



Digital
Marketing
IN THE **ZONE**

Be Your Own CMO
A How-To Guide for Smart CEOs

You've got a business to run, and if you are like most CEOs of a small to mid-sized company, you wear a lot of hats: from sales to marketing, to IT, to operations. While you may have delegated the leadership of some of the functions of your company to others on your team, you may still hold on to the strategic marketing decisions such as product, pricing, and marketing strategy. But are you holding on to too much if you are taking on the role of Chief Marketing Officer (CMO) in your company?

This whitepaper will show you how you can get the results you need in marketing, without having a full-time CMO on board. It will start by reviewing the marketing challenges CEOs face and identify the tactical skills you can learn now to get on top of your marketing efforts right away. Then it will discuss six elements that are essential for marketing success and leadership, which I call "Marketing in the Zone," including marketing strategy, people, technology, content, website, and digital marketing campaigns. Finally, it will illustrate how, with the help of a Zone Coach, you can become a world-class marketer – without having to hire a CMO to do the job for you.

INTRODUCTION

THE CHALLENGES

Many CEOs of small to mid-sized companies come from a sales and marketing background – so it's natural that they continue to take on that role when running the business. Marketing and sales are two parts of the engine that keeps the company going, and hiring a CMO can be an expensive proposition. The challenge of not having a CMO on board and doing the work yourself, however, is that marketing in today's digital world is highly complex and rapidly changing. It's practically impossible to become an expert on website development, marketing automation, email techniques, social media, and digital ad channels and still run your company effectively. It can be overwhelming to say the least.

Not having a CMO on board also means that you may not have a clear marketing strategy and plan, and the effort you are putting into marketing is not paying off in enough leads to meet your sales goals. You want to have a world-class marketing plan and strategy, but you can't afford to hire the expertise required to get you there.

TACTICAL SKILLS

If you are running marketing as the CEO, there are four tactical skills you should master immediately to help you get on top of your marketing campaigns. By understanding your data, focusing on the right goals, testing proven marketing campaigns, and hiring the right expertise, you'll immediately feel better and be taking a giant step forward.

1. Understand your own data.

Digital marketing systems produce mounds of data, and it can be overwhelming to try to decipher a lot of complex reports from multiple platforms and systems. If you want to really understand what's happening, start by signing into a tool like Google Analytics that your web developer probably installed on your website to gather key statistics about your website traffic. Look for a report on traffic by source, and discover how many people are visiting your website from each source such as referrals, organic search, direct, and advertising. You should also set up goal conversion tracking in Google Analytics so that you can see how many leads or sales are coming from each source.

2. Focus on the goal.

Once you understand your current situation, you'll be ready to set goals for improvement. There are many digital marketing techniques that can help you such as search engine optimization, website optimization, and A/B testing, but if you are doing it yourself, focus on a simple goal like driving more traffic and leads or sales. You can start by adding a "call to action" or "offer" to your home page that makes it easy for visitors to give you their contact information to access the offer. An offer can be some sort of valuable content, such as a whitepaper, case study, or video. By tagging the lead as a conversion in Google Analytics, you can now connect the dots between your marketing efforts, visits, and leads or sales.

3. Test simple marketing campaigns.

If you don't have a lot of resources, focus on simple campaigns that can drive traffic and leads. The easiest campaigns to begin with are email campaigns, if you have a list, or simple ad campaigns using Google, LinkedIn, and Facebook. Each of these tools is powerful and highly complex, but start with the simplest form and leverage the vendor's staff to get the program started correctly. Just remember that these campaigns don't run themselves, so you'll need to check in every few days to see if they are on track and if they are driving the traffic and leads you want.

4. Reach outside for expertise.

Even if you are running your own digital marketing campaign, don't be afraid to reach out for help when you need it. It's probably not worth your time to become a certified expert in website creation, video production, or graphic design when you can outsource these functions to contractors when you need them. If you spend a few dollars with these professionals you won't get bogged down on details that can cripple your progress.

HOW TO BE YOUR OWN CMO WITH THE ZONE SYSTEM

Now that you understand the tactical essentials of marketing data, goals, campaigns, and outside contractors, you'll want to think more strategically in order to execute a world-class marketing strategy and get the results it produces.

There are six key elements of a new digital marketing system, that I call Marketing in the Zone, that you can master to be your own CMO. These six elements are outlined below:



1. Strategy & Planning

You need to have a solid marketing strategy in place if you are going to get to where you want to go. In order to build an effective strategy, you need to know who your target customers are, what's important to them, and how you compare to your competition. You'll need to do some competitive intelligence to have a good understanding of your competitors. You also need to ask your current customers what motivated them to buy from you, and what they do and don't like about your company, product, or service. Once you've defined your objectives, you can build buyer personas to align your marketing campaigns with them. There are several more key elements to developing a marketing strategy, including marketing research, differentiation, ROI, marketing planning, and developing a campaign budget. The bottom line is that you need a strong strategy to even begin to understand why and how you will execute on your marketing plan.

2. Team and Processes

If you want to stay in the Zone, you need to have the right people in place to carry out the work. If you are a small company, that may just be you, a small staff, and a few outside contractors. You need to measure the effectiveness of these people, and how well they will help you carry out your marketing strategy. It's also important to evaluate your team members, including any outside vendors, to make sure you have a strong team with industry experience, certified expertise, proven framework and processes, data and insight, and innovation. Schedule regular meetings with the people on your team: quarterly, weekly, and daily, if you can, so that everyone is on the same page. As mentioned above, not all expertise needs to be in-house: know when to outsource, and make sure the vendors you use are aligned with your goals and values.

3. Data and Technology

Technology is the glue that makes modern digital marketing work. Are you utilizing the right technology for your needs? With so many technological tools out there, it's hard to know if you are using the best and latest technology to its fullest. There are different kinds of technologies used for advertising, content and experience, social media, e-commerce, data, and campaign management. Build a list of tools you are using today and rate each one on whether it fits your requirements, its value, innovation, usability, and cost.

4. Content

The content you provide for prospects and customers can dramatically improve or hinder your marketing results. You must develop a content marketing strategy based on the target audiences, or personas, you developed in the Marketing Strategy Stage. Then, you must align your content to each persona in each stage of the buying process and come up with an editorial calendar for writing and distributing content. Your content can include website content, emails, whitepapers, product information, blogs, and videos – anything that informs the prospect. The ideal content strategy has information for each persona for each stage of the buying cycle.

5. Website

You can accelerate your website performance by ensuring that your site is a place where your marketing ideas, content, goals, and messages come together to create a powerful resource for your audience. A high-performance website begins with a cohesive strategy, solid architecture, and excellent design. You want to make sure your website has web analytics built into it so that you get detailed information of all the activity that's happening on your website. You also want to integrate offers into your website, so you can generate leads. Each offer should have its own landing page, where prospects can complete a short form to access the content you are providing for free. When you are building your website, be sure to utilize a content management system (CMS) that allows you to easily update information and graphics on your site. Also, a good CMS template will be mobile-friendly, allowing your site to be easily viewed from mobile devices such as tablets and smart phones.

6. Marketing Campaigns

The goal of most digital marketing programs is to convert a visitor to a lead or sale, whether it's from email, social media, digital advertising, SEO, or website traffic. A great way to think about your digital marketing programs is to envision them as a marketing funnel: you may use digital advertising or SEO to drive leads, specific content both on and off your website to convert these leads into sales, and social media marketing or email automation to nurture leads. All of these work together in a single budget to drive more traffic, and ultimately more qualified leads, to your company.

Above is just a short summary of the six core elements of the *Zone System* and you can learn more from the book, "Digital Marketing in the Zone". As you probably have gathered, digital marketing in the Zone is ideal, but it takes a lot of work and expertise to get there. That's where a Zone Coach can help.

WHAT IS A ZONE COACH?

A Zone Coach is an individual who is an expert at implementing the marketing in the Zone System for companies that do not have a CMO on staff. A Zone Coach will help you develop a clear marketing strategy, devise and implement a professional marketing plan, create a strong process and measurement system, and give you expert guidance for decisions regarding people, technology, and marketing campaigns. Most importantly, a Zone Coach will keep you on track to meet your goals with regular reviews of your strategy and implementation.

Engaging a Zone Coach is far less expensive than bringing on a full-time CMO, yet you get all the benefits of having one. You will have a world-class marketing system that junior staff on your team can implement with confidence. In addition, you will have the strong know-how and leadership of a coach whose primary expertise is in Digital Marketing in the Zone. Frankly, as a CEO, your time is best spent running the parts of your business you are strongest in – marketing is where a Zone Coach shines. A Zone Coach can help you feel confident in your marketing efforts, utilize a winning strategy, invest in the best, most relevant technology, and come out on top with strong content, web, and marketing programs that will grow your business.

SUMMARY

You've got a successful business, but not necessarily the best marketing plan and tactics to get you to where you want to go. You do not have to hire a CMO to get you there. An excellent alternative is to work with a Zone Coach, who will help you optimize on the six core elements of a successful marketing program: strategy, people, technology, content, website, and digital marketing campaigns. With the continued help of a Zone Coach, either you or junior staff in your company can implement a winning marketing program that will get you the results you want.

For more information on how to get a Zone Coach working for you, simply go to: www.marketing-in-the-zone.com Or, call 1-508-616-0111 to request more information.

To learn more on your own, consider purchasing the book, *Digital Marketing in the Zone*, available at most online bookstores including Amazon.com.