a natural ongoing lab in which to try out new ideas and learn from the global employee base. And Barry Judge at Best Buy cannot overemphasize the importance of Blue Shirt Nation, an internal electronic bulletin board used by twenty-four thousand employees that senior executives scan daily to tap the pulse of employees' thoughts and comments on work policies. This internal source identifies insights and ideas tied to marketing, innovation, and the overall customer experience mix on an ongoing basis. Someone must orchestrate and assimilate all of these incredible sources of information, or a major asset will be underleveraged and opportunities possibly missed. This is a great role for Marketing to lead.

From an external perspective, senior marketers can make the most of the extended network of suppliers, vendors, and distribution partners to regularly tap into multiple sources of inspiration. Barry Krause, CEO of Innovation Consultancy Persuasion Arts and Sciences, keeps an open mind about innovation with his clients, such as Disney and Apple. He works with every external partner to bring in as many ideas as possible in a nonjudgmental way. Acura and W Hotels also see the value in working with external partners. They recently announced a marketing partnership under which Acura will be the preferred vehicle of W Hotels. W Hotels will feature the "Acura Experience," a chauffeured livery service offered as a benefit to hotel guests. The Acura Experience will be an extension

of W Hotels branded “Whatever/Whenever” concierge services and will feature W Hotel amenities.

Overall, this *Network Effect*, which combines employees, partners, customers, and influencers, can be the single most important area where a marketer can have great impact, with potentially the highest profile, internally and externally.

The topic of more effectively leveraging your internal and external network will be discussed in the Second Shift.

11. Inspiring the Marketplace with a Galvanizing Platform and Big Idea: Targeting the Head and the Heart

From messaging to product and service delivery to customer service, to winning the battle for the dollar, growth-oriented marketers know that their first responsibility remains motivating and inspiring the marketplace to make a call to action on behalf of the brand. As Steve Jobs has accomplished with Apple, Howard Schultz with Starbucks, Richard Branson with Virgin, and Tony Hsieh at Zappos, combining world-class products and services with personal and authentic targeted messaging wins over fan bases, which inspires customers to use their voices to sell the brand as well.

Marketers with a growth agenda recognize that winning the hearts and minds of their customer base is also their job. Stephen Quinn believes that, at times, the simplest idea can cut through all of the noise and clutter in the marketplace and galvanize customers. “Save Money. Live Better” is a simple notion but a huge idea that instantly communicates the message that Walmart is devoted to bettering people’s lives by offering world-class familiar brands at prices that allow them to save a little bit more than they can elsewhere, ultimately allowing them to have more money to spend on life’s other needs. Communicating this type of functional and emotional benefit that could not be more relevant in today’s environment is simple and personal—and brilliant. It is no wonder that the idea originated in a 1990 speech by one of the most brilliant retailers ever to walk the planet: Sam Walton.

12. Putting the Customer at the Center of the Universe

This sounds noble, grandiose, and a bit obvious, but too many companies put their capabilities at the center of their universe—“we make the best jet engines,” “we produce the highest quality television shows,” “we create the most cost-effective insurance policies”—instead of putting the customer in the center and discussing all of the different ways they can serve the customer. When Adam Stotsky was at the Sci-Fi Channel, he experienced a real “aha” moment when they took the TV out of the center of their conversations and put the target customer in the center. That small step allowed Sci-Fi to understand the essence of the brand, and with that insight, they could see many more ways of serving those customers: online, mobile, in theaters, in games. As a result, reaching aggressive growth aspirations did not seem so daunting. If the company had continued to center its conversation on the fall lineup while advertising revenues continued to plummet and production costs continued to rise, the Sci-Fi story may have turned out very differently from the success it is today.

The topic of relentlessly putting the customer at the center of your organizational efforts is discussed in depth in the Fifth Shift.

Owning the Right Strategic Imperatives

Once the marketer decides to seize an opportunity to become a strategic growth catalyst, it's important to determine which of the twelve growth topics will best showcase these catalytic capabilities across the organization, ultimately helping to achieve the company's longer-term growth objectives. To help prioritize potential initiatives, the marketer needs to do several things. First, he or she needs to see which of these growth topics should or could become corporate imperatives and then which Marketing can, and should, affect.

Second, the marketer must judge whether it can have this impact on an imperative directly or indirectly. For example, although marketing cannot singularly drive the decision to upgrade the organization's customer relationship management (CRM) system, the

Visionary Marketer will seize this opportunity to directly affect the specific type of customer data that Marketing can access through a new CRM system and thus the value of this investment. Actually, the Visionary Marketer will also see the CRM upgrade as a much needed tool to get closer to the customer through sophisticated data that will lead to better customer understanding and more intimacy. Clearly, Marketing is expected to lead the charge here.

Third, Marketing should have a plan for how best to accomplish the imperatives it carefully chooses to own: which activities, over what time frame, tied to what milestones, with which specific owners and metrics. Of course, the strategic imperatives that are traditionally marketing oriented will be easiest to accomplish, but they will also tend to keep Marketing somewhat insular from the rest of the organization. A portfolio of imperatives, including ones that Marketing can drive, co-own, or be part of is probably the best way to think about how a Visionary Marketer should go to market internally.

Your Five-Step Plan to Victory

Heads of Marketing who have led the strategy dialogue have generally followed a five-step path that starts with the simple notion that they are taking the organization on a journey over time, aimed at helping the executive team articulate the three- to five-year vision and its strategy. Importantly, the Visionary Marketer knows that this is not something accomplished in a two-day offsite meeting. Rather, it is an extended, informed, and aspirational conversation. Here are those steps.

Step 1: Get Alignment

Get alignment that this is something the organization can benefit from and that there is merit in embarking on this path. Smart CEOs may want to think more about their three- to five-year strategy, but in reality, they are tied to short-term quarterly pressures or have little experience in leading this type of dialogue or other priorities,

so many never actually get to it. When they are approached on the topic, they may talk about revenue targets and expansion efforts but not specific strategies to get there.

If this is the case for your organization, the CEO will embrace the notion of engaging his or her team on the topic of long-term strategy and growth and will embrace the idea of someone else stepping up to lead the team through the process. Some marketers specifically ask for permission to lead, others hijack time set aside to review marketing to start the dialogue, and others take the organization through a Gantt chart type of process with milestones, activities, and responsibilities all outlined. Regardless of the spark, getting alignment on the importance of the dialogue and getting it started is the first step.

Step 2: Equip the C-Suite to Engage in the Dialogue in a Meaningful Way

Mark Gambill, CMO of CDW, a leading provider of technology products and services, had a vision that to really engage the leadership team at the level he wanted, he would have to plant seeds along the way. He would need to have frequent conversations, work sessions, and updates on the segmentation, positioning, and competitor analysis work he was leading, all the while knowing that certain executives in his organization would be able to truly participate in a longer-term discussion on strategy only if they were grounded in the facts first. He needed to address a slew of questions:

- Which segments of the market are we winning with today, and why?
- What types of customers are looking for an end-to-end technology solution rather than just a product?
- How big is the market opportunity?
- How are you defining the market opportunity?
- What brand equities do we own, aspire to own, can never own, and don't ever want to own?

The more upfront engagement, debate, and education you arm your peers with, the more fruitful the strategic dialogue down the road will be. Whether this is a six-week, six-month, or year-long process depends on the profile of your executive team, the relationships that exist at the C-level, and how ready these executives are to engage in the process.

Step 3: Start and Lead the Dialogue

It may seem obvious, but getting the dialogue going and truly leading the discussion of what the company can become is not as easy a topic to launch into as it first might appear to be. This dialogue will be somewhat informed by your current profile and all of the data with which you have carefully armed your executive team. But more than anything else, it depends on the integration and summation of the aspirations of the executive team and what they believe the organization can become.

Visionary Marketers always enter into the first “inspire and aspire” work session with questions:

- What do we want to be famous for five years from now?
- What is the headline of the *Fortune* magazine cover story about our company going to say?
- When we are selling our brand, products, services, and individuals five years from now, what are we actually selling?
- How will our frame of reference change (from products to services or services to solutions, for example)?

These are great thought stimulators to get the organization to start to hear what others believe is the future potential and to start to anchor the executives in what a vision of the future could be.

Once some degree of alignment is reached around whom the organization serves, what it should stand for, and how it thinks it can win, a pragmatic discussion has to take place about the current

realities of the business. The competencies, competitive advantages, weaknesses, and the like have to be taken into account. Once they are thoroughly debated and thought through, you can enter into a broader version of the growth-gap discussion. In this case, the dialogue should be about bridging or closing the gap between your aspirational future state and the current realities.

Step 4: Lay Out the Strategies to Bridge the Gap Between Today and Tomorrow

At this point, you might want to turn to a few of the twelve growth topics. You might be getting hit with questions outside your traditional realm, such as operational continuous improvement, cross-functional integration and collaboration, information technology upgrades, and optimization of current assets. Nevertheless, even if the discussion is outside your normal range of expertise, you must be ready to engage in it at a C-suite level. In fact, only if you can become conversant across the entire range of strategic issues and across functions, geographies, businesses, products, and services will Marketing be able to sell itself as a strategic asset for the entire organization and a long-term partner for the CEO. Your ability to prioritize and balance specific growth initiatives and strategies outside your comfort zone, at the same time as you are handling traditional marketing responsibilities and toggle short- and long-term needs, will make this growth mind-set and organizational shift toward your place at the C-suite table a reality.

Step 5: Own the Imperatives

At first blush, this will seem highly administrative. Nevertheless, this step will keep you focused on *The Shift* over the long haul. Owning the list of strategic imperatives, along with the commensurate work plans, ownership, activities, milestones and metrics, and timing, while assisting each owner with his or her strategic imperative, will help the Visionary Marketer sustain a “shifted” position. The owners of the strategic initiatives will participate with the Visionary Marketer in an ongoing dialogue, built around quarterly updates, annual refreshes, and progress check-ins.

Keeping the Dialogue on Track

While getting the growth agenda started and moving from marketing to business strategy is important, sustaining the momentum of each imperative is equally as important.

Drive and Partner in Dialogue

As you think through these initiatives, remember that each represents a multifunctional bridge builder, allowing the Visionary Marketer to solicit, build, and nurture cross-functional C-suite relationships. Pick any one, and you will see some combination of Sales, Finance, Human Resources, R&D, or Information Technology playing a role in bringing the initiative to life. Pick any two or three initiatives, and you may possibly span the entire organization. All things being equal, you should attempt to engage in dialogues that span across as much of the organization as possible.

If you do not relentlessly drive and partner in the strategic dialogue across the executive team, keeping up a consistent rhythm and approach, time, effort, and good intentions will slip away—along with your credibility. Follow-through and leading by example are hallmarks of Visionary Marketers who understand that strategy is ongoing. It is easy to put strategy on hold while you try to meet the numbers, get a new product launched on time, or cut costs across the board. But if you co-own the growth agenda, it will be your job to keep executives' eyes on the strategic vision. Barry Judge, CMO of Best Buy, suggested that the CMO should make sure strategy is on the Board agenda each quarter to force a regular dialogue about strategic progress on an ongoing basis.

The Administrative Trap

Resist becoming trapped inside just an administrative role as you strive to lead a more strategic dialogue within your organization. As one CMO mentioned, "It is easy to get caught in becoming the administrative arm for all things strategic and actually forgetting to contribute to the strategic dialogue." Another CMO said:

We have a group called the Strategic Initiatives Group that administers the strategic planning process, acting as an internal consulting group for various businesses. They determine different business opportunities we should consider pursuing. Over time, however, they end up facilitating the process and forget to bring strategic content to the dialogue. They have important titles, but they fail to lead us in an ongoing and thoughtful strategic dialogue, so our CEO ends up driving the discussion and singularly owning strategy.

This CMO vowed to change the pattern and step up to become the strategic voice and driver of the strategy going forward. She admits it will be an uphill battle, hampered by the way the organization has approached this in the past.

Don't Give Up Your Day Job

Don't forget to do your day job flawlessly. As Bob Harris mentioned earlier, "Credibility comes from execution. You cannot be perceived as only coming up with great strategy or only driving to great execution. You have to do both—always. The minute you lose sight of successfully delivering on your day-to-day responsibilities will be the minute you start to lose your audience."

Don't Bite Off Too Much

The most crucial mistake you can make is taking on too much strategy. Leaders of strategic dialogues and companies in general typically fail because they overcommit, overprioritize, lack focus, and don't put enough resources against any one strategic initiative to be successful. As Peter Senge wrote in *The Dance of Change*, start small, get some wins, and grow from there. Not only is fewer better, but those fewer need to be properly resourced and have hard metrics put against them to track the progress and return on investment on specific strategic initiatives over time.

The Dialogue Itself Will Change

Successfully making *The Shift* is about permanently changing the dialogue with your peers, the profile for Marketing, and the path to reaching your company's growth objectives. Making *The Shift* brings value to all functional areas while helping the organization clearly prioritize its opportunities for growth. Making *The Shift* allows senior marketers to focus on the bigger, transformational bets for their organization, while building a world-class marketing team to carry on the day-to-day tasks of traditional marketing roles and responsibilities.

So, What Do I Do on Monday Morning?

Making a successful shift from creating marketing strategies to driving business impact is the first shift in starting to change Marketing's position in your organization permanently. Without success here, Marketing will continue to be boxed in. With success here, new possibilities will start to open up for marketing.

1. Understand what your marketer profile is today—from tactician to visionary, what archetype your company most closely aligns to, and which success factors you do or do not have working in your favor to better understand the success formula to change your leadership profile from where it is today to becoming a Visionary Marketer.
2. Audit your success relative to the three critical Visionary Marketer components required to change the dialog from marketing as a function to marketing as an asset: your ability to leverage customer insights into in-market impact, your ability to show up with a P&L mind-set, whether you own a P&L or not, and your ability to earn credibility and trust across your peer set and in the executive suite.
3. Leverage the power of the insights at your fingertips to quickly start sharing insights and commensurate areas of impact with the executive team and other functional areas to start to spur

growth agenda topics. Embrace the notion that insights give you the power, confidence, and credibility that Marketing has so often lacked—not being the owner/repository of customer insights is a huge missed marketing leadership opportunity.

4. Discover your personal path to earning credibility and trust throughout the C-Suite, whether it is going in the field and “working the registers” or building strong alliances with the CFO.
5. Start every growth conversation with a business strategy/business impact lead in and not a marketing lead in—always in service of the articulated five year strategy.
6. Capture your CEO’s imagination, by leading discussions tied to the five macro Wall Street/shareholder objectives he or she is always trying to achieve.
7. Have the courage to step up to lead the strategic growth discussion. Always link back to the macro Wall Street objectives and always with an eye on either acquisition, retention, or deepening share of wallet with customers and prospects.
8. Leverage any subset of the 12 Strategic Growth Topics to spur the dialog with the executive team, push in areas that you are not necessarily comfortable with, and form alliances with those that can help you achieve the objectives of the dialog.
9. Embark on The Five Step Plan to Victory, helping you to co-own the strategic growth agenda; avoid the administration trap.
10. Get going. Start small and recognize that you are on an impact journey. Pick parts of the strategy you want to personally own and others you want to simply have a voice on. Search for big and small strategic victories. You’ll be surprised how early wins can begin to change the internal dialogue from creating marketing strategy to driving business impact.

The next four shifts are critical to completing the entire shift. Chapter Two proceeds to the Second Shift: from controlling the message to galvanizing your network.