

Executive Brief: Meeting 2026's CMO Challenges with the G1 Platform



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Healthcare Chief Marketing Officers (CMOs) in 2026 confront unprecedented strategic threats that are putting their roles and results under intense scrutiny. Marketing's value in health systems is under siege – squeezed by financial pressures, misaligned capacity, disruptive technologies, sprawling responsibilities, and demands for hard proof of ROI.

This brief examines the five major challenges identified in The Future of the CMO 2025 report and analyzes how Growth Health's G1 Platform is uniquely designed to neutralize each threat. With an authoritative, data-driven lens, we outline the risks and the actionable solutions – from deterministic targeting to closed-loop ROI attribution – that can transform marketing from a vulnerable cost center into a growth engine for health systems.

1. The Financial Pressure Squeeze

The Challenge:

Health system marketers are under extreme budgetary pressure. Post-pandemic economics and cost containment drives have slashed marketing resources. In fact, healthcare marketing budgets fell from 9.6% of revenue in 2023 to just 7.2% in 2024. CMOs must deliver growth with fewer dollars, forcing tough choices between cutting spend or finding new efficiencies. CEOs/CFOs now expect marketing to do more with less – or risk further cuts. Every dollar is scrutinized, and traditional broad-brush campaigns with unclear returns are no longer tenable in an era of tightening margins.

The G1 Solution:

The G1 Platform directly addresses financial pressures by maximizing the impact of each marketing dollar through precision and integration. Its deterministic targeting capability focuses outreach on known high-value audiences (using first-party and clinical data) rather than costly mass marketing or vague demographic proxies. By targeting likely patients with precision, health systems avoid waste on low-yield audiences, improving cost-efficiency per acquisition.

As an example, one specialty clinic CMO using the G1 Platform was able to replace nearly half a dozen separate marketing tools with the unified platform, cutting expensive vendor contracts and complexity, while actually improving patient acquisition. The G1 Platform consolidates critical growth functions into one interoperable system, eliminating redundant software and siloed agencies – fewer vendors, lower overhead, greater impact. Its AI-driven analytics also continuously optimize spend allocation toward the best-performing channels and campaigns, ensuring smarter spending and higher ROI from constrained budgets. In short, G1 turns budget pressure into an opportunity: doing more outreach, with less cost, by boosting marketing precision and operational efficiency.



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2. Capacity and Demand Imbalance

The Challenge:

A pervasive but often overlooked threat to marketing efficacy is the misalignment between consumer demand generation and actual clinical capacity. Health systems frequently experience uneven capacity – some clinics or service lines have open slots while others have weeks-long waitlists. Traditional marketing campaigns that “spray and pray” can worsen this imbalance: driving patients to already overbooked practices (frustrating patients and staff) while other service lines go underutilized. This capacity-demand mismatch not only wastes marketing spend but also hurts patient experience and revenue. In essence, every other issue becomes secondary if marketing is filling a funnel that operations cannot accommodate (or vice versa). CMOs are now expected to manage this balance – “create a matrix that matches supply and demand” with data-driven agility – yet most lack real-time operational visibility to do so.

The G1 Solution:

The G1 Platform bridges marketing and operations with real-time capacity modeling and adaptive campaign orchestration. It ingests live data on appointment availability, staffing levels, and service line utilization, then dynamically adjusts marketing efforts to direct demand where capacity exists. Instead of static, blanket promotions, G1 enables programmatic reallocation of budget and messaging based on the latest capacity signals.

For example, if one specialty has openings next week while another is overbooked, G1 can automatically dial up targeted outreach for the under-booked service and pause or defer campaigns for the over-capacity area. This approach was proven in one healthcare group that shifted from one-size-fits-all marketing to a capacity-tuned strategy – funneling more budget to locations with open slots and cutting back where waitlists were long – resulting in a significant improvement in booking rates.

G1's AI-powered orchestration manages these adjustments continuously and at scale, ensuring marketing and operations stay in lockstep. The platform also integrates multi-channel outreach (ad display, CTV, direct mail, email, SMS and call-center prompts, etc.) to rapidly fill open capacity across channels. The outcome is a balance of supply and demand: clinics see optimized utilization, patients get timely access, and marketing spend yields actual volume growth rather than empty clicks or overwhelmed phone lines. By making capacity data actionable in marketing, G1 turns a systemic imbalance into a synchronized growth opportunity.



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3. Navigating the AI Disruption

The Challenge:

The rise of artificial intelligence is a double-edged sword for health system marketing. On one side, AI promises to automate analysis, personalization, and even content creation; on the other, it threatens to upend traditional marketing roles and skills.

The disruptive rise of AI is already contributing to CMO turnover and role eliminations in healthcare, as boards question whether human marketers can keep up with data-driven, AI-enabled precision. Moreover, the flood of new AI tools can overwhelm teams, and misuse of AI (e.g. sharing patient data with non-compliant models) poses serious privacy risks. Health systems find themselves needing to adopt AI to stay competitive – 93% of healthcare and life sciences organizations plan to increase AI spending in 2025 – yet they must do so in a way that maintains trust, compliance, and a human touch.

The threat for CMOs is falling behind the AI curve (and seeing agile competitors seize the advantage) or rushing in unwisely and eroding patient trust or data security.

The G1 Solution:

The G1 Platform is an AI-powered orchestration engine purpose-built for healthcare marketing, allowing CMOs to harness AI's benefits safely and effectively. Rather than replace the marketer, G1's AI acts as a force-multiplier – crunching vast datasets and automating workflows to free up the team for higher-level strategy.

For example, G1 uses AI-driven segmentation to sift through clinical, demographic, and behavioral data and pinpoint the right audience for each service in real-time. It can automatically personalize messaging and timing to each patient segment across channels, dramatically enhancing campaign relevance and efficiency.

Critically, G1's AI capabilities are implemented with healthcare-grade governance and privacy controls. Growth Health's patented Trust ID™ and Trust Datasphere™ architecture mean personal health information (PHI) never leaves the health system's control, with robust encryption safeguarding all data. This privacy-by-design approach lets marketing teams leverage rich patient data and machine learning insights without compromising HIPAA compliance or patient trust.

G1's AI is also domain-trained for healthcare, reducing the "hallucination" risk of generic AI and ensuring content accuracy and empathy in patient communications. In practice, the G1 Platform might automatically orchestrate an omnichannel post-discharge follow-up campaign (selecting optimal channel and content via AI) while flagging any outputs for human review when needed, blending automation with oversight.

By embracing G1, CMOs turn the AI disruption into a competitive advantage – augmenting their team with advanced AI tools that drive smarter decisions and personalized engagement at scale, all under an umbrella of data privacy and ethical guardrails. In short, the G1 Platform lets marketing departments thrive in the AI era rather than be displaced by it.



4. Expanding Span of Control and Influence

The Challenge:

The role of the healthcare CMO is in flux, with an ever-expanding span of control that can become unmanageable. Marketing leaders today are expected to “wear many hats” – not only overseeing brand and advertising, and public relations, but also digital and social strategy, patient experience, physician outreach, even aspects of IT and innovation.

Modern healthcare marketing now covers the entire patient journey, “from driving patient scheduling to ROI validation,” and requires collaboration with a half-dozen other departments from operations to compliance. In essence, the job’s scope has grown far beyond traditional marketing, to the point that it “exceeds any reasonable definition of the term ‘marketing.’”

At the same time, in some organizations the CMO’s influence is actually shrinking – with marketing functions splintered (e.g., a Chief Digital Officer or Chief Experience Officer taking pieces) or the CMO role being eliminated or downgraded due to perceived lack of impact.

These twin dynamics leave many CMOs either stretched impossibly thin or fighting to justify their relevance. An overly broad span of control with fragmented tools makes it hard to execute effectively, while a diminished span undermines the CMO’s voice in the C-suite. Both scenarios threaten marketing’s ability to drive outcomes.

The G1 Solution:

The G1 Platform empowers marketing leaders to consolidate and conquer their span of control by providing an integrated growth command-center. Instead of juggling a patchwork of niche applications and siloed data streams, CMOs get one unified platform that centralizes data, channels, and analytics. This unity brings much-needed clarity and efficiency to a wide-ranging role.

G1 effectively becomes the connective tissue between marketing, IT, operations, and finance – a single source of truth and action that all stakeholders can tap into. By unifying critical functions under one roof, G1 reduces complexity and vendor overload. Marketers can manage deterministic display ad targeting, CTV, direct mail, email and SMS outreach, CRM segmentation, and campaign analytics all in one place, rather than logging into 5–6 different systems. This not only saves time and cost, but also means the CMO can actually oversee the full spectrum without losing control.

Additionally, G1’s architecture promotes cross-functional alignment. It breaks down data silos so that everyone – from the marketing team to the operations crew to the executive suite – is working off the same real-time data on performance and consumer needs. When a CMO can pull up a unified dashboard showing marketing impact on service-line volumes or campaign-wise ROI, it speaks the language of the CEO and CFO, strengthening leadership confidence in marketing.

One health system marketing leader described that today, “you have to own the top of the funnel and the bottom – scheduling the patient and then validating they showed up for the procedure.” G1 was built for this reality. Its multi-channel integration means the platform doesn’t stop at awareness generation; it extends through conversion and follow-up, even interfacing with scheduling systems or call centers as needed to support patient access.

By having G1 orchestrate and track each step, the CMO can truly own the end-to-end growth pipeline without physically micromanaging every tactic. In summary, G1 lets a lean marketing team punch above its weight – simplifying the orchestration of a broad remit – and it fortifies the CMO’s influence by delivering unified insights that resonate across the C-suite.

This is how Growth Health helps transform marketing leadership from “chief of campaigns” into Chief Growth Orchestrators who command respect at the strategy table.



5. Proving Financial Impact (Closing the Loop)

The Challenge:

Perhaps the most existential threat to marketing's role is the enduring question: Can you prove it's working? Many CMOs struggle to demonstrate tangible financial impact from their initiatives, which erodes executive trust. It's telling that 80% of CEOs do not trust or are unimpressed with their marketing leaders, often because marketing is seen as a "black box" of spending with vague results.

In health systems, this skepticism is amplified – CFOs and boards, facing thin margins, demand to see patient volume, revenue, or margin directly attributable to marketing efforts. Traditional marketing metrics (clicks, impressions, even appointments) don't satisfy finance leaders if they can't be tied to bottom-line outcomes.

The inability to close the loop from a marketing touchpoint to a billed encounter (and ultimately dollars) is deadly for budgets and CMO tenure. Marketers know this; as one industry piece noted, "we've gotten much better at proving ROI, but there is much more that can be done to show value."

Without clear ROI attribution, marketing is relegated to discretionary spend – first on the chopping block when finances tighten. The challenge is both technical and analytical: connecting disparate systems (CRM, web analytics, EHR, finance) to follow the patient journey, and analyzing the data to credit the right campaign for each conversion.

Few organizations have fully cracked this code, leaving the CMO in a vulnerable position when asked, "What revenue did your team drive this quarter?"

The G1 Solution:

Proving marketing's financial impact is a cornerstone of the G1 Platform's design. G1 enables true closed-loop ROI attribution in healthcare marketing by seamlessly linking marketing activities to clinical outcomes and revenue, all while respecting patient privacy.

Using its secure identity resolution (Trust ID™) and data integration layer (Trust Datasphere™), G1 can match an individual's journey from initial engagement (an ad click, email response, etc.), to appointment scheduling, to service utilization and payment – without exposing PHI in the process.

The platform's "Success Criteria" analytics module then delivers clear, executive-friendly metrics and ROI analyses for each initiative. For example, a CMO can pull up a dashboard showing that a cardiology service-line campaign last quarter generated 120 patient appointments, of which 95 resulted in procedures, driving \$500,000 in net revenue – equating to a 5:1 ROI after marketing costs.

G1 automatically attributes value across channels and touchpoints, so marketing can credit the email vs. display ad vs. call-center outreach appropriately for each converted patient. This level of insight elevates conversations with the CFO: instead of debating the validity of marketing spend, leadership can see hard numbers on growth outcomes.

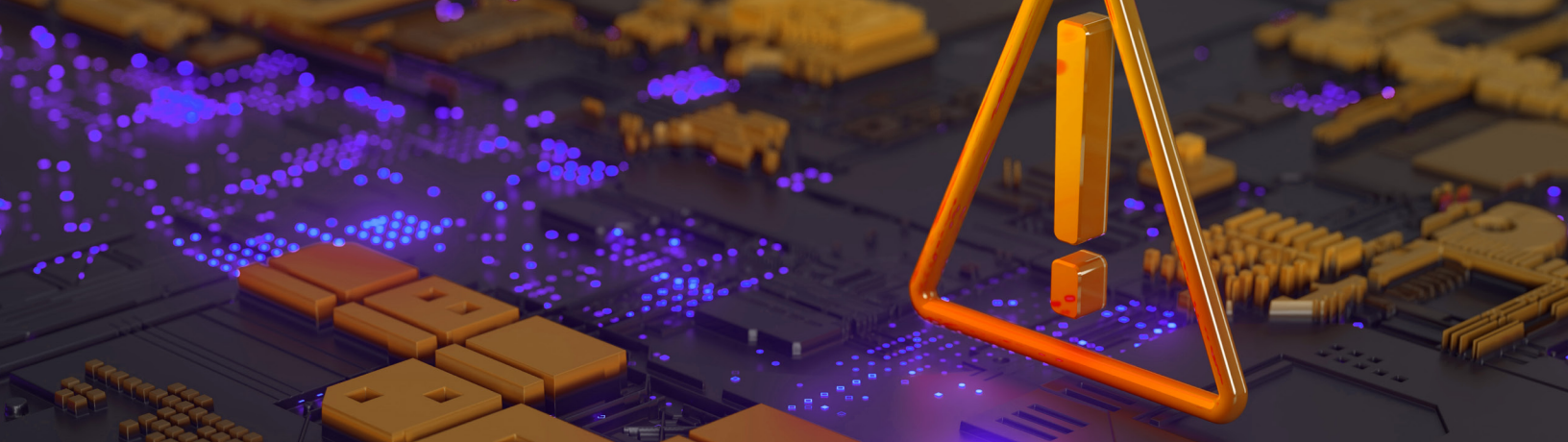
One healthcare marketing study emphasizes focusing on "revenue-driven metrics that matter to key stakeholders (CEO, CFO, COO)" and moving beyond surface-level stats – G1 fulfills exactly that by focusing on patient acquisition cost, lifetime value, service line profitability, and other outcome-based KPIs.

Moreover, the platform provides these insights in real-time, not just in post-campaign retrospectives. That means teams can optimize in-flight (shifting budget toward the highest-ROI tactics) and forecast outcomes with confidence. In essence, G1 closes the feedback loop that has long plagued healthcare marketers. By finally illuminating marketing's direct contribution to financial performance, the platform helps CMOs convert skepticism into support.

Marketing investments start being viewed not as sunk costs but as accountable, repeatable revenue drivers. This proof of impact is often the difference that secures marketing a seat at the table and protects budgets even in lean times.

With G1, health system CMOs can definitively answer the CEO's toughest question: "What are we getting for our marketing spend?" – supported by credible data and attributable results.





Conclusion: From Threats to Transformation

The five challenges above – crushing financial pressure, capacity-demand mismatches, AI upheaval, sprawling responsibilities, and ROI doubts – are indeed formidable. They have led many to declare a “full-blown reckoning” for health system marketing. Yet within each threat lies an opportunity for bold transformation. The G1 Platform is engineered to convert these headwinds into tailwinds by modernizing how healthcare marketing works. It brings innovation (AI, predictive modeling, automation) together with healthcare-specific safeguards (privacy compliance, deterministic targeting of known needs, integration with clinical workflows) to produce actionable insights and outcome-driven strategies.

The voice of Growth Health in this arena is one of optimism backed by innovation: we believe that with the right technology and approach, marketing can evolve into a powerhouse for strategic growth and patient engagement, rather than a cost center on the sidelines.

For CEOs and CFOs, G1 offers transparency and efficiency – a way to ensure every marketing initiative is aligned with capacity and tied to financial outcomes. For CMOs and marketing operations leaders, G1 is a force-multiplier that streamlines execution across channels and disciplines, allowing even a lean team to orchestrate complex, personalized campaigns and then demonstrate their value in dollars and cents. Crucially, all of this is done with rigorous data privacy at the core, so that health systems can innovate in outreach without ever compromising patient trust or compliance obligations.

In the end, the future of the CMO in healthcare will belong to those who embrace data-driven, outcome-focused marketing. The G1 Platform was built to enable exactly that paradigm. By solving the financial, operational, and credibility challenges marketers face, G1 frees leaders to focus on strategic growth and creative differentiation.

The result is marketing that not only survives the storm of 2025’s challenges, but emerges as a stronger, more integral contributor to health system success. In an environment where marketing’s value must be continually proven, G1 provides the engine and the evidence to secure marketing’s rightful place as a driver of revenue, innovation, and patient lifetime value. The threats are real – but with a platform like G1 in hand, so is the opportunity to redefine what’s possible in healthcare marketing and build a stronger growth platform for the future.

Ready to Lead the Growth Revolution?

We are Growth Revolutionaries—bringing deep expertise and bold innovation to our partners that helps modernize growth through precision targeting and personalized engagement.

Let’s explore how Growth Verticals can partner with your organization to accelerate sustainable growth through smarter strategy and real-time insights.

- **Schedule a Personalized Demo** Discover how our G1 Platform equips our partners with the tools to drive strategy, conversions, increase retention, and deliver ROI across every channel.
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