

How To Have A Love Affair With Marketing Procurement

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As a marketing leader who has also spent time on the agency/supplier side of the equation I have a bit of a love/hate relationship with procurement. In the early years of my career, while I was still in the agency world, I perceived procurement as a daunting hurdle pushing me toward onerous contract or payment terms that stood between me and an exciting creative challenge. Over the last eight years in my roles leading various marketing organizations, I have grown to appreciate and value what a great partnership with [marketing procurement](#) can look like.

As businesses scale, procurement becomes an essential part of the business, but the relationship between marketing and procurement isn't always easy either. CMOs want "Yes!" but they frequently see procurement as "No!", "Not yet!", or "Not that much!". Here are 3 great habits to build an effective relationship with marketing procurement from a marketing leader's perspective.

Get Procurement Involved Early

Procurement is rarely a fast process. Yes, they might rush an initiative from time to time, but you can quickly use up your credibility if you use that "card" too often. The reality is marketing procurement is really there to help and if you keep open communication and get them involved early in the process they can actually make the process more enjoyable and take a lot of heavy lifting off the marketing team.

Demonstrate Fiscal Savvy

Do you enjoy it when people respect your craft? For marketers it is very easy to appreciate the quality of another marketer's work and respect them for it. Unfortunately this mutual appreciation is not always apparent with marketing and procurement. If you want your marketing procurement to go the extra mile for you then demonstrate a strong effort to contribute to their work in a meaningful way by demonstrating your own fiscal savvy. Their earned respect will improve your relationship and give you more credibility in future interactions.

Pick & Choose Your Battles

Like any great long standing love affair you need to know when to pick and choose your battles. Marketing procurement can be an incredible asset to help you get the most value, innovation, and creativity out of your partners. Their methods may not always align with your own, but respect your partners, and entrust them to do their job. From time to time you'll need to make your boundaries clear on areas that could cause significant determinants to your partnerships or to reach your marketing goals. Hopefully your partners in procurement also understand that they too will need to pick and choose their battles.

Any Great Relationships Starts With Aligned Values

Once I understood what a great relationship could look like I started to work harder toward collaborating. I worked to align on metrics that mattered and made sure procurement understood why certain metrics were important and how that was driving my decision making around broader company goals. Responses that I feared like "No!", "Not yet!", or "Not that much!" in fact

became “What about this?”, “Here’s the plan.” and “We got more of what you wanted.” and for that I’m eternally thankful.



About the Author: Freddie Laker takes an entrepreneurial approach to problem-solving, helping clients transform their businesses through unconventional thinking, shaping culture, and driving innovative growth strategies. These pillars form the foundation of Freddie’s success with both startups and established global brands for over 20 years.

Inspired by his desire to support CEOs and investors by providing executive leadership, he created Chameleon Collective in 2015. He has held interim marketing leadership roles at several Private Equity-backed organizations spanning a wide range of industries, always leveraging his expertise in digital marketing and eCommerce. Notable positions have included serving as the Chief Digital Officer of Bugaboo, the SVP of Consumer Marketing & eCommerce at Nixon, VP of Marketing for Backyard Discovery, and the CMO of World Airways.

Before providing interim marketing and digital leadership roles to companies, Freddie had served as a CEO three times, a CMO twice, and a VP of Strategy for one of the world’s largest digital marketing agencies. An inspiring leader, he’s passionate about his work and his desire to make a meaningful impact on companies undergoing periods of transformation.