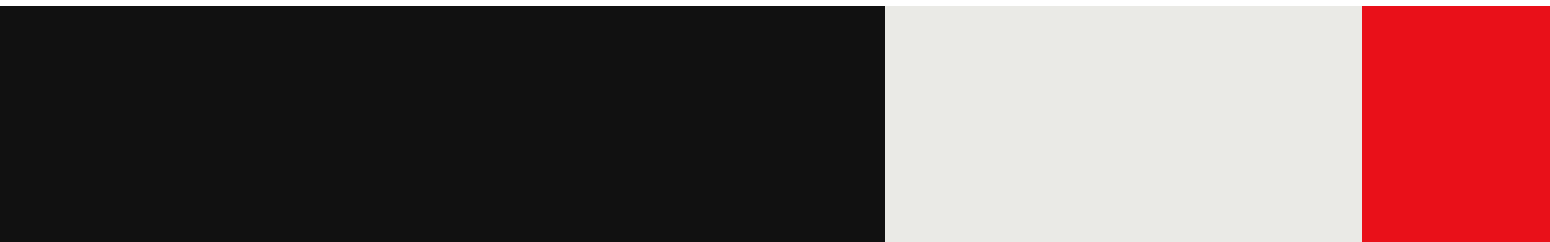# 4 tips for creating an agile marketing team

Article

There's a common misconception that agile marketers abruptly switch direction at a moment's notice if a campaign or launch doesn't go according to plan.

In reality, agile marketing is much more systematic. Teams focus on a specific benchmark that aligns with their objectives. If a campaign doesn't reach its goals, rather than continue moving forward, an agile marketing team will pause, reevaluate, and then pivot as needed, according to Stacey Ackerman, managing partner at NavigateAgile.

Marketers tend to fall into two categories: They either can't get anything done because they're too process-driven and caught up in bureaucratic red tape, or they're too reactive and lack a clear focus. Agile marketing finds the sweet spot.

"You can't be overly prescriptive and planned [in your marketing], but you can't be reacting all the time either and just switching on a whim," said Ackerman. "That's not agile."

Here are four tips to create a team focused on agile marketing.

Agile marketing isn't a two-day training session—it's a new way of thinking.

- "[Becoming agile] is a culture and mindset shift," said Ackerman. "You have to change to really embrace agility marketing."

- Transforming your team won't happen overnight. "It's really a systematic approach that begins with training, but doesn't end with training," Ackerman said. "We need to train everybody on the same words, the same mindset and processes, so that there's universal agreement on what we're doing."

Understand your "why" and get your leadership's commitment from the get-go.

- "Being agile isn't just about having your team work differently—it's about having your leaders lead differently," Ackerman added. "Everyone needs to be on board and understand what problems within your organization you want agile marketing to solve."

- Ackerman suggested determining how your organization measures success and how your current process needs to change as a starting point. Having well-defined guide points is also key and can help keep teams on track while minimizing distractions.

Agile marketing can't happen without collaboration.

- The marketing department is often looked at as a "McDonald's ordering system," said Ackerman. A stakeholder from elsewhere in the organization "orders" a new website, for example, without collaboration, strategy, or consulting with marketing on the idea. "[The marketing team is made up of] more than just tactical executors."

- Emphasis should be placed on goal-setting, flexible planning, transparency, and, importantly, agreement on what will move the needle closer to common goals.

- "We need to break those [marketing-stakeholder] relationships, where it is, 'I'm ordering this. You're delivering it,' to 'We're working together for the same outcome,'" she said.

When implemented successfully, agile marketing heightens performance.

- In coaching teams on agility, Ackerman has found that speed to market improves substantially, as does performance.

- "[Agile marketers are] setting more success criteria up front so that they can go back to say, 'How do we pivot? How do we experiment, test, and learn?'" Taking this approach improves performance because marketers aren't statically doing something, she said.

- Plus, with an agile framework, marketers can identify and remove excess waste that has been slowing down their current process in order to move faster.

At its core: Agile marketing helps marketing teams cut out the noise to move faster, cohesively, and in a way that lines up with business goals.

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