



EXECUTIVE BRIEF

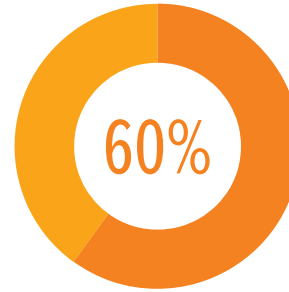
The Beginner's Guide to Managing Marketing Operations Requests

Introduction

As part of the marketing operations team, it's your responsibility to help teams across the organization run as smoothly as possible. You know what needs to be done, but too often you run into frustrating roadblocks. Projects get deprioritized. Fire drills derail plans. New initiatives don't seem to map to any established strategy. You, and the people you need to get work done, don't know where to focus your efforts.

It's a frustrating scenario that plays out every day in marketing. In a recent survey, 60 percent of workers reported feeling completely overwhelmed at work, while another one-third of respondents said their daily workload doesn't seem to impact company strategy.¹ These frustrations are rooted in broken processes, workplace chaos, and misplaced priorities.

Fortunately, marketing operations has the ability to solve these challenges. You know which processes need to be standardized and optimized to maximize the



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impact of every campaign. You leverage data to connect the dots in the customer's journey—and make even more insightful decisions the next time around. A well-oiled marketing operations team can provide a 15 to 25 percent improvement in marketing effectiveness, based on return on investment and customer-engagement metrics. Yet, many marketing operations teams still struggle to see that improvement.²

Read on to learn common marketing operations request roadblocks, as well as what you can do to take the guesswork out of request management.

Where is the work coming from?

Your team is the organizational catchall that helps the business run smoothly. And as the scope and role of marketing operations has expanded, so have the demands on you from all across the organization. Unfortunately, 64 percent of workers said there is often confusion at their company about who is doing what.³

What does this mean for your day-to-day? Creatives lean heavily on your team to help project manage and prioritize creative requests. Strategic marketers rely on your strong data management and analytical skills. Content marketers turn to you to help funnel content to the internal sales teams. Marketing automation teams will expect help optimizing processes and streamlining campaigns.

But requests aren't limited to marketing. Sales teams also rely on your team for insight into upcoming marketing campaigns and top-performing content to speed up the sales cycle. And, as one of the more data-driven arms of marketing, many groups across the organization will lean on your team's analysis when gauging the effectiveness of a campaign or the value of new technologies and investments.

No doubt, your team is juggling requests from all across the organization, and it can be tough to sift through the noise to focus on what's most important.

3 Easy Steps to Streamline Marketing Operations Requests

Not only are requests coming at you from every department in the company, but from every possible angle: top down, bottom up, and even sideways. They come in the form of emails, water cooler chats, ad-hoc conversations, IMs, and phone calls. They range from nice-to-have to urgent and mandatory, and it's on you to decide what's actually mission critical and get it all into the workflow. The best place to start refining your workflow is at the beginning—the initial request.

1 Standardize the request process.

Too often, the squeakiest wheel gets their project prioritized, regardless of its value to the larger business. It's your team's job to sift through the noise to determine what to work on next.

By documenting the baseline for how work gets done, your team will be able to identify inefficiencies and start to standardize processes and improve workflows. To do so, it's important to streamline request management by establishing a central location to submit all work requests. The solution can be an online form, an email alias such as requests@yourcompany.com, or a Marketing Work Management solution. With all requests in one location, you can then see, prioritize, and assign all work based on factors such as downstream impacts, urgency, requestor importance, and the team's overall strategic goals.

2 Get aligned.

There are many reasons why work can feel like, well, work. Office politics, lack of appreciation, and poor direction can all have a negative impact on productivity and morale, and 38 percent of B2B companies cite inefficient processes or workflows as one of the most challenging obstacles to marketing success.⁴

Companies like Google have found a way to alleviate these common workplace complaints by setting quarterly objectives that map to a larger

strategic goal for the organization. Teams then set goals that align to the company strategy, provide clear direction, and keep each worker focused on an achievable goal. You can fix your current process by prioritizing marketing and other departmental requests based on how they align with agreed-upon strategic initiatives or quarterly or yearly corporate goals. You may use a tiered or scored system, leaving little question as to which projects get first dibs.

3 Assign the work to the right resources.

Oftentimes, managers assign work to the same people. Sometimes it's preference and other times it's the convenience of who's available. But this assignment process leaves some overwhelmed while others don't have enough to do. This lack of balance can cause delays and projects to be delivered late.

To properly assign work, you must first know who is available. That view opens the door to choosing the right person for the job. A tool that shows availability as well as previously tracked data—time spent on projects, for example—gives you one perspective on resource strengths. Also consider allowing employees to self-identify strengths and interests. With that information, you can look at who is available for new projects and who will be the best fit. With that system, you don't have to worry about some people with overflowing workloads while others sit idle.

Run a Smooth Operation with Workfront

The right tools can help you increase your team's value in measurable ways. Embracing a more holistic approach to managing your team's work with a Marketing Work Management solution like Workfront will help you:

- **Understand** the source and type of work requests
- **Prioritize** work requests by aligning with company's strategic initiatives
- **Streamline** workplace collaboration and speed project completions
- **Provide full visibility** into work, data collected, and insight gained

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