

The Global CMO Growth Council, responding to requests from CMOs around the world, established a task force consisting of a select group of CMOs from leading small to mid-sized companies (SMCs). The mission of this group is to identify the unique challenges and opportunities of driving global business growth and societal good that could be better addressed by focusing on the needs, and strengths, of SMCs.

OBJECTIVE

The SMC Council serves as a catalyst for action toward achieving the mandates established by Global CMO Growth Council in October 2020, within smaller companies.

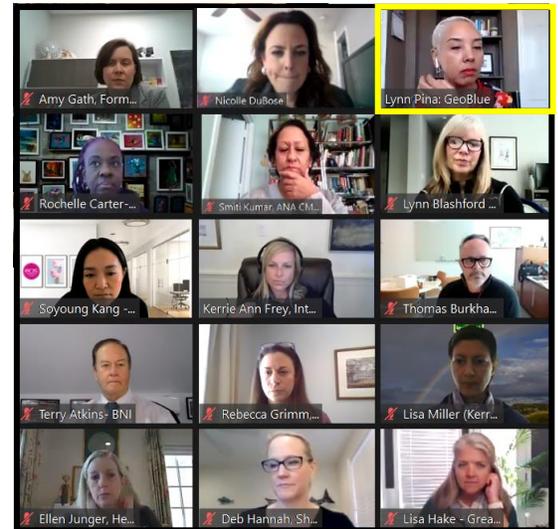
DISCUSSION FOCUS

The group explored two key elements centered around the Talent and Brand Priorities:

- Upskilling marketing teams to increase retention
- Agile culture at SMCs
- Measuring the long-term value of a brand
- Team burnout

Effective talent management is one of the most important strategic business leverages that SMCs can have in today’s uncertain market. Elements of successful talent management within many of the SMCs include:

- **Criticality of Talent:** SMCs may not have the luxury of filling spots with someone else in the company. Yet, hiring highly skilled employees or leaders from outside can be extremely costly. Carefully considering the most important needs of the business and preparing for internal hiring by having formal employee development and succession planning programs is critical.
- **Core Strength:** Once an SMC develops the talent pool they need, it is critical to keep colleagues engaged, feeling valued and performing well. Successful strategies include understanding the needs and motivations of each employee and responding to their needs by providing structured training resources. Like all businesses, SMCs must consider the costs of development. Resources, like the ANA, provide efficient ways for SMCs to invest in talent development.
 - [ANA Marketing Training and Development Center](#)
 - [ANA Marketing Knowledge Center](#)
 - [ANA Marketing Futures](#)
 - [Global CMO Growth Council Resource Center](#)



Nearly 30 CMOs from leading small to mid-sized companies joined forces on February 10, to discuss opportunities for growth in talent development and brand leadership.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. **Structured training and sharing.** Specialized training resources, like those offered by the ANA, and peer-to-peer sharing groups are considered valuable development tools.
2. **Brand value.** There is a need for tools and processes that enable more effective brand valuations.
3. **Connecting through community.** Community platforms, like Slack, offer connections with other Growth Council CMOs in a more intimate setting.
4. **Vendor evaluation.** Comparing notes on suppliers can help save time and money through more informed decisions.
5. **Shaping the industry agenda.** Organized coalitions – like ANA Committees, can help ensure that SMC voices are expressed and captured.

SPANNING THE SKILLS GAP

Even before the pandemic reshaped the way businesses of all sizes work, SMCs have had to address major skills gaps, compared to larger organizations.

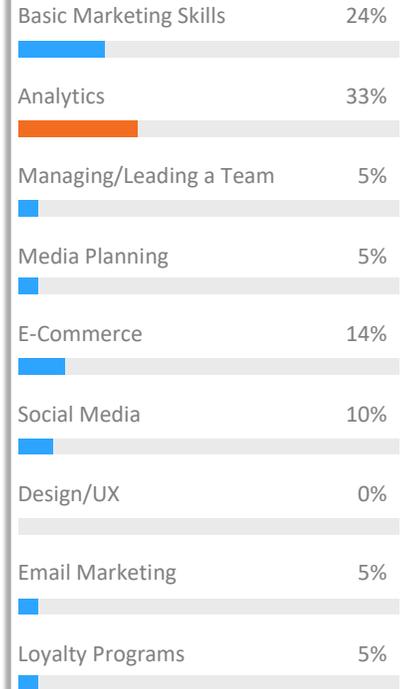
- **Limited Bench Strength:** SMC CMOs who transitioned from larger companies reported that the depth in certain specialties was shallow. Even some basic marketing and media skills that larger companies may take for granted can be limited in smaller environments. SMCs need to look for opportunities to cross-train in multiple disciplines.
- **The Data Desert:** Data sophistication and access to analytics can be a challenge. SMCs often lack the data infrastructure required to create a single point of view for brand health.
- **Low Growth Opportunities:** SMCs marketing teams tend to be younger, on average, than at larger companies. While younger teams can sometimes bring forward-thinking and innovative solutions, it may be difficult to keep them engaged in a smaller environment. Opportunities to gain broader knowledge and experience are fewer. Even something as basic as providing an appropriate mentor can be challenging.
- **Embrace the Forest.** (And the Trees.) Small companies are flatter than larger organizations. Sometimes when SMCs hire the experienced talent they need from larger firms, the transition from thinking solely at a higher level is a challenge. It's hard, for instance to go from thinking about strategy – to fixing the printer. SMCs should look for people who thrive on rolling their sleeves up, to drive growth across the entire organization.

MEASURING BRAND VALUE

When every dollar needs to support driving the business, SMCs must find creative ways to evaluate the impact of their marketing investments.

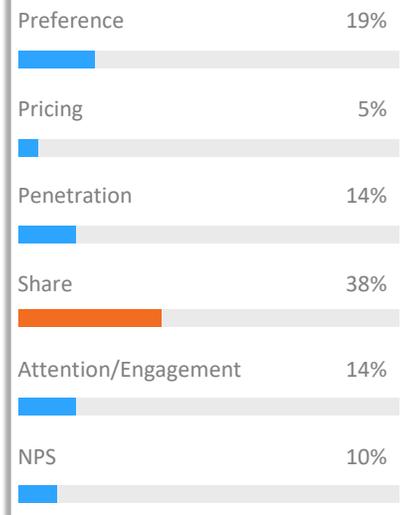
- **Adapt “Big Company” metrics:** Metrics like purchase rate, penetration, and new households are critical. Yet rather than ongoing tracking studies, some SMCs reported consolidating efforts into an in-depth attitude and usage study on annual basis.
- **Social listening:** Consumer conversations centered around brand, as well as NPS scores provide some SMCs with cost-efficient brand engagement metrics. In addition, YELP reviews and GOOGLE reviews provide snapshots of consumer sentiment. In some cases, it is possible to correlate increased traffic with the number of “stars” included in reviews. Other SMCs rely on “reputation partners” to aggregate reviews.
- **Syndicated Research:** Omnibus research solutions like Morning Consult and YouGov provide SMCs with an opportunity to pose brand preference questions to targeted global audiences in real-time.
- **The Long Tail:** B2B brands with long selling cycles, and high costs associated with switching in their category reported that they evaluate metrics related to the number of RFPs they are invited to pitch, how far they advance in the pitch cycle, and final stage percentage.

What skills do you “MOST” want your teams to learn/enhance?



POLLS WERE TAKEN DURING THE MEETING.

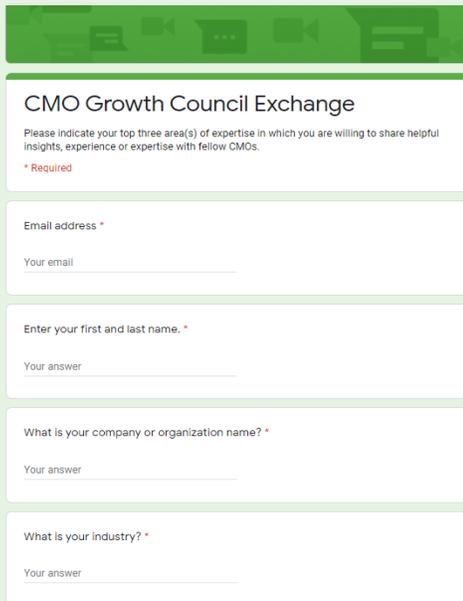
Which brand metric correlates “MOST” strongly to growth in your organization?



IT TAKES A NETWORK

Combine velocity and volatility with the 24/7 business cycle that most companies are operating under today, and it is virtually impossible for any leader to stay on top of his or her game by going it alone. For chief marketers at SMCs, staying on top can spell the difference between success and failure, for them as well as their companies.

- **The Need for an SMC Forum:** Several of the SMC CMOs expressed an interest in creating an information and experience exchange with each other that would enable them to share tips on suppliers and vendors, provide insights and watchouts for tools, like tech stacks, discuss challenges and solutions across shared experiences, compare benchmarks, and more. In addition to these SMC Working Sessions, we will be exploring a private Slack channel to enable this type of collaboration.



CMO Growth Council Exchange

Please indicate your top three area(s) of expertise in which you are willing to share helpful insights, experience or expertise with fellow CMOs.

* Required

Email address *

Your email

Enter your first and last name. *

Your answer

What is your company or organization name? *

Your answer

What is your industry? *

Your answer

The Global CMO Growth Council Exchange

In October 2020, the Global CMO Growth Council launched the first “**CMO Exchange**.” Open to client-side chief marketers only, nearly 120 CMOs from companies of all sizes have already registered. To enable ongoing productive dialog between SMC chief marketers, we strongly encourage you to participate.

To join the exchange, please reach out to the Global Growth Council at:

ana-masters-circle@ana.net

Global CMO Growth Council

Small to Mid-Sized Company

IWONA ALTER <i>The Habit Burger Grill</i>	DANIELLE HOLLANDER <i>Visit Orlando</i>
MOLLIE ANDREWS <i>Cox Business</i>	ELLEN JUNGER <i>Helzberg Diamonds</i>
TERRY ATKINS <i>BNI</i>	SOYOUNG KANG <i>eos Products</i>
DOUWE BERGSMAN <i>Piedmont</i>	DONNA LUCAS <i>Joni and Friends</i>
LYNN BLASHFORD <i>White Castle</i>	LISA MILLER <i>KerryGold Butter</i>
KEVIN BRIODY <i>Center for Creative Leadership</i>	JASON MORROS <i>Edison Properties</i>
THOMAS BURKHARDT <i>Marchon Eyewear</i>	PETER NEIMAN <i>Amalgamated Bank</i>
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REBECCA GRIMM <i>Cytel</i>	GLOBAL CMO GROWTH COUNCIL
LISA HAKE <i>Great Clips</i>	SMITI KUMAR <i>ANA</i>
DEB HANNAH <i>Shoe Carnival</i>	NICK PRIMOLA <i>ANA</i>
JUDY HOFFSTEIN <i>Crohn's & Colitis Foundation</i>	MEG WUBBENHORST <i>ANA</i>



JOIN THE FORCE

The SMC Task Force serves as a catalyst for action toward achieving Global Growth Council priorities, within smaller companies.

We are looking for chief marketers who are innovators within their organizations and are willing to work toward achieving the mandates established by the Global Growth Council, while holding themselves and their brands accountable for progress.

- **To join the SMC Task Force, reach out to:** ana-masters-circle@ana.net.
- **The next meeting of the SMC Task Force will be on Thursday, April 1st from 10:30 AM to 12:00 PM (ET).** [Register here.](#)

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ana-masters-circle@ana.net