

How Not to Get Fired as a CMO

CMOs in venture-backed companies face immense pressure, with an average tenure of just 1.8 years, the shortest among executive roles (SaaStr). Boards demand quick results, AI is reshaping industries, and traditional market share is under constant attack. In this environment, every marketing initiative must justify itself in revenue terms.

1

Build Real Relationships With Sales

Sales doesn't care about your vision — they care about results. Identify champions, prove incremental wins, and anticipate the practical steps they will take. Make assets easy to use, and the depth of engagement will directly shape marketing's impact.

2

Niche Down and Take Action

Focus on a highly defined audience. Understand their problems, behaviours, and channels, then act quickly. Rapid, targeted campaigns provide measurable wins and demonstrate marketing's tangible value.

3

Get Close to Customers

Direct conversations with key clients reveal frustrations, priorities, and opportunities that data alone cannot. Prioritising existing customers drives faster wins through retention, cross-sell, and upsell.

4

Speak the Language of the Business

Translate marketing initiatives into tangible business outcomes. Show how campaigns drive revenue, margin, and growth. Educate stakeholders on long-term brand value while aligning marketing with organisational priorities.

5

Make Sales Enablement Obvious

Don't hand over collateral without guidance. Map out step-by-step usage, anticipate roadblocks, and make adoption easy. Close collaboration ensures marketing's efforts translate directly into measurable results.