

The Next-Gen CMO: Essential Skills & Leadership Strategies from Marketing Visionaries

Eric Fulwiler, Co-Founder & CEO
Rival

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I've spent a lot of time
interviewing CMOs...

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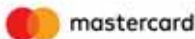
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Varo

ACTIVISION

who gives a
crap



The New York Times



150 interviews
40 roundtables
7 whitepapers

Uber



mint
mobile



Google



Robinhood

VISA



purple

Here We Flo



If there's one thing they all
agree on...

We are living through the
single biggest period of
disruption the marketing
world has ever seen.

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“It has become very clear to me that every single area of marketing is either obsolete or about to get obsolete and we need to reinvent and reimagine marketing totally. Because most of the marketing principles and marketing theories were formulated more than 50, 60 years back. At that time, there was no social media. There was no mobile phone. There was no internet. There was no artificial intelligence. There was no gen AI. There was no augmented reality. There were no blockchains, no cryptocurrencies. So, the world at which point in time when marketing theories were formulated is totally different than the world that we are in today.”

Raja Rajamannar , CMO Mastercard

The incumbent playbook
isn't fit for purpose.

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The challenger playbook
is winning.

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And the challenger CMO is
the next-gen leader for this
new world.

Definition of challenger

- Not about size or stage
- Not (necessarily) risk or disruption
- It's about being fit-for-purpose for the world of today
- It's about having zero “marketing debt”

A bit about me...



A bit about Rival...

- Our mission is to understand what challengers are doing differently to grow faster than incumbents
- Part media company: research, document, share, connect
- Part integrated consultancy: bring the challenger playbook to incumbent brands

Research and resources for today

Scratch: CMO
Interviews



Future of the
CMO



Amp CMO
Community



QR codes throughout!

3-5 Things

Think about 3-5 specific things
you want to do differently
based on what I share today...

What we're going to talk about today

- The role of the CMO
- The skills of the next-gen CMO
 - Speak the language of the board
 - Own and deliver commercial results
 - Make data/tech a competitive advantage
- Lessons and learnings from leading CMOs (both challenger and incumbents who are thinking/acting like challengers)
- One takeaway/action for each section

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The Role of the CMO

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The role of marketing and
the CMO is misunderstood.

And that's leading to
ineffective marketing and
marginalized CMOs.

2% of Fortune 1000 board members are marketers...

That's our fault.

Start with the definition of the discipline and the role

(ideally before you join)

“I think the role of a CMO is to drive change and deliver growth. And I think if more CMOs define themselves as a person who drives change and delivers growth, they would recognize that being an effective storyteller, both to the board, and to Wall Street, but I'll also add to your own employees, really matters. Your ability to tell a persuasive story and get other people to back your judgment with their money is key.”

Kristen Cavallo, ex. CEO Mullen Lowe, Martin Agency



“Good marketers make the businesses they work for more customer centric.”

Dean Aragon, CEO Shell Brands, Chairman ANA



“The CMO is responsible for bringing the mission of the brand to life in every aspect of the business.”

Sadira Furlow, CMO Tony's Choclonely



Marketing is everything that bridges the value of the product to the needs of the market.

“Choose the right CEO, not just the right business and brand.”

Andrew Davies, CMO Paddle



Action

Clarify and align your board to the definition and role of marketing in your organization.

Speak the Language of the Board

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Your job is not marketing.

Your job is growth.

“A strong CMO is a leader, manager, and board member first, and a marketer second. It’s the ‘work around the work’ that matters most.”

Andrew Garrihy, ex-CBO Huawei, CMO Didi



“The thing I’ve always been able to do well, and the thing that I think matters most for a CMO internally and externally is to make the complex simple and the simple exciting.”

Abey Mokgwatzane, CMO Investec



Speaking the language of the board

- Speak to the things they care about in language they understand
- Work backwards from their objectives and priorities not forwards from yours
- Treat the 'work around the work' as a fundamental part of your job

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Action

Identify the 3-5 most important jobs to be done in the 'work around the work' of your role.

Own and Deliver Commercial Results

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Marketing is a means to
an end.

No marketing for the sake
of marketing.

It's getting harder to hide in
the 'more with less' era.

“We're looking at software CMOs. And I say to CMOs when after I interview them and I'm giving them their first onboarding call to their new role – ‘I'm not threatening you, but deliver on your demand gen goal or lose your job. You and I can agree on the beauty and majesty of marketing and how important brand is, how important your tech stack is, how important it is that you have good data and reporting, etc. All these things are important. But in the end, deliver on your demand gen goal or lose your job.’”

Gary Survis, Operating Partner, Insight Partners



Next-gen CMOs are commercial owner/operators first and marketers second

Mosala Phillips, Old Mutual



Christina Stanley, Duck Duck Go



Soyoung Kang, Eos Beauty



Owning and delivering commercial results

- Get P&L experience
- Embrace more with less
 - Fraud & waste, outsized impact, tech-enabled efficiency, human-enabled effectiveness
- Develop a framework for innovation

Action

If you had half the budget you do now, what would you do differently.

Make Data and Tech a Competitive Advantage

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What would you do
differently if you were
starting your career now?

Who's going to be taking
your job in 10 years?

The rising tide of tech raises
careers that ride it and sinks
the ones that don't.

“It’s a marathon, not a sprint.”

Gary Vaynerchuk, CEO VaynerX



“The way I do it is I partner with my CIO in the company because they understand technology a lot more than I believe in understanding. So the whole idea is collaboration, get their perspective, get their advice, get their points of view in.”

Raja Rajamannar, CMO Mastercard



“Classic marketers who are behavioral/design driven vs the modern marketing who are performance, data driven, A/B testing ones. But when tech becomes table stakes it is not an advantage for companies, so differentiation comes from classical creativity. Follow the cycle. Good CMOs should understand both the performance and classical.”

Meghan Davis, CEO Dr Scholls, ex CEO Thinx



Let's talk about AI...



Eric Fulwiler · You

Co-Founder & CEO of Rival, ex CMO of 11:FS and MD of Vayner...

1w · Edited · 🌐

...

My 10 principles on AI in marketing right now.

1. AI will drive the biggest disruption this industry has ever seen.
2. BUT...We're in a big bubble right now (think internet in 1999)
3. The hype does not live up to the reality. (Seriously, can we all stop pretending? At best it makes good easy, but it can't do great).
4. Yet...because it will get better, even if the rate of improvement won't continue at this pace.
5. Just like every other tech hype cycle there's a ton of "innovation theatre" happening and "solution looking for a problem".
6. (And no, those big consultancies don't actually have "10,000 AI experts". They just want your money.)
7. The tech is just the middle layer - the data foundation beneath it and the human talent layer above it matter just as much.
8. Regulation and IP are a massive shoe that's going to drop.
9. This is marathon with many hills, not the flat sprint everyone's looking at right now.
10. Get in shape. But pace yourself and your business for a 10-year intentional journey, not a 1-year frantic chase.

Would love to hear your thoughts/builds... 📌

Kevin Green and 64 others

33 comments · 2 reposts

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Actions

1. Set and commit to regular 'marathon training'.
2. Assess and roadmap your team's data/tech capability.

Recap

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3-5 Things

- Start with the role of marketing
- Three most important skills of the next-gen CMO
 - Speak the language of the board
 - Own and deliver commercial results
 - Make data/tech into a competitive advantage
- ‘Challenger’ is mindset and model that’s fit-for-purpose for the world of today

One last thing...

Opportunity is proportional to
change for those who react to it.

Questions?



**Scratch
Podcast**



**Future of
the CMO**



**Amp
Community**

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Thank you!

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