



Fabric course guide:

How to choose the right marketing partner
to drive your business forward

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HOW TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT MARKETING PARTNER TO DRIVE YOUR BUSINESS FORWARD

Choosing the right partner to support with your marketing strategy can be an overwhelming task.

Not only can making the wrong choice send your strategy into a spin, but managing a relationship that's the wrong fit takes up heaps of time, which marketers just don't have. But when you build a strong relationship with a partner who understands your organisation inside out, you can save time and resource whilst making your marketing more effective.

Working with external partners is a great way to tap into expertise without having to add to the full-time payroll. There's tons of freelancers and agencies who can support your internal teams so you can focus on the big picture. This can still be a major investment for any organisation, so it's important to make sure you choose the right partner up front. To help you get the most out of your external relationships, we've broken down the key things you need to consider when choosing a supplier to work with.

KEY THINGS TO CONSIDER

1. Their understanding of your requirements

First things first, you need to make sure you're crystal clear on your own requirements. Make sure your organisation has its objectives defined and that you have some tangible goals to work towards. Knowing these up front will really help you communicate what you want to get out of the partnership.

Then consider what skills you have in house and where there are gaps that need bridging, this will give you a clearer idea on where you need to bring in external specialists. If you're looking for a whole range of skills, you may be better working with a full-service agency vs coordinating a range of partners.

Make sure any potential partners understand your requirements fully and don't be afraid to ask for projections. Whilst you can't always hold your chosen partner to these, it's good to see what impact they believe is achievable. If you're focused on outcomes right from the start, your external partners will be able to better manage and (hopefully) deliver on your expectations.

2. Budget

Next up, you should determine what budget you have available to spend on external resource. Whilst you may not share this with prospects, having this information clear in your own mind will really help you when narrowing down your options.

3. Experience

Get to know a potential partner's experience by asking about any similar projects they have delivered. This could be in terms of tactic (i.e. digital campaign, website, brochure) or if they have worked with similar organisations in your industry. Ask them to detail their successes and where they have overcome issues in the past, this will help you make an informed decision when choosing who to partner with.

4. Case studies

Ask to see any related case studies so you can see the quality of work. A beautifully designed case study can draw you in, but make sure it also includes results. You need to get a full picture of a potential partner's track record, so ask for information on return and any other associated data that evidences their ability to deliver.

5. Cost vs value

Prioritise value over price and don't just pick a supplier because they are cheaper. Some agencies and freelancers cut corners and it can end up costing you more in the long run. Consider the range of services on offer and the level of expertise when deciding on your external partner.

6. Chemistry

Always meet with potentials before making your decision. Make sure you ask who you'll be working with on the team and set up a chemistry meeting with them so you can decide if it's the right fit. This is so important as you'll likely have lots of contact with your partners, so you want to make sure your personalities and values are aligned.

7. Contract

Make sure you have a contract agreed up front and that you agree to the terms. Check for any hidden costs that might sneak in at a later date and make sure your finance team are aware of the payment terms. Within your contract, there may be an agreed number of amendments for each project so make sure you note this down and collate your team's amendments to avoid any additional costs.

8. Process

Lastly, you should ensure you're happy with how a potential partner approaches your project and if they are happy to flex in their process. Think about how often you'd like to review progress and how you'll measure results. Make sure a potential supplier is willing to be accountable and has reporting factored into their approach so you can see they are committed to working towards your wider goals.

NEW PARTNER CHECKLIST

The checklist below serves as a great reminder of all the things you need to consider when choosing an external partner. You could even use this as a score chart when deciding which partner to work with.

- They understand the organisation and overall goals
- Projections are included in the proposal
- They have worked with organisations in our industry
- They have experience delivering similar projects
- They have a track record of delivery including results
- Case studies have been included in the proposal
- Their previous work is of a high standard
- Costs are clearly outlined and the value is evident
- There is a chemistry fit
- A contract has been provided and terms are clear
- They are flexible in their process
- They are willing to be accountable
- Regular reporting is factored into the approach