

**GROWTH PRIORITY:** Brand, Creativity, and Media

**GROWTH MANDATE:**

- Elevate the marketing craft.
- Establish the financial value of a brand.

**WHY IT MATTERS:** As part of our continuing Global CMO Growth Council working sessions we brought together CMOs from leading B2B companies to establish the frameworks and playbooks for brand growth in B2B-driven organizations.

**OBJECTIVES**

- Begin to elevate the craft of marketing by launching a new Global Growth Council working team dedicated to the opportunities and challenges of B2B-driven organizations.
- Establish the financial value of a brand by pressure testing Brand Growth KPIs to ensure that they are valuable to B2B organizations.

**DISCUSSION FOCUS**

- Humanizing your marketing – from B2B to B4H (Brands 4 Humans)
- Marketing Metrics that Matter Most to the C-Suite in a B2B Organization – how do you define marketing’s value? How is the brand enabling commercial success?

**THE NEED TO HUMANIZE B2B BRANDS**

B2B and B2C brands are similar in the sense that marketers are dealing with human beings in both cases. Many of the principles in B2C marketing have the potential to be even more powerful in B2B.

- **Convince and convict.** In B2B, there is an even bigger need to differentiate your brand. It is intellectually impossible to be preferred if you are not significantly differentiated. The best brands in the world channel values and personification traits to allow us to buy into them. First, they convince us. And then they *convict* us of what we stand for. Conviction is about brand trust.
- **Genuine human insights enable brand preference and perceived value.** For example, why did Dove create “Campaign for Real Beauty?” Because it’s not enough to be a good quality soap that you want people to “Buy.” You must also offer something that your customer will “Buy Into.”
- **Customers are at the heart of our business.** So why do we treat them like they have no heart? B2B relationships tend to be transactional in nature. But how much do we know about our B2B customer’s inner motivations, the psychological levers, the unarticulated needs? Marketers cannot abdicate “emotion” to the sales team.
- **What is the bigger dream?** The unarticulated needs, both rational and emotional, are often much richer and fuller of potential. It’s incumbent on B2B marketers to probe deeper and unearth them. What is their leadership agenda? Are they looking for game-changing solutions? Do they want to transcend their industry?
- **Flip the script.** B2B marketers often act more like a trafficking department, rather than as a growth partner. Our opportunity is to reset. Marketing has a bigger strategic role to ensure value is perceived and creates pricing power. This requires leadership, senior marketers who have gained the trust of the CFO and CEO, and a true understanding of business strategy, not just marketing tactics.



*The Global CMO Growth Council brought together 40 CMOs and industry leaders on March 23 to set the agenda for the new B2B Working Team.*

**KEY TAKEAWAYS**

1. **Move beyond buying.** B2C marketers already understand the critical combination of “Buying” and “Buying Into.” B2B marketers urgently need to understand this too.
2. **Business to human is extremely powerful.** In B2B, there is a disconnect between rational and emotional. We must unlearn this. There is power in emotion and creativity.
3. **Overcome the risk.** We are in business to persuade humans to take big risks. Your “animal” brain tells you to “mitigate this risk and not get burned by your decision.” Unlike B2C, risk is much bigger.
4. **Features and functions don’t sway decisions.** We have a big opportunity at the top of the funnel for emotionality. When you go down the funnel, rational decision-making starts to take over.
5. **Win the short-term to gain trust for delivering long-term value.** Show the C-Suite how marketing can drive sustained growth – on their terms.

## WHAT MARKETING METRICS MATTER MOST?

One of the dangers we face as B2B marketers is that there is a tendency for our success to be measured by how we spend money – *rather than on how we make money*. We need to develop clear metrics – not only for success, but *repeatable success*. The chart below reflects common ways that marketers measure success.

### How do you define the financial value of your brand?

**Brand Preference:** Reflects a desire to use specific brands, even when there are equally priced and equally available alternatives.

**Pricing Power:** Reflects a company's ability to raise prices without reducing demand

**Attention / Virality:** How quickly brands "catch on," at scale and momentum in culture and society for consumers to become aware and use a brand

**Brand and Category Penetration:** How are your sales compared to your category and total market?

**Customer Base and Incremental Sales:** The incremental KPI is one of the most consistent ways to measure marketing ROI

### What metrics are missing for B2B marketers?

- **Organic Traffic.** Looking at share of branded search, or non-paid traffic to the site. Some B2B marketers can follow this through to inquiry and sales. Customer segmentation, or geographic segmentation can help to validate the impact of branding on these things.
- **Client versus non-Client.** It is important to look at pricing power of existing clients versus non-clients. B2B marketing is often only one component – in a very long sales cycle. B2B marketers need to look at engagement across the entire cycle.
- **Push back on "brand play."** Action is important to measure in any form. If you don't get an action out of it, then you will never get a *transaction*
- **Skip the vanity metrics.** It's not about awareness. Your brand needs to affect mindset, handset, and heart-set. You need to be clear on how deeply you are driving branded content.

## OPTIMIZING MARKETING'S ROLE IN THE C-SUITE.

B2B marketers realize the customer is their most important audience. However, many seem to have forgotten about a second – almost equally important – audience: the C-Suite.

- **Recognize the entrepreneurial role of marketing.** Most B2B marketing over-indexes on demand generation, and under-indexes on entrepreneurialism. The brand is an extremely valuable intangible company asset. It drives all preference. It drives all demand. It is an asset that must be invested in and managed – like every other asset.
- **Start with the language of the C-Suite.** You have to demonstrate the value of your brand in their language. You need to show how the brand delivers business growth – and how you can sustain it.
- **Never have an opinion.** Always have a fact. You can't find a metric for everything. But you can get pretty close. It is the only way to make a point in the C-Suite.
- **Short term aligns with the C-Suite.** Short term is very ROI focused. Showing how well a brand does in three months – earns you the right to show value long term. When you can show short term growth – then the C-Suite will start believing you about long-term marketing impact.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

**The CFO is one of the CMO's most important stakeholders within the business.** This report published by The B2B Institute at LinkedIn, explores the approach of high-achieving CMOs and CFOs. Learn how to change the relationship with insights on the finance mindset based on shared language and trusted relationships within the business.

[CLICK TO DOWNLOAD](#)

The B2B Institute



## Marketing to the CFO:

The way back to VALUE for Marketers

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Working Team Session | B2B

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## JOIN US FOR THE NEXT B2B WORKING TEAM SESSION

May 6 | 11:00 A – 12:30 P (ET)

### FOCUS ON:

- Brand, Creativity, and Media
- Talent and Marketing Organization

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