



Four disconnects blocking marketing growth in 2025



Today's CMOs are caught in a **Pressure Cascade**: a surge of rising expectations from the C-suite, intensified by AI transformation, shifting buyer behavior, and limited resources.

What the C-Suite wants from marketing →

What the C-Suite wants from marketing



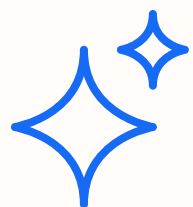
As expectations rise, critical disconnects are emerging between business demands and marketing capabilities.

- 39%** expect marketing to prioritize customer acquisition.
- 35%** expect modernization of MarTech, including AI implementation.
- 32%** expect improved customer intelligence and market knowledge.

The pressure points: where disconnects derail progress

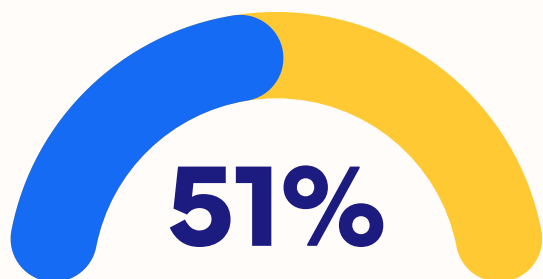


The pressure points: Where disconnects derail progress

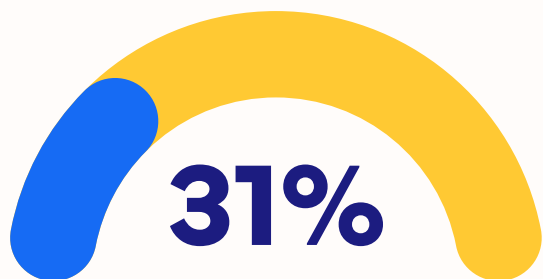


Disconnect #1:

The illusion of AI adoption



51% of CMOs say they've moved beyond initial AI experimentation.



However, only 31% prioritize modernizing their MarTech stack to fully integrate AI capabilities.

Takeaway: Many CMOs overestimate their AI readiness. Without the right infrastructure, talent, and governance, AI's full value goes unrealized.

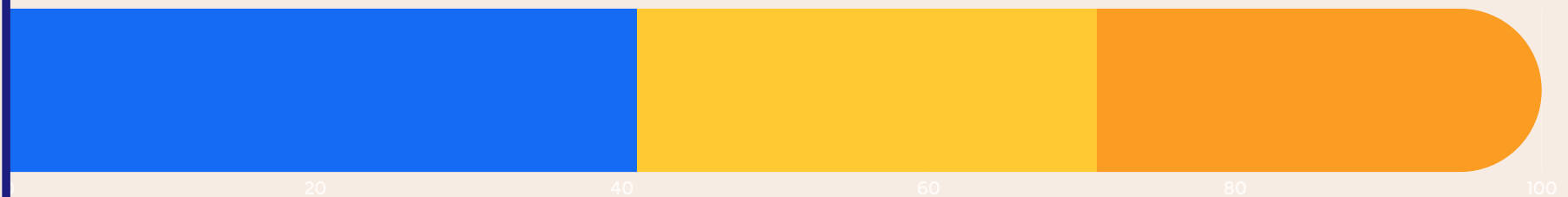
Disconnect #2





Disconnect #2:

Growth expectations vs. Marketing reality



41%

of CMOs recognize customer acquisition as a top C-suite expectation.

30%

Yet marketing remains focused on existing customers (30%)

29%

and cost reduction (29%).

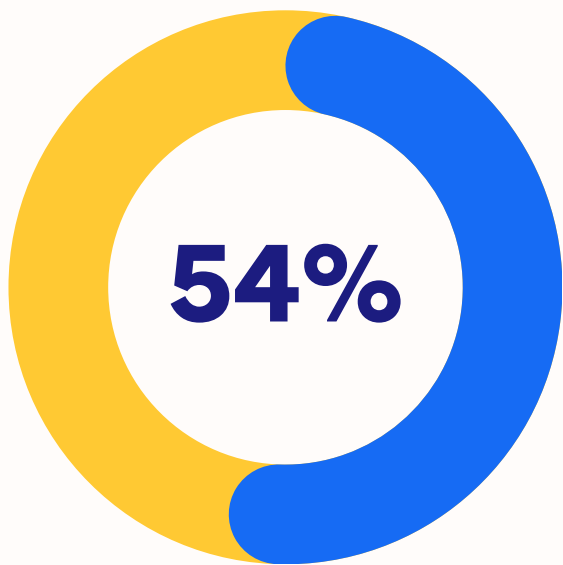
Takeaway: When marketing's goals don't align with the business's growth agenda, momentum slows and strategic impact diminishes.

Disconnect #3





Disconnect #3: The budget deadlock



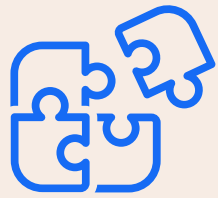
CMOs are increasingly responsible for measurable results in customer acquisition, AI implementation, and customer experience.

However, 54% anticipate no increase in their marketing budgets.

Takeaway: Without the right talent and skills, marketing teams face inefficiencies, missed opportunities, and lost relevance.

Disconnect #4





Disconnect #4: **The execution crisis**

CMOs are under pressure to deliver complex, AI-driven customer journeys.



Yet only 15% say upskilling and hiring for new skillsets like AI prompters or data scientists is a priority.

Takeaway: Without the right talent and skills, marketing teams face inefficiencies, missed opportunities, and lost relevance.

So where does all this pressure lead?



→ So where does all this pressure lead?

It's not just about doing more, it's about proving more. Outcome-based KPIs and brand equity metrics matter to the C-suite, but they remain difficult for marketers to measure.

IDC's research helps marketing leaders benchmark performance, identify blind spots, and translate strategy into measurable outcomes.

Ready to start bridging the gaps?

→ [Marketing AI resource hub](#)

→ [Connect with us](#)

Sources: IDC's 2025 Global Midmarket Tech CMO Priorities Study

Lead confidently into the AI-driven future

CMOs who act now can reposition their teams as drivers of business growth and innovation.

IDC's Executive Insights Brief delivers the data-backed, actionable guidance you need to:

- Align with C-suite priorities.
- Optimize AI strategies for real results.
- Realign budgets to support growth.
- Upskill teams to meet AI-driven demands.



Get the Brief

