

chartwell  agency

More hands on deck!

Hire internally or work
with an agency to
get more done



We've all been there

realizing that the demands on your marketing department exceed your team's availability – or capabilities – to meet those expectations.

While you probably anticipate peak seasons with higher-than-average demands on your team, when those needs consistently outpace resources, you likely need more hands on deck and it may be time to consider growing your marketing team by either hiring or working with an agency. So which path is the best? The truth is that it's different for every organization and at any given moment.

So, when your “to-do” list isn't consistently getting “to-done,” here are some hints to help you evaluate which path is right for you.



What's on your plate?

There's a reason marketers are tired – we're delivering messages across more platforms and channels than ever before. As communication technology explodes, it adds to, rather than replaces, traditional tactics. Marketing departments are juggling content strategy, digital marketing, social media, reputation management, direct mail marketing, websites, in-location marketing, internal communications, and more.



Before you make the case for adding a team member or outsourcing,

take a close look at what's on your plate and be
prepared to make the case to your C-suite.



There are some obvious cues that will resonate with that audience:

Important tasks are not getting completed or are not getting the time and attention they deserve.

The next time leadership asks for your team to lead a new project or initiative, say, “Sounds exciting and we’d love to take that on. What current initiative should this replace?” Giving voice to the choice provides valuable insight.

Growth is stalled.

It’s hard to plan for the future when you’re constantly fighting fires. As your team struggles to meet daily demands, you lack the mental and emotional bandwidth to think at the 10,000-foot level, which is central to fueling growth.

Your vision for the future of the organization exceeds your team’s ability to deliver for that vision.

Big ideas should inspire and energize, but when you find yourself unable to dedicate attention and resources, those big ideas turn into frustration.

Specialized capabilities are necessary to complete the work.

We are not all experts in everything, and sometimes we rely on subject matter experts to deliver the results we need and expect. Without those specialized resources, results will take longer and likely be lackluster in results.

If you can share

what you're able to do with the resources you have as well as what you could accomplish with additional hands, the conversation becomes investment focused and therefore more likely to unlock budget.



Hire or outsource

Evaluating your options

Once you've secured support for additional budget, you can determine how to allocate those dollars. Do you want to add another FTE to your team or leverage the capabilities of an agency? Here are considerations that can help you evaluate the pros and cons of each strategy.



Option #1

Hire

Hiring allows you to have a person within your organization and focused on your goals full time.

To hire, you first need to determine what type of position and skills you're hiring, then consider the cost. Some costs like salary are obvious while others, like the time and attention needed to support and grow that individual, are hidden but still very real.



Consider the following when thinking of hiring:

Once you've assessed the considerations, you can evaluate whether hiring is the right move.

Be clear about culture

The saying goes that “Culture eats strategy for lunch,” and that’s true. Define the culture you want to exemplify in your department and be clear about what that looks like in a candidate.

Determine the level of your hire

Are you prepared to help support a more junior staff person or do you need an experienced senior marketing professional to hit the ground running? In addition to the varying salary requirements, you’ll also need to consider management and professional development demands.

Assess the “must have” skills

You probably have a wish list of skills for which you’re looking for a perfect fit. Our guess is that list is pretty long and you’re hoping for a special unicorn of a candidate to come across your desk. Be realistic and think about your priorities. Where do you need expertise, where is capability sufficient, and where can you develop the skills with mentorship and training on the job?

Be prepared to reduce churn

While the first step is hiring a strong candidate, the second step is keeping (and growing) that individual. Consider what it will take to create the environment a candidate needs to be successful. What will s/he need from you as a manager or other teammates? What resources are necessary for success? How will you keep that right fit person in a seat within your organization?



Hiring Pros & Cons

Pros

- Dedicated attention of an FTE
- Ability to grow organizational expertise
- Flexibility to move within the department's needs

Cons

- Skill set of one person
- Management and resource demands to support that individual
- "Right-fit" candidates are hard to find and keep



Option #2

Work with an agency

For many organizations, working with an agency is a way to scale marketing output quickly and effectively.



Here are considerations when looking at a partnership.

Evaluate agency breadth and depth

Working with an agency often means you get the depth and expertise of a team of professionals. Not all agencies are the same though. You may want to consider whether you are looking for a partner with a depth of specialty or full-service capabilities. Know what the agency can offer and their experience with clients like you.

Ask about onboarding and tools

Most agencies can hit the ground running, but you'll want to know what time and resources you can expect for onboarding. Gauge their familiarity with the tools your team uses for collaboration or see what a partnership with them might bring to the table for your team.

Be prepared to define the relationship

The most successful partnerships have clear expectations. Do you want a partner to fully take a scope of work off your shoulders? Is the ability to pivot and be flexible important to you? What goals and deliverables do you expect? Since an agency is not a full-time employee, communication is key to success.

Again, look for cultural fit

A cultural fit is critical to the success of both parties, so make sure it feels like a love match. Working with an agency should feel like handing things over to a trusted team member, so find a partnership that feels easy and delivers results that make everyone look good.

Consider flexibility

An agency knows it must deliver results and the relationship is never guaranteed. This gives you flexibility as an organization – if something isn't working you can make a change quickly and easily.

Agency Pros & Cons

Pros

- Team of experts
- Focused on delivering results and showing value
- Ready to hit the ground running
- Exposure to tools and resources available through the agency

Cons

- Not fully integrated into your team
- Handoffs and scope of work needs to be clearly defined
- Access to internal information/resources can be limited



But what about budget?

While these are all important considerations, the decision often comes down to a big question – what does the budget support?



When looking at hiring or working with an agency, there are multiple variables to consider:

Salary is only part of the total cost of employment.

Remember the base salary is just part of the equation. According to most human resource calculators, there is a 25-40 percent multiplier on a salary to cover the total compensation package (unemployment insurance, social security, 401K, disability, health insurance, etc.) A full-time marketing manager with a base salary of \$70,000 could have a total cost of employment of \$87,500 - \$98,000.

Budget Comparisons

Full Time Marketing Manager	\$70,000	vs.	Agency Retainer	\$7,000/mo.
Benefits Multiplier (Unemployment Insurance, Social Security, 401K, Disability, Health, etc.)	(20 - 40%)		Benefits Multiplier (Unemployment Insurance, Social Security, 401K, Disability, Health, etc.)	0%
Total Cost	\$87,500 - \$98,000		Total Cost	\$84,000

Ask what your agency can offer in terms of budget options and structure.

Agencies often offer different types of budgetary relationships. A project-based or draw-down budget for the year allows the agency to bill work as it is completed within an approved budget or project estimate. A retainer relationship generally bills a set amount at an established cadence (monthly, quarterly, annually). Find out what flexibility there is within an agency's contractual relationship and know what your obligations are.

Know the length and financial requirements of an agency contract.

Hiring is (hopefully) a longer-term commitment, but if you decide to work with an agency, find out what its contract outlines for the terms of the relationship. Is it an annual contract, month-to-month, or project-based? What are the contractual commitments for both parties and what notice is required for a change?

If you can't decide whether it is best to hire or work with an agency, the answer may be that a hybrid model is best.

You hire a more junior team member to build an internal team that can grow with you over time, and you lean on an agency partner to lead specialized projects, manage peaks periods, or supplement your team with a more limited scope of work.

Hybrid Model	
Full Time Marketing Specialist	\$50,000
Benefits Multiplier (Unemployment Insurance, Social Security, 401K, Disability, Health, etc.)	(25%)
Annual Expense	\$62,5000
Agency Retainer	\$4,000/ month
Annual Expense	\$48,000
Total Cost	\$110,500

Want more of an inside scoop?

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Meeting the demands in this evolving marketing landscape can be challenging and exciting. Whether you decide that adding to your team or working with an agency (or both!) meets your needs, ensuring your team has the resources necessary to be successful will be the ultimate key to your success.

We're happy to share additional insight - our team has been on both the client and agency side of the table so we can share the good and not-so-good of all the options we've shared.

Of course, if you decide the time is right and you would like to explore what a relationship with Chartwell Agency could look like for your organization, we'd love to connect.

