STOP PROCRASTINATING!

Hive⁹

## ...5 Excuses Keeping You from Better Marketing Planning

INTRODUCTION

Enterprise marketing organizations have a lot of moving parts. With so many different departments, teams, channels, and campaigns in play, the natural state of many large marketing orgs is chaos — a hodgepodge collection of plans, goals, and individuals focused on their own responsibilities without much thought to what's happening outside of their own bubble.

Almost half of all marketers are doing digital marketing without a plan. Even though research from the Content Marketing Institute consistently shows that content marketers that bother to create a strategy perform better, somehow businesses have a hard time making marketing planning a real priority.

That may be the status quo where you work, but it doesn't have to be. A clear marketing plan can get all your various teams on the same track and ensure they're making decisions based on what past data shows works.

Marketing planning shouldn't be seen as optional. If you want to do the kind of marketing that will help you achieve your goals and impress your CEO, you need a plan. And not just any plan, you need data-driven marketing planning that's specifically designed to help you reach your goals.

The need for marketing planning is clear, but actually making a commitment to free up resources, make the necessary investments, and fit it into the calendar in order to actually get it done can prove difficult. Many businesses find lots of excuses to put it off. We've heard them all, and we know that each one can be overcome so your organization can start down the path to better marketing results.
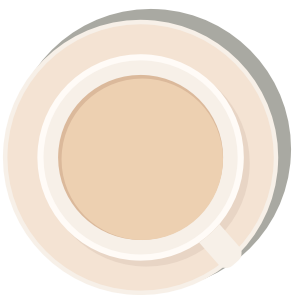
"We're just not there yet. We have other needs we should prioritize first."

If you feel like you're struggling with the basics and not yet at a point in your marketing where you're sophisticated enough to incorporate data-driven marketing planning, you should consider whether you're wasting resources now that could go toward smarter marketing that improves your results.

It's never too late to invest in marketing planning, but it's also never too early. Clearly, the best time to get it done is before you start marketing, but failing that, the next best time is right now.

When you start marketing planning, one of the first things that happens is you start to see the big picture – including what work and reporting you're doing now that either isn't working at all, or is being done inefficiently.

One of the next things that happens is that you sit down with your team to clearly define your goals. When you start mapping your marketing activities to your goals, then you immediately gain a clear focus. It's not a hodgepodge anymore – everyone's working toward something clear that they know they can track.

It's only then that you can start to see what's missing and what's not working. If your resources seem limited now, cutting out unnecessary efforts so you can redirect your resources for the greatest results is all the more important.

Tip: When B2B marketers work with Hive9, we focus first on visibility and collaboration and on reducing wasteful, error-prone manual reporting work. Then we move on to add goal setting and managing your revenue models (how your leads convert to revenue over time). For many organizations this starts with setting activity & upper funnel goals, and then advances over time.

Use ROI modeling: Invest one hour of your time and we can quantify the annual benefit of more effective planning, budgeting and measurement for your organization. While improving planning is something people often think they can put off, the combination of saving manual work and improving campaign effectiveness makes marketing planning a top 3 initiative in leading marketing organizations who have used the ROI model.

"No one's explicitly demanding we measure our contribution to revenue. Why bother?"

Even if no one's expecting you to show marketing ROI now, they likely will the moment budgets get tighter. Or worse, instead of asking you to produce measurements, they may just assume the worst and cut your budget without giving you a chance.

One of the things better marketing planning accomplishes is helping you work out a process that ensures every marketing activity you devote time and resources to has a point. Whether directly or indirectly, everything you do should be designed to help you contribute to business and revenue goals.

Marketing planning gives you a way to connect your activities to those goals and see how well they're paying off. For that to work though, you have to at least start the goal-setting process.

If you want the executives in the company to see the value in your work – and if you want to know yourself that the work you're doing is paying off – data-driven marketing planning is the thing that gets you there.

Tip: Goals in Hive9 can be set at any level - activity goals, response goals, inquiry goals, and more. The key is to start the goal setting process and the system will help your team become more data–driven. Hive9 lays the foundation for knowing the baseline performance, what revenue goals are reasonable and the path to best in class results over time.

"We don't trust our data quality, and don't have the resources to get the data into another system."

In working with B2B marketing teams, we have found that the fastest way to improve data quality is to shine a light on it. Our reporting can highlight gaps and track improvement over time. It helps you see more clearly when you can filter your data by business unit, product, geography and more.

When businesses maintain and share their data in spreadsheets over email, you always risk having an old spreadsheet that's out of date or one with inaccurate information due to human error. That's not saving you time or effort!

Bringing all your marketing data into one platform under a standardized process can increase your labor efficiency by up to 10% – not to mention cut down on the incidence of errors.

And if you go with the right marketing planning software, then you can easily import all the data you have in your spreadsheets now and then integrate the software with all of your other marketing platforms. With no effort on your part, all the data that resides within your CRM, MAP, and project management platforms will automatically be included in your marketing planning platform as well.

In other words, good technology can mean that the data maintenance required for improved marketing planning takes significantly less resources rather than more.

Tip: To get a jumpstart, Hive9 can load your initial plans for you. And Hive9 has productized, configurable integrations to Marketing Automation, Finance, Project Management and CRM systems. We simply need the proper permissions, and we do this work for you. Flat file integrations are also possible, and can be a quick way to get started with less open systems.

"My team is tired of being asked to spend time learning new marketing technology. Will they really use it?"

The marketing technology landscape is large and many businesses have fallen prey to shiny object syndrome, which can leave your marketing department with more software than you really need. It's understandable that some marketers are feeling overwhelmed.

A true marketing performance management solution isn't just an addition to your already busy marketing stack. It is an orchestration layer that works on top of your marketing stack, pulling and pushing data to and from other systems, so all your planning and measurement stays in one place.

Software that enables data-driven marketing planning will:
- Improve your results, which helps you impact revenue and secure the marketing budget you need.
- Help you save money by clearly showing you what activities aren't paying off, which can potentially open up some of the marketing budget for better-performing campaigns.
- Make collaboration between different teams and departments easier so that cooperation becomes more the norm than competition or hostility.
- Automate many of the processes that your employees must now do manually, saving them time and energy.

Better marketing planning doesn't just pay off for stakeholders – it offers tangible benefits to all the team members that will be using the marketing planning software.

Tip: Best practice templates are available for campaigns to save time and improve performance. Users readily adopt Hive9 as it provides more value and time savings over the current spreadsheets or MRM processes they have today. Hive9 gives the individual marketer visibility into how their activities fit within your overall marketing strategy, how their tasks fit in with the larger picture, how they contribute to the major goals, and how their activities are performing, which informs making the right changes to their plan. Rather than waiting for the quarterly or monthly performance report when it can be too late to make a change, marketers can use Hive9 at any time to see how a tactic is performing

Reason #5

and make data-driven decisions to improve their impact. Hive9 provides feedback loops for marketers and provides agility to 'course-correct' to maximize performance. Over time, keeping the system up to date becomes second nature to marketers as Hive9 provides value to them every time they log in.

"Our budgets are tight. We're not sure we can afford it."

If you're wasting a quarter of more of your marketing programs budget, can you afford not to fix that? Your business deserves marketing planning that's backed by data and aligned to clear goals.

An upfront investment can lead to quick ROI and savings. Hive9 clients have managed to free up to 27% of their marketing programs budget by optimizing their plans and budgets. And we offer starter packages that make it easy for businesses to start small if your budget is limited. Pick a small group or division and get started with their plans and budgets.

Tip: We can paint you a clearer picture of what better marketing planning would look like for your business and just what you'd be getting for the price. Sign up now for a demo by clicking the button below.

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