RESEARCH SUMMARY: UNLOCKING MARKETING-LED GROWTH IN REGULATED INDUSTRIES OVERVIEW

OVERVIEW

TrueVoice Growth Marketing™ commissioned a comprehensive ongoing study of more than 100 senior marketing leaders from Fortune 500 companies in highly regulated industries. This research unveils critical challenges and strategic opportunities for marketers striving to modernize marketing into a full-funnel growth engine while navigating stringent regulations, legacy infrastructure, and complex decision-making processes.

Regulated industries must balance compliance requirements with the need for innovation.
Many organizations struggle to implement modern marketing techniques effectively. Without a clear strategy, and without the experience on their teams, marketers often find themselves constrained by outdated processes and a lack of alignment across departments.

The study highlights the primary barriers that hinder growth and provides data-driven insights into the state of growth marketing in regulated industries. Additionally, these findings illustrate both the challenges, and the pathways organizations can take to achieve measurable success.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Key findings from the study include:

1. **CUSTOMER JOURNEY UNDERSTANDING:**
   Marketers and their companies lack a shared definition of customer journeys, hindering personalized engagement and growth marketing adoption.

2. **THE EVOLVING ROLE OF THE CMO:**
   CMOs are increasingly responsible for driving growth, but few feel their organizations are currently well-equipped to support this demand.

3. **LIMITED EXPERIMENTATION:**
   Few organizations actively encourage structured marketing experimentation, with risk aversion and conservative cultures slowing innovation.

4. **MEASUREMENT GAPS:**
   Marketers prioritize improving data usage and attribution, yet many still struggle with fragmented systems and outdated tools.

5. **CULTURAL RESISTANCE TO CHANGE:**
   Most marketing leaders believe their companies are not currently effectively managing change.

To unlock growth in regulated industries, organizations must take a holistic approach that aligns people, processes, and technology. Prioritizing customer intelligence, fostering a culture of experimentation, and breaking down internal silos can help marketing teams overcome regulatory complexities and drive measurable business impact.
By modernizing their marketing infrastructure and embracing data-driven decision-making, companies can turn these challenges into sustainable growth opportunities.

1. UNDERSTANDING OF THE CUSTOMER AND THEIR JOURNEYS

Many companies lack true customer understanding

Understanding and defining customer journeys in real-time remains a critical challenge for many regulated industries. **63% of respondents** report that their organizations lack a shared definition of customer journeys. This gap not only prevents companies from delivering personalized, responsive experiences that foster engagement and long-term loyalty, but also correlates strongly with a lack of growth marketing adoption.

63%

Nearly two-thirds of respondents cited that their organizations do not have a common understanding of customer journeys.

Organizations that do not see their marketing as an engine for growth:

2x **more likely** to report being "not even close" to understanding customer definitions and journeys.

Those with a common understanding of customer journeys are nearly:

5x **more likely** to believe their marketing efforts effectively drive growth.

Effectively mapping and analyzing customer journeys empowers companies to adopt full-funnel growth marketing strategies. Without real-time customer intelligence, marketing efforts become fragmented, leading to missed opportunities, reduced retention rates, and impacts to the customer experience. Companies must prioritize first-party data collection and behavioral analysis to gain a clear, actionable view of their customers' dynamic paths.

2. THE EXPANDING ROLE OF THE CMO & CAPABILITY GAPS

CMO's roles are changing but marketing orgs lack the capabilities to respond

The role of the Chief Marketing Officer (CMO) is evolving, with 77% of marketing leaders stating that CMOs are increasingly responsible for driving full-funnel growth. However, only 14% feel their organizations are well-equipped to manage this change effectively. As CMOs take on broader responsibilities that include full funnel growth applications, digital transformation, and data-driven strategy, the need for cultural and operational adaptability has never been greater.

77%

of marketers are seeing a change in CMO's roles with an increased focused on driving full funnel growth.

only 14%

of these same marketers feel their organizations excel at managing change.

This adaptability is most evident in innovative organizations.

87% of respondents in companies where experimentation and innovation are freely encouraged report seeing a change in the role of the CMO.

These innovators are leading the way in redefining the CMO's responsibilities, showcasing how a culture of agility accelerates the transformation of marketing leadership.

Yet, many organizations lack the internal alignment and infrastructure necessary to support this shift. Without the right talent and operational frameworks, marketing teams struggle to execute scalable growth strategies. This highlights the critical importance of fostering an environment where CMO's can effectively fulfill their expanding mandates.

3. LIMITED COMMITMENT TO EXPERIMENTATION & TESTING

Few companies have made testing and experimentation a marketing priority

Data shows that fewer than **one-third (32%)** of organizations actively encourage structured marketing experimentation. Similarly, **one-third (33%)** of companies do not view their marketing organization as a growth driver, reflecting a strong link between fostering innovation, achieving growth, and a seamless customer experience. Companies that invest in testing and innovation tend to adopt a growth mindset, optimizing their marketing effectiveness over time.

less than
1/3

32% of Marketers freely encourage structured innovation.

33%

1/3 of companies do not view their marketing organization as a growth driver.

However, risk aversion due to fear of failure remains major roadblocks. Many regulated industries operate under conservative corporate cultures, which can slow the adoption of agile marketing techniques. Without a test-and-learn approach, organizations risk falling behind more adaptive competitors who continuously refine their marketing models based on real-time insights.

4. MEASUREMENT GAPS ACROSS THE FUNNEL

Marketers prioritize data usage to drive business impact

More than 50% of marketers cite improving data usage and attribution as a top priority, with 56% specifically calling for better integration of systems and improved data usage. This reflects a widespread recognition of the importance of marketing's impact to revenue, understanding the dynamics of customer journeys and achieving a seamless customer experience.

However, the fact that these issues remain top concerns suggests that many organizations are still grappling with fragmented or siloed data, which makes it difficult to track performance across the entire customer journey.

>50%

More than half of surveyed marketers cite improved data usage as one of their top four priorities for better leveraging marketing efforts.

56%

A significant portion of respondents highlighted the need for better integration of systems and more effective use of data.

Marketers struggle with modernization, hindering effective measurement.

87% of respondents prioritize modernizing tools, highlighting the critical role of technology in enabling effective measurement frameworks.

Yet, the ongoing need for modernization indicates that many marketers are still working with outdated or insufficient tools, further complicating their ability to implement robust measurement practices.

To bridge these gaps, organizations must invest in integrated measurement frameworks that unify data across channels, enabling a clearer view of marketing performance.

By modernizing their analytics tools and breaking down data silos, marketers can gain real-time insights, improve attribution accuracy, and confidently optimize their strategies for sustained growth.

5. CULTURAL RESISTANCE TO CHANGE

Effecting meaningful change remains an issue

Organizational inertia is a significant challenge, with fewer than one in seven marketing leaders (14%) believing their company effectively manages change. In highly regulated industries, legacy systems and entrenched processes often hinder marketing transformation efforts, creating resistance to adopting new tools and strategies.

This resistance is further compounded by the fact that 72% of respondents say their organizations manage change only "moderately well," indicating a widespread struggle to implement and sustain new initiatives. Without strong change management, even the most advanced measurement frameworks and growth strategies fail to gain traction, leaving organizations reliant on outdated or inefficient practices.

Companies that encourage collaboration both across functions—such as marketing, sales, and customer teams—and within departments like demand generation, acquisition, and retention see greater success in implementing growth strategies. However, many organizations still face internal resistance to digital transformation, hindering their ability to compete in an evolving market.

To address these challenges, organizations must prioritize change management as a strategic initiative. This includes aligning leadership around a shared vision for transformation, investing in training and resources to support new processes, and fostering a culture that embraces experimentation and adaptability.

By breaking down silos and encouraging collaboration across departments, organizations can overcome resistance to change and build the agility needed to thrive in a rapidly evolving market.

14%

Less than one in every seven marketers feel that their companies excel at managing change.

72%

Nearly three-quarters of respondents say their organizations manage change only moderately well, highlighting challenges in sustaining new initiatives.

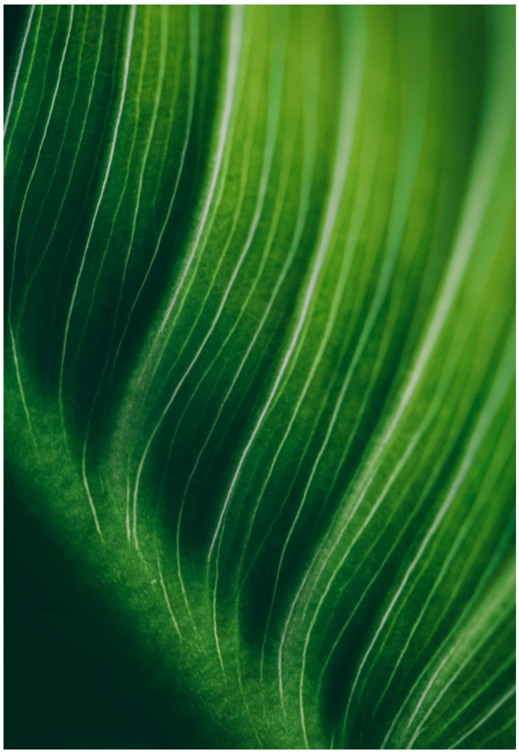
CONCLUSION

Organizations in regulated industries face unique challenges, but the findings from this study highlight clear pathways to unlocking performance and growth potential. By addressing critical barriers such as fragmented customer journey understanding, limited experimentation, and cultural resistance to change, marketing leaders can position their organizations for long-term success.

The research underscores the importance of adopting a holistic approach to transformation, integrating data-driven strategies with organizational adaptability.

Key priorities include:

- Investing in new ways to define and map dynamic, real-time customer journeys.
- Empowering marketing leaders with the tools, talent, and operational frameworks needed to drive full-funnel growth.
- Fostering a culture of experimentation to encourage innovation and agility in marketing strategies.
- Modernizing measurement frameworks to unify data, improve attribution accuracy, and optimize performance across the funnel.
- Prioritizing change management to break down silos, align cross-functional teams, and drive organizational transformation.



Marketing leaders must recognize that sustainable growth requires more than just tactical adjustments—it demands a strategic shift in mindset, culture, and operations. By anchoring strategy in the customer journey and aligning people, processes, and technology, organizations can overcome the unique challenges of regulated industries and achieve measurable business impact.

LEARN MORE

Want to learn more about how TrueVoice Growth Marketing's proven Growth Framework helps marketers unlock marketing-led growth?

Dive into the **Unlocking Growth in Regulated Industries Whitepaper** for expert tips, real client success stories, and actionable strategies to build the capabilities needed for sustained growth.

Methodology
This research, conducted with a third-party, utilizes both qualitative and quantitative primary research methods to provide a comprehensive analysis of growth marketing in regulated industries.

Qualitative Research
To gain deeper insights, in-depth interviews (IDIs) and CMO roundtable events were conducted in multiple markets with senior-level marketers at Fortune 500 companies. These interviews focused on understanding the challenges and opportunities within different organizational structures. The selected participants had varying levels of experience across business-to-business, business-to-consumer, and business-to-intermediary markets to ensure diverse perspectives were represented.

Quantitative Research
Building on the qualitative findings, a structured survey was distributed to 111 senior marketers. The survey consisted of 13 targeted questions designed to quantify the perceptions, priorities, and challenges marketers face in implementing full-funnel growth strategies.

By integrating both qualitative and quantitative approaches, this research provides a data-driven foundation for understanding how marketers in regulated industries can better leverage growth marketing strategies to drive growth at their organizations, at every level of maturity or capability.

The findings in this report are based on self-reported data from respondents and reflect their individual perspectives and organizational experiences. While the data collection process ensures methodological rigor, self-reported insights may not always align with external assessments.
A comprehensive analysis was conducted to identify key trends, validate qualitative insights, test hypotheses, and highlight emerging patterns in growth marketing within regulated industries.