

# Reshaping the CEO, **AMPLIFIED**

Reshaping marketing and business development

**smps**<sup>®</sup>  
Missouri Valley  
Regional Conference

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research collaboration

## Thanks SMPS MVRC!

fresh content, one  
of our first runs  
with expanded  
input

first time  
presented since  
January 2020!

feedback  
welcome!



Welcome



Donna Corlew FSMPS, CPSM  
SMPS Nashville

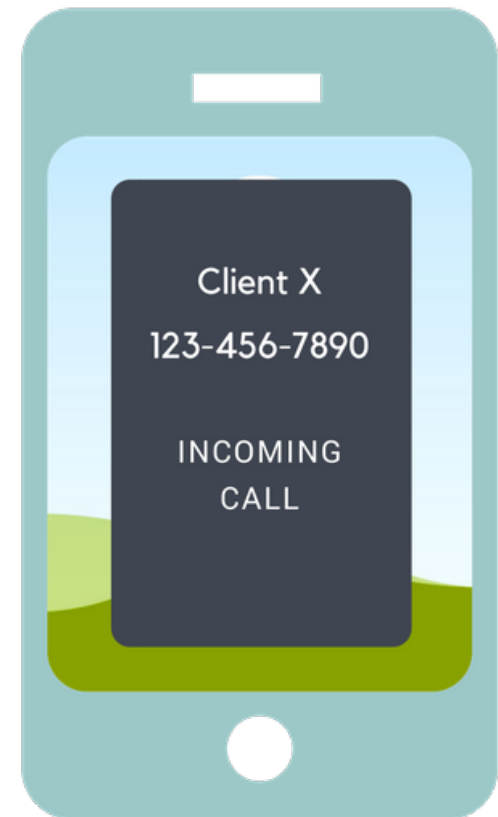


Frank Lippert FSMPS, CPSM  
SMPS Sacramento



# Why are we here today talking about this?

- Is it just me or...
- OK, let me tell you about this one...
- Gotta sec...
- I might be crazy, but...
- Hey, check me on this...

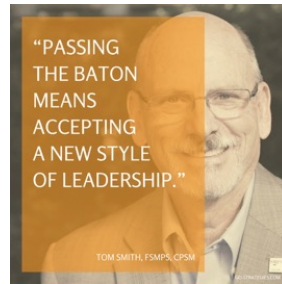


Let's check

- CEO perspective
- Marketing perspective



# Big picture



# My generation

- It's hard to label yourself and fit in perfectly to any one generation



# Exercise

*make a mental note*

Never

Occasionally

Frequently

Always

# What's your generation?

- I prefer to listen to the opinions of others, rather than do all the talking.

Never

Occasionally

Frequently

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# What's your generation?

- I am ready to receive negative feedback from my team members.

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# What's your generation?

- I am alert to small nonverbal cues when interpreting communication.

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# What's your generation?

- I summarize and reflect on what is said in order to check mutual understanding.

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- I prefer to ask open-ended questions rather than closed ones.

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# What's your generation?

- I believe good communication is based on seeing different views.

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# What's your generation?

- I keep telephone and communications as direct and brief as possible.

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What's your generation?

Great

Boomer

X

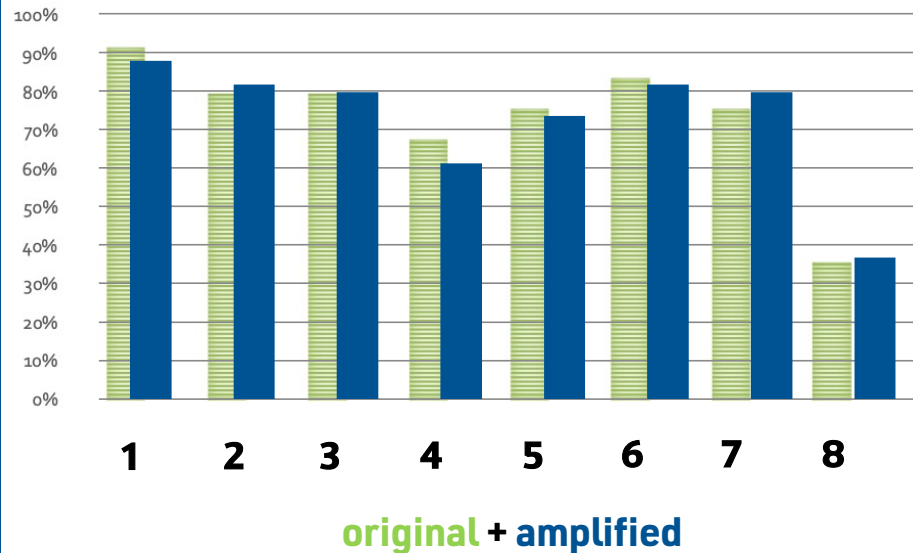
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# What's your generation, CEO?

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# What's your generation, CEO?

Describe your decision-making style.  
Check all that apply.



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7. If asked for advice, I offer it in the form of suggestions, not directions.
8. I keep telephone and communications as direct and brief as possible.

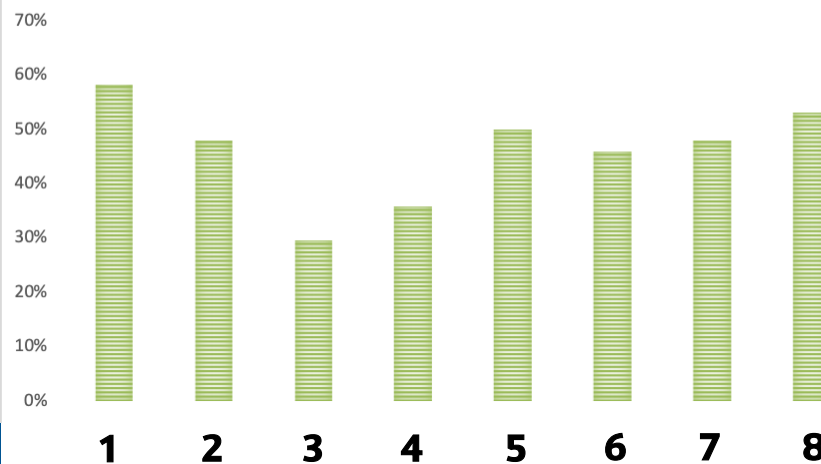
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# What's your CEO's generation, Marketer?

- My CEO prefers to listen to the opinions of others, rather than do all the talking.
- My CEO is ready to receive negative feedback from my team members.
- My CEO is alert to small nonverbal cues when interpreting communication.
- My CEO summarizes and reflects on what is said in order to check mutual understanding.
- My CEO prefers to ask open-ended questions rather than closed ones.
- My CEO believes good communication is based on seeing different views.
- My CEO keeps telephone and communications as direct and brief as possible.

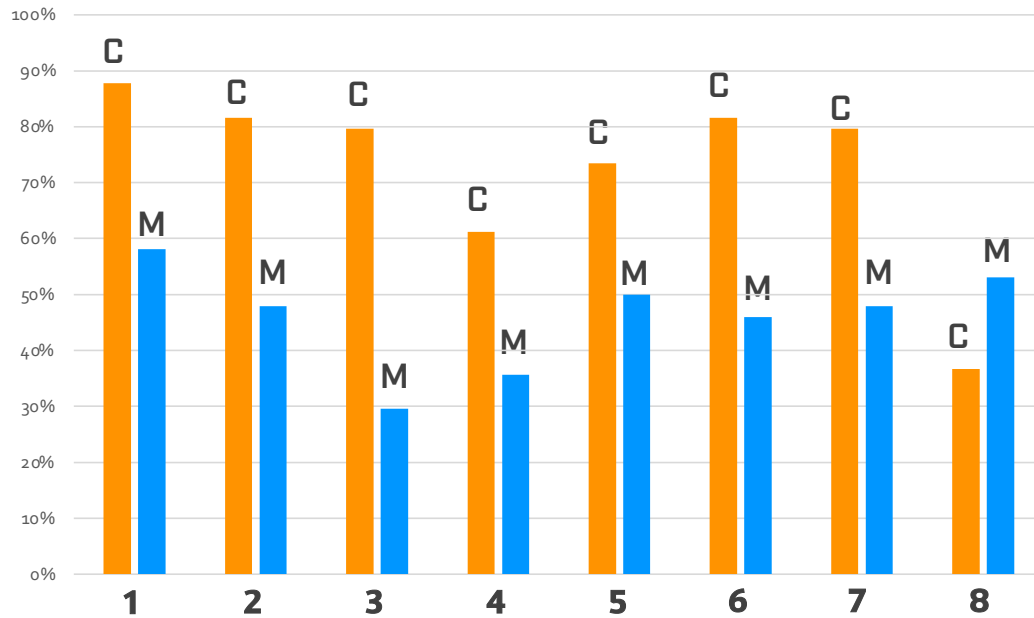
# What's your CEO's generation, Marketer?

Describe your CEO's decision-making style. Check all that apply.



1. My CEO or president prefers to listen to the opinions of others, rather than do all the talking.
2. My CEO or president is ready to receive negative feedback from my team members.
3. My CEO or president is alert to small nonverbal cues when interpreting communication.
4. My CEO or president summarizes and reflects on what is said in order to check mutual understanding.
5. My CEO or president usually asks open-ended questions rather than closed ones.
6. My CEO or president believes good communication is based on seeing different views.
7. If asked for advice, my CEO or president offers it in the form of suggestions, not directions.
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comparing CEO & Marketer responses



1. I prefer to listen to the opinions of others, rather than do all the talking.
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# Say, what?

# Big picture

There *is* a new  
leader at the table.

Big picture

**sm<sup>ps</sup>**

**business transformed  
through  
marketing leadership.**

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We've all seen plenty of leaders who wittingly, or unwittingly, mimic the bad behaviors of their predecessors.



Is the thinking about marketing in A/E/C changing?



Are we getting a more significant seat at the table?

**New  
generation  
means new  
thinking?**

# First up, CEOs

- I am the ultimate go/no go decision maker.
- I get involved only when asked by marketing leadership.
- I am involved in all aspects of marketing.
- I talk to the marketing staff almost every day.
- I meet with marketing staff regularly.
- I seek advice and ideas regularly from marketing staff.
- I hire good marketing people and let them run their department.
- I am often the middle-person between marketing and our seller/doers.

## CEO results

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>50%

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65%

## Next up, Marketers

- I get them involved only when needed.
- I talk to the CEO or president almost every day.
- I meet with CEO or president regularly.
- I seek advice and ideas regularly from the CEO or president.
- I depend on the CEO or president to be the ultimate decision maker.
- I go to the CEO or president to be the middle-person between marketing and our seller/doers.
- I have a good working relationship with my CEO or president.
- I laugh with my CEO or president often.

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43%

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# But, are we sure this is happening?

We asked the respondents to reflect back.

# CEOs, please describe the relationship between the *former* CEO and marketing

- They were the ultimate go/no go decision maker.
- They were involved only when asked by marketing leadership.
- They were involved in all aspects of marketing.
- They spoke with the marketing staff almost every day.
- They met with marketing staff regularly.
- They sought advice and ideas regularly from marketing staff.
- They hired good marketing people and let them run their department.
- They were often the middle-person between marketing and our seller/doers.

**CEOs, please describe the relationship between the *former* CEO and marketing**

- They were the ultimate go/no go decision maker. **30%**
- They were involved only when asked by marketing leadership. **33%**
- They were involved in all aspects of marketing.
- They spoke with the marketing staff almost every day.
- They met with marketing staff regularly. **18%**
- They sought advice and ideas regularly from marketing staff.
- They hired good marketing people and let them run their department. **25%**
- They were often the middle-person between marketing and our seller/doers.

# Extra comments for CEOs and Marketers

## from Marketers

- Decisions are typically made together after reviewing the input from others and considering possible unintended consequences.
- My President is not only a trusted colleague, but also a friend.
- Our CEO likes to be kept up to date on the progress of things but doesn't always need to be involved in decision making.

## from CEO

- We did not have a marketing staff when our former CEO ran the company.
- **With our former CEO, I was the head of the marketing team. We shifted to allow a marketing person run the firm.**

# Things are changing

How so?



# CEOs: How has marketing changed?

- Marketing has become more empowered to make decisions.
- Marketing seems to be clashing with seller/doers more.
- Marketing has become more than a proposal machine.
- Marketing is seen an integral function in the company.
- Marketing has a seat at the company decision-making/leadership table.
- Marketing really hasn't changed much, might be busier.
- Marketing turnover has been high.
- Marketing has become a bigger challenge to deal with in the company.

# CEOs: How has marketing changed?

- Marketing has become more empowered to make decisions.
- Marketing seems to be clashing with seller/doers more.
- Marketing has become more than a proposal machine.
- Marketing is seen an integral function in the company. **80%**
- Marketing has a seat at the company decision-making/leadership table. **64%**
- Marketing really hasn't changed much, might be busier.
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# CEOs: How has marketing changed?

- Marketing has become more empowered to make decisions. **44%**
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# What about decision making?

Is go/no go getting better?



# What about decision making?

- Seller/doers make (or made) go/no go decisions.
- Principals/leadership make (or made) go/no go decisions.
- Marketing makes (or made) go/no go decisions.
- It is (or was) a collaborative process.
- Everything is (or was) generally a go decision.

# Decision making 5 years ago, according to CEOs

- Seller/doers made go/no go decisions.
- Principals/leadership made go/no go decisions.
- Marketing made go/no go decisions.
- It was a collaborative process.
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## Decision making now, according to CEOs

- Seller/doers make go/no go decisions.
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- Marketing makes go/no go decisions.
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- Everything is generally a go decision. 8%

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# How about the marketing and seller/doer interface?

Is this getting better?

## How is the seller/producer-to-marketing interface changing in your firm?

- Very collaborative and productive.
- Usually collaborative and productive.
- Occasional hiccups, but mostly collaborative and productive.
- It's evolving but improving.
- We need help.

# CEO perspective on seller/owner- to-marketing interface

- Very collaborative and productive.
- Usually collaborative and productive.
- Occasional hiccups, but mostly collaborative and productive.
- It's evolving but improving.
- We need help.

40%

# CEO perspective on seller/doer- to-marketing interface

## Comments from CEOs

- As a small business with diverse business lines, we struggle to find the perfect forum and definition of "our marketing team."
- Seller-doers becoming more armed by marketing, and thus more comfortable in the role. Process working. They will get better at it with time/experience.

# Marketer perspective on seller/doing- to-marketing interface

- Very collaborative and productive.
- Usually collaborative and productive.
- Occasional hiccups, but mostly collaborative and productive.
- **It's evolving but improving.**
- We need help.

# Marketer perspective on seller/doer- to-marketing interface

## Comments from Marketers

- Our seller doers don't know how marketing works.
- They're not used to having someone challenging/pushing them to think strategically.
- Seller-doers are becoming more armed by marketing, and thus more comfortable in the role. Process is working. They will get better at it with time/experience.

## Wrapping up

- We asked **CEOs** "what advice can you offer for other new CEOs regarding marketing?"



# CEO advice



Hire great people - make sure they are the right culture fit.



Trust your marketer/marketing team.



Marketing is not just proposals.



Marketing/marketers are a valuable company-wide resource, creative, integral to organization's success.



Advocate and support marketing/marketers.

# CEO advice



Hire the best and the brightest, **pay them equal to the top management**, make sure they are at the leadership table and let them do their thing.



**Listen more**...not just hear. Keep an opened mind and collaboration is the key to growth.



It is not a dispensable overhead expense **and just as essential to the firm as any technical role.**



Marketing **needs to have a voice at the table**, not just a cog in the machine. This allows for alternative thinking resulting in alternative ideas.



**Marketing is at the heart of the firm.** It allows insight into talent gaps, client perspectives, team morale, and overall financial outlook of the firm.



You need to **give marketing clear direction.** Everyone's interpretation of marketing is different, but they should truly understand how to impact the business.

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## CEO advice

**Bryan Johnson PE, President, Capital Engineering Consultants, Inc.**

**I see the leap from business development to firm leadership as a direct path.** Turn connections into opportunities, bring in the work (the projects) with them, and you're in.

It took a good three years to turn the tide from the past leadership model. It's not easy, but it's there now and good things are ahead.

## CEO advice

**Brian DiSabatino, EDiS Company**

The most important job for the CEO is to feed the family and that is pure marketing.

It's a never-ending chore to stay abreast of the crazy and outlandish opportunities in our business – different angles to bring value.

**Looking through the customer service lens constantly means that marketing sees clearly how we can bring more value to our clients every day.**

## CEO advice

### Greene Celuch, Concord General Contracting

I'm not a unicorn. It's hard to climb up, but it can be done and it's being done everywhere. "Lean In" by Sheryl Sandberg is a phenomenal read for marketers. The career path she talks about is marketing's career path. **She says we tend to look at career path as one ladder up or down. She encourages us to look at the career path like a jungle gym instead.** There are lots of ways to the top. Even if things don't align with your path go do them.

I engage marketing a lot, I came out of that group. The number one place critical for them to engage is recruitment. They tell me what we're missing on our collective resume. They see our submittals every week and they work on them every day. They know, first hand, what is missing in our portfolio.

## CEO advice

### Ed Bond Jr., BOND Construction

I look to marketing and BD for validation of what I'm seeing. Sometimes, those in the field can have more insight into the future of the client's business than people at the top of the business. They see what they need, what they want. From the market standpoint, you need to know what's going on the client's business and in that industry – then outside the industry influencing that industry.

Honestly, with an understanding of all the business facets (technical, operational, HR, marketing/BD, financial, IT, etc.) and with client relationships; marketing can certainly go to the C Suite. **People want that one-on-one relationship and the trust that goes with a personal relationship when it comes to leaders – marketing is all about that.**

## CEO advice

“ **Jon Christensen, Kleinschmidt Associates**

Marketing is an active part of the leadership team - always assessing where we're headed, asking every kind of question. Our CMO is one of four at the leadership table and he's involved in every decision.

CFO, a decade ago, was someone who wrote down the numbers. Today that role is seen as someone who leads and strategically impacts the firm. **CMO could do the same thing within the next decade. Winning work is equal and as important as doing work.**”

## CEO advice

**Rich Smith, Henderson Engineers**

My philosophy is that diversity of thought and opinions makes for better decisions and a better place to work. Engineers can be rather linear in their thinking, task oriented. It's important to have left brain/ right brain thinking and creativity on any topic. Many times, it's easy to make a decision – how you communicate it and share it can be difficult. We changed our structure last fall to bring in the CMO and CPO for their input and perspective on every decision.

**Some of the best companies in our industry are ones with a marketing mentality, not to diminish the technical side.** A C-suite level partner, especially the CMO, in the core leadership team should be in the room when decisions are made regarding everything. If company doesn't understand that value, then shame on them.



## Marketing's last word

- What advice can you offer for other marketers working with new CEOs or presidents?

## Marketers' advice

- Be respectfully assertive, believe in your value to contribute to the success of your firm, demand a seat at the leadership table.
- Communicate frequently, meaningfully.
- Showcase your value and how you want to help the company.
- Be open. Say what's on your mind (respectfully) and equally be willing to listen. Fostering a culture of sharing ideas and mutual respect will benefit everyone.



New CEOs are demanding more from marketing.



Leadership roles for marketers are evolving and changing.



Some of the best companies out there, with really good CEOs, understand and appreciate marketing at a higher level.



Seller/doing interactions improve with guidance, mentoring, and process.

## Big take-aways

**This is real.** If your leadership team is transitioning and the company is serious about differentiating in the market, they need to see this data and talk with these next-gen CEOs.

## The Last Word

**new research!  
we need your  
help**

Teaming Rules 2.0



Thank you



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