

CMO Roadblocks: Accelerate Growth by Solving Your Toughest Challenges

In the middle of an AI-fueled tech shift, you're being asked to do more with less, while still proving ROI at every turn. While tech shifts can cause friction, they can also represent an opportunity to differentiate yourself in the market

CMOs and marketing leaders now have a chance to recalibrate marketing strategy, integrate AI and automation, refine customer experiences, and adapt to emerging technologies.



Did you know?

49%

of marketers have not implemented GenAI, even though C-Suite executives expect it is necessary to impact success.

Your secret weapon to capitalizing on these opportunities and getting ahead of your competitors is simple: **trusted data and insights**. **Educating yourself about the market, your competitors and most importantly, what your customers need and want is necessary to stand out in a crowded market.** Your leadership – and your bottom line – will thank you.

Flattening the Five Biggest Roadblocks CMOs are Facing

1. Justifying Marketing Investments

CMOs face pressure to maximize marketing ROI with limited budgets. They know technology moves fast and they must keep up, but budget constraints limit the ability to invest in new tech, talent, and innovative marketing strategies.

31%

of executive teams say that optimizing costs and improving marketing ROI is a top priority for the next 12-18 months.

Head in the Right Direction:

When shaping your marketing strategy, skip the guesswork. Rely on accurate, timely data to understand market trends, customer needs, and competitor movements with confidence. **Marketing efforts driven by tangible data and analytics keep you ahead of the market** — so you're leading, not catching up. Your leadership doesn't want decisions based on anecdotal evidence — they want to know your strategy is backed by data, ROI analysis and reputable thought leadership.



2. Delivering Effective Multi-Channel/Multi-Buyer Strategies

Executive teams say that brand and reputation protection is their biggest challenge and concern when implementing AI initiatives. But they know AI is inevitable. Customers increasingly expect personalized, seamless, and consistent experiences across all touchpoints and are willing to share their data if they believe it will be used responsibly.

There is an expectation of trust, ethical use of AI, protection of data and secure but transparent security measures. Failing to meet these expectations can lead to customer churn and damage brand reputation. It benefits leaders to remember that **a customer-centric approach is a winning approach.**

32% of executive teams say that CMOs must improve enterprise-wide customer intelligence and market knowledge to drive revenue.



Head in the Right Direction:

There's no better way to personalize your marketing efforts than by speaking to your actual customers. Create personalized marketing strategies, in-person events and other live engagement opportunities through which customers can make real connections with you.

This may feel a bit “old school” but continuing a human touch in the era of AI and automation can be a differentiator, especially when it is paired with highly tailored digital strategies. Modern omnichannel marketing tool strategies now make it easy to provide consistent, personalized experiences across different channels, such as email, social media, and websites to ensure your customers will feel connected, understood, and heard. If you can't meet them where they are, source current and trusted data about the personas you are targeting.



3. Improving/Consolidating Data, Analytics and MarTech Strategies

CMOs need to effectively integrate AI and automation into marketing strategies to improve efficiency and personalization, but they must also ensure ethical and responsible use of these technologies. **Your customers won't trust you if you don't protect their privacy and comply with data regulations.**

When used responsibly by prioritizing fairness, transparency, accountability, and respecting privacy, AI can enhance customer engagement, personalize experiences, analyze data for better insights and automate tasks. Your products are infused with AI, so your marketing strategy should be, too.

Head in the Right Direction:

Get ahead of your competitors by implementing AI-powered customer journey tools like Journey.ai or MyMap.ai to improve the customer experience, personalize customer interactions and enhance customer understanding. Enable trust-based marketing practices fortified with ethical and responsible use of AI by researching the market to find out what tools and insights work best for you.

According to IDC's presentation "[Trust in Ethical AI: The Key to Winning Tech Buyers in the Next Two Years](#)", 88% of C-level executives cite the ethical use of AI as a crucial factor in their technology purchasing decisions.

4. Recruiting and Retaining Critical Skillsets and Marketing Talent

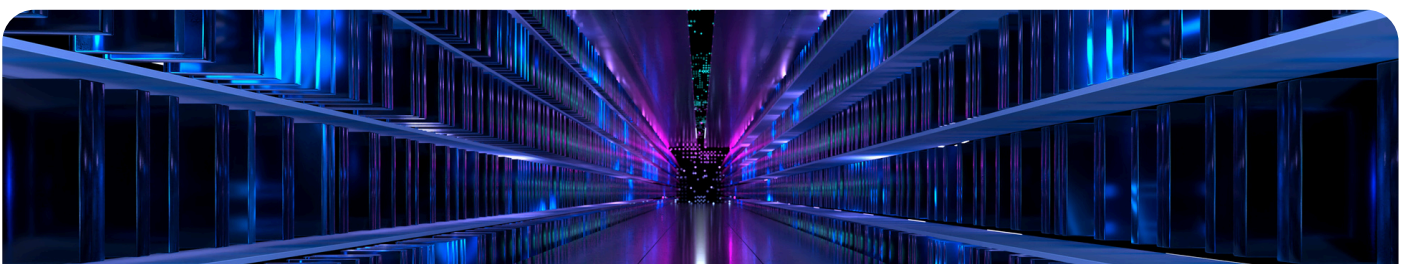
The marketing industry is highly competitive, so a skilled and motivated marketing team is essential for driving business growth. Hiring managers are looking for the top level of talent; specifically, those who can bring new skills, experience and perspective to the marketing team.

Marketers need proficiency in data science, persona-based storytelling, and AI tools like ChatGPT or Perplexity AI. Marketers who are proficient in these areas will bring a new skillset to an AI-fueled marketing team. Be the company that attracts top talent by having a stellar reputation for embracing this AI tech shift.

35% of marketers say they plan to increase the use of AI in their marketing in the next 12-18 months.



22% of marketers say that upskilling and hiring people with new skillsets like AI promoters, data scientists, experience design and storytelling is a top priority now.



Head in the Right Direction:

When hiring highly skilled workers, remember: People want to be proud of the company they work for. Brand presence matters. If you want to attract top talent, find out what your prospects really want. Is it professional development? A positive work environment? A competitive salary? Chances are, it's not a pizza party on Fridays. **Brand, culture, and reputation are just as important as salary and benefits.** Constantly circulating quality thought leadership, reliable, data-backed insights and trusted solutions will boost your reputation in the market and differentiate your brand as a top place to be.

5. Implementing AI and Other Advanced Technologies

The digital landscape is constantly evolving, and we are in the midst of an AI-fueled tech shift. New technologies are emerging regularly and as a leader in your department, you need your finger on the pulse. **Marketers who immerse themselves in data, analytics and AI tools will differentiate themselves**, build stronger relationships, and gain a competitive edge in the marketplace. Don't be left behind.

37%

of marketing leaders say that marketing science, data and analytics will be the most critical core competencies for marketers to have to be successful.

Head in the Right Direction:

To remain competitive, CMOs must stay on top of the latest trends and technologies. Find a trusted partner as your source for intelligence so you can confidently experiment with new marketing channels, adopt rapidly evolving technologies such as AI and automation, and continue to build your brand reputation as a company rooted in trusted thought leadership.

Turn Challenge to Opportunity

There are many obstacles marketing leaders must dodge in today's fast-shifting tech landscape, but with the right intelligence and data-backed strategies, you and your leadership team will be able to fuel revenue growth, drive brand awareness, and deliver empathetic and personalized customer experiences that inspire loyalty. C-Suite executives know that modernizing marketing strategy and implementing AI are essential to success. **It's time for CMOs to step up.**

According to ***IDC's Global B2B Tech CMO Priorities Study (2025)***, new customer acquisition is the number one priority for businesses; and **new customers come from good marketing.**



IDC: Your Trusted Partner

Tech investment is accelerating but challenges remain. To turn those challenges into opportunities, leaders need trusted insights to close skill gaps and maximize ROI. IDC is recognized for high-quality advice, trusted market data, and 60 years of success with:

- Helping buyers justify investments with data-backed insights
- Aligning strategy with real spending trends
- Using localized insights to meet regional market needs
- Leveraging IDC events to engage decision-makers and industry leaders



Contact Us

Solve challenges in a fast-paced tech landscape with a respected partner. [Contact Us](#)

Marketing Resources

To learn about how IDC's thought leadership, research, data and insights can steer you through a tech shift, read more below:

- Blog: [AI Alone Won't Drive Revenue](#)
- Blog: [The AI-Fueled Tech Shift: Kick-start Marketing Innovation and Business Growth](#)
- Infographic: [AI-Driven Marketing Transformation](#)
- Infographic: [Build a Thriving Partner Ecosystem in the Age of AI](#)
- eBook: [AI, Trust & Customer Data](#)
- eBook: [Worldwide CMO 2025 Predictions](#)
- Customer Story: [Capitalizing on the AI Inflection Point](#)
- Customer Story: [Communicating Business Value](#)
- Customer Story: [Refining Market Strategy](#)
- Customer Story: [Shaping the Digital Transformation Narrative](#)
- Customer Story: [Strengthening Sales](#)

