



5 REASONS

IT'S TIME TO HIRE A

MARKETING CONSULTANT

Leading and growing a successful business of any kind is not for the faint-of-heart. But it takes a special kind of leader and a steadfast entrepreneurial spirit to grow a Business-to-Business (B2B) company. When it comes to growth, marketing and lead generation should be your top two priorities - but what's the best way to achieve success? And, perhaps more importantly, do you have the expertise and time in-house to plan and execute marketing and lead generation successfully?

As if overcoming the odds and maintaining a successful, growing business isn't challenging enough, seeing your business clearly – both from the perspective of your overall market and how your offering is positioned within that market – can be particularly difficult, especially when you're mired in the day-to-day work of running the business.

If you're looking to take the next step to accelerated revenue growth, you have a number of challenges to face. How will you break through to the next level of growth? How will you pay for it? What do you need to do to attract and appeal to new customers? Can you continue to serve your existing customers? Will you need to launch new products or services? Will you expand to new geographies or industries? And those are just a few of the considerations.

Facing these challenges alone isn't usually the best way to go about it. It's in these situations that enlisting an outside expert – a management or marketing consultant – to help you get the facts, perspective and guidance to succeed, makes the most sense. Before we jump to the specifics of what a marketing consultant can do for you, let's start with an understanding of what they are.

WHAT IS A MARKETING CONSULTANT ANYWAY?

A marketing consultant is not an employee but rather someone who will work alongside you and/or your team to do analysis and

research, lead discussions, build strategies, act as a senior-level "sounding board", and assist in decision-making so that you can continue to focus on ensuring that your day-to-day business remains a success. A marketing consultant will bring marketing experience, expertise, frameworks, processes, objective perspective and a lack of vested interests to you and your business.

When it comes to your specific organization, a Business-to-Business (B2B) company, it's important to note the difference between a B2C marketing consultant and a B2B marketing consultant. Just like you wouldn't go to an impressionist painter to engineer a building, ensuring that anyone you engage for your business has the right tools and skills to get the job done properly is essential. As there is a distinct difference between consumer and business marketing, looking for an expert in the B2B realm is the first most important step.

A B2B marketing consultant is a Business-to-Business expert. Someone who has been immersed in and clearly understands the B2B sector, has lead B2B marketing, lead generation and

sales efforts, and who – through years of experience – has strategies and processes in place to perform analysis and build plans based on objective evidence and intelligent assumptions for success in the B2B realm.

HOW DO CONSULTANTS WORK?

After having discussions with you about your particular business situation, objectives, and needs, a marketing consultant will provide you with a proposal outlining their processes and deliverables along with a timeline and budget. Anyone suggesting that they can provide you with a plan before reviewing your business situation is not offering you actual consultation but rather a cookie-cutter approach, probably leveraging a process that is familiar to them. This might not be what your business requires.

HOW WILL I KNOW IF I NEED A MARKETING CONSULTANT?

Unlike an oil change or a haircut where it's obvious (or should be), there is no defined point when engaging a marketing consultant is an expected part of running your business. Most likely your business didn't come with a manual and making the decision to hire a consultant comes down to how you want to see your business grow or if you are facing specific sales, lead >>>



generation, market share, brand awareness or other type of challenge.

There are myriad situations in which a marketing consultant can be helpful. Depending on the size of your business, there are different levels of support available. Large enterprises will most often look to the large management consulting firms who offer whole teams of specialists, each looking to a particular piece of the business puzzle – including sales and marketing – to formulate their growth plans. For these types of organizations, this undertaking is onerous and requires an extensive timeline and budget. Their transformation can take years and they have internal stakeholders focused on supporting this transformation as a job priority.

For mid-market B2B companies, hiring a consultant through a B2B marketing firm is often the best use of budget and time since a huge, client-facing team is not required to get the job done. For these types of businesses, there are generally five reasons a marketing consultant is considered:

1. LOOKING FOR GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES OR EXPANDING YOUR MARKET

Growth is usually the number one objective of any business because it means increased market share, revenue and profits. Whether tapping more deeply into existing markets or expanding into new ones, growing the business is a strategic, analytical process that requires research and factual clarity. Conducting market analysis, feasibility studies, customer research, evaluating business readiness and then devising a strategic marketing and lead generation plan, requires B2B marketing expertise and time – two things that smaller and mid-sized companies often lack.

2. THERE IS A NEED TO RE-POSITION OR RE-BRAND A BUSINESS, PRODUCT OR SERVICE

Things are always changing, including trends, perceptions, markets, technologies, niche needs and so on. Understanding a growth opportunity or solving a sales problem based on

positioning or branding requires analysis - including qualitative and quantitative research - to identify what has to change and why. Once the analysis is completed, building a strategic plan to effectively execute and communicate the re-positioning or re-branding is key to overcoming the challenges that change can cause.

3. NO FORMALIZED MARKETING OR SALES STRATEGY

No business should be without one. It's that simple. If you or your team doesn't have the time or expertise to build one, hire a consultant to do it. Period.

4. THE MARKETING ISN'T WORKING

This happens and usually it's because of one of two reasons. Either the proper research and understanding about who the target audience is and what influences their decision-making process hasn't been conducted, or the marketing activities are being executed in an ad-hoc rather than consistent and strategic manner. The former is like throwing spaghetti against a wall and hoping

something will stick if you don't actually know who you should be talking to and what you should be saying. The second is like throwing an item from each of the four food groups against the wall and hoping it turns into a delicious meal.

5. DON'T HAVE SENIOR LEADERSHIP WITH DEPTH IN B2B MARKETING

This is often the challenge for smaller and mid-market companies and especially in traditional sales organizations. Either due to size or business specialization, having senior leadership with experience and expertise in B2B marketing seems like a luxury when the business is focused on sales and revenue growth. Yet, senior-level perspective and guidance is required to make the very best decisions when it comes to revenue transformation since, at some point, every organization requires lead generation and marketing support to nurture and grow prospects. Negating the need to hire another employee, a marketing consultant can provide this senior-level support as required, offering the business tremendous insight, perspective and value without having to invest in a senior-level salary and benefits.

WHAT CAN I EXPECT A MARKETING CONSULTANT TO DO?

Let's start with what they won't do. A senior-level marketing consultant isn't a marketing coordinator. They won't (or at least they shouldn't) run your day-to-day marketing or execute the operational marketing tasks themselves. They're senior strategists whose time is better spent identifying what work needs to be done and creating the direction for effective marketing and lead generation.

If you have an internal marketing team, a marketing consultant will help to manage them through the execution of the strategic marketing plan, providing feedback, insight, ROI analysis and guidance for the day-to-day execution. If you don't have an internal team to execute the plan, most marketing consultants will either recommend project

HERE ARE SOME SPECIFIC THINGS THAT MARKETING CONSULTANTS TYPICALLY DELIVER:

- Strategic marketing planning
- Executional road-mapping
- Communication audits and planning
- Business, product and service positioning and differentiation
- Market identification, segmentation and competitive analysis
- SWOT analysis
- Brand and product launches / market entry including feasibility studies
- CRM systems and marketing automation
- B2B marketing best practices and benchmarking

managers or are directly associated with a marketing firm that offers execution services as well as marketing consulting.

What's most important is that your strategy is executed by people dedicated to ensuring its success and that, after all the preparation and work that has gone into the plan, it doesn't collect dust in a corner, become outdated from lack of use, or become the secondary task of an employee with other priorities. Effective, transformative marketing and lead nurturing requires regular daily work to be successful.

AT THE END OF THE DAY, IT'S ALL ABOUT REVENUE GROWTH

While there's never really a wrong time to add a marketing consultant to your business planning processes, looking

for opportunities to improve bottom line and transform revenue growth through increased and improved brand visibility, market share, lead generation, prospect nurturing and overall sales, is the most compelling time to ensure senior-level B2B marketing expertise is a part of your business growth process.

Armed with their experience, perspective and insight, along with the analysis and factual research a B2B marketing consultant can provide, you can, together, make the very best decisions for your business – while keeping your eye on the day-to-day management of your current business success.

If you're ready to transform your business and take the next step with a [marketing consultant](#), or to find out more about marketing consulting, [contact us](#) today!



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