



# THE ROLE OF THE **CMO** TODAY

BY

**DAVID POSTILL**

C-suite roles have been changing over the past few years to reflect a natural redistribution of core competencies and responsibilities. Functional responsibilities now overlap or may be found in different areas of organizations. For example, what was a finance competency might now belong in HR. Or what was an IT competency might now be shared with marketing. COVID has further heightened the interconnected and symbiotic nature of the senior executive team.

While the evolving nature of the C-suite is certainly a relevant topic, over the next few weeks, I want to share my perspectives on how the CMO role plugs into the mix.

Especially as we're coming out of COVID, it's important to pause and reflect on where this role is headed. The competencies and skills of a CMO need to be fluid to keep pace with rapidly shifting business and customer expectations. Yet, it's equally important for current corporate structures to understand what marketing does and where it fits within the organization.

As a marketing leader, I've been passionate about exploring how organizations can truly leverage the value of this C-suite role. In the slide below, I've included some of the topics that I look forward to having a dialogue about. Happy to hear your thoughts!

THE ROLE OF CMO TODAY:

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QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

# 1

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Beyond overseeing the marketing activities that typically come to mind, such as branding, advertising and digital technology, etc., what does the CMO role need to encompass today?

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Why is CEO and CMO alignment so important?

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Does the CMO need to be a visionary and change agent in our current environment?

# 4

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A Spencer Stuart study indicated that CMOs are spending increasingly less time in their posts. Why is that?

# 5

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Are companies truly leveraging the value of this C-suite role?



# TOP 5 AREAS OF FOCUS FOR CMOS.

BY

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As the world has shifted, so too have the roles of the C-suite. This change is particularly pronounced in the CMO role. Beyond overseeing the marketing activities that typically come to mind, such as branding, advertising and digital technology, there are additional areas that CMOs absolutely need to get right.



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## **ENSURE ALIGNMENT WITH CEO**

More than ever before, the CMO and CEO need to be working in lockstep. Given the emphasis on customer experience (CX), a brand's purpose, values, and how they are communicated within and outside of the company, the CMO needs to be a CEO's right hand in helping guide the organization.

## **EMBRACE THE EXPANDING MANDATE OF THE CMO**

COVID heightened the interconnected and symbiotic nature of the senior executive team. Today the CMO's mandate has both expanded and become more fluid. For example, a CMO can be called on as needed to step into the roles of a Chief Connection, Collaboration, and Innovation Officer.



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## **PRIORITIZE PEOPLE**

Above everything, companies need to prioritize caring for their employees, customers, and communities. It is no longer just within the CEO's mandate to drive an understanding of the role a company and brand plays within society. CMOs need to ensure the message of prioritizing people is communicated throughout the organization and to customers alike.

## FOCUS ON CX

CX is more important than ever along with the ability to be agile and responsive to shifting customer needs. Quite simply stated, marketing is the direct line between a company and the consumers. The CMO possesses the ability to influence and communicate the marketing message throughout the organization, which will in turn influence the level of CX the organization is able to provide

**REMAIN  
COMMITTED  
TO PURPOSE AND  
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The reality for CMOs is, and will continue to be, one of continual change. While it's important for marketing to stay committed to their organization's values and purpose, CMOs need to be open to change if they want to be visionaries, capable of driving innovation, growth and delivering a high level of customer experience. The CMO plays a pan-organizational role in helping bring needed change to fruition.



# WHY CEO & CMO

ALIGNMENT IS CRITICAL TODAY:

5  
CONSIDERATIONS

BY

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The last couple of years have given rise to an unprecedented amount of change. This has led to the need for the CEO and CMO to possess an enterprise-wide vision, change management skills, and a commitment to customer-centric thinking. For a company to thrive, it's more important than ever that a CEO and CMO are in alignment. Here are 3 reasons why:

## THERE IS POWER IN PURPOSE.

- COVID-19 and a focus on diversity and inclusion propelled us into an era of conscious consumerism. Data indicates that purpose-driven organizations are not only getting more attention but are also prompting consumer action.
- Purpose starts with the CEO, but its success is heavily reliant on the CMO. Quite simply stated, marketing is the direct line between a company and its brand and the consumers.
- Organizations need to demonstrate that their long-term commitment to their purpose guides their actions and the customer experience (CX) they offer.

## **SUCCESSFUL COMPANIES NEED TO BE CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE FOCUSED.**

- This requires a commitment to customer-centric thinking. To achieve this, the focus on CX needs to be understood and practiced throughout the organization.
- The CEO needs to allow the CMO adequate runway to foster the culture of CX necessary today.
- A CMO needs to have the CEO's support to build powerful relationships with other functions to develop and implement the systems, processes, and mindsets necessary to deliver the most relevant customer experiences.

## IT'S A **WIN-WIN** WHEN THE **CEO AND CMO** **COLLABORATE AND** **MUTUALLY SUPPORT** **EACH OTHER.**

- I've witnessed first-hand what can be achieved when a CEO and CMO are aligned, collaborate, and mutually support one another.
- Given the connection between CX and company growth, CMOs and CEOs need to continually work together to shape corporate strategy to align with customer needs and drive the bottom line.
- In turn, the CMO can bolster the CEO's goals and objectives, capitalize on opportunities that may have gone unrealized in the marketplace and demonstrate value to the board and shareholders.