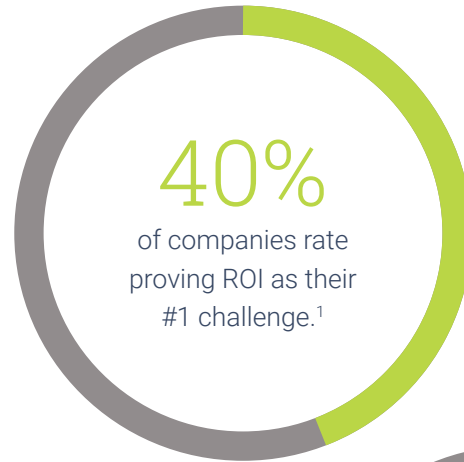




When is a Marketing Consultant
a Good Investment?

Escaping the “Marketing Rut”

First you hit the marketing ceiling, now you’re stuck in the marketing rut. You know, the place where, no matter how many dollars you throw at marketing, you just aren’t moving the needle. When companies get stuck in the rut, it’s usually a sign they’re ready for a change. And oftentimes, this prompts many to consider investing in an external marketing partner.



Who to Turn to: Agency or Consultant?

External marketing partners come in a couple different flavors, but be careful, because choosing your flavor isn't as simple as buying ice cream. When you make the wrong ice cream choice, you toss it in the trash, drop four bucks on a new one and happily get on with your day — no big deal. When you don't like your marketing partner, or you find they just aren't as advertised, you're looking at potentially thousands of dollars in sunk cost, plus the added time and hassle of finding a new partner and introducing a new regime of strategies, tactics, etc. Needless to say, this is a much bigger deal.

Now that the fear-mongering is out of the way, let's break down the different flavors of marketing partners — marketing agency and marketing consultant.

A **marketing agency** is a great partner for companies in need of strategic expertise and tactical execution. Good agencies will have a backstop of resources that can advise you on which marketing you should be doing and help you go do it. This breadth of service and support is ideal if you have a limited (or non-existent) marketing staff but can be expensive if you're just looking for someone to guide your marketing strategy.



If strategic guidance is all you're looking for, then a **marketing consultant** is your best bet. Expert consultants will bring years of experience and know-how to the table to steer your marketing strategy in the right direction based on your needs and goals.

When to Choose a Marketing Consultant

Making the decision to team with a consultant isn't always as straightforward as it seems. And like with all business decisions, there are plenty of pitfalls and gotchas that could derail your investment. Fortunately, you're reading this white paper, and we're going to help set your investment up for success by telling you explicitly when and when NOT to work with a marketing consultant.

A marketing consultant is a smart investment for your company when:

1 YOU HAVE THE STAFF BUT LACK THE STRATEGY.

You might have a team of doers that can handle your marketing workload — all you lack is the guidance on what that workload should be. And you just don't have the bandwidth or specialized knowledge to address your company's strategic marketing needs yourself. Ding, ding — sounds like you're primed to benefit from the expertise of a marketing consultant.

2 YOU'RE READY FOR AN OUTSIDER'S PERSPECTIVE.

It's amazing the power of an unbiased opinion. A strategic marketing consultant can be a sure-fire route to escaping the marketing rut. Fresh ideas, perspectives and approaches can be gold when your marketing results plateau and your in-house staff is taxed.

3 YOU'RE STRUGGLING TO KEEP PACE WITH MARKETING TRENDS.

No marketing is done in a vacuum. Business needs change, audiences evolve and technology advances. These ever-changing elements beg you to re-approach your marketing strategy from time to time. They also beg you to maintain a knowledge and perspective over all the trends that could influence your strategy, and, let's face it, you're only human. You (and your staff) don't have time to get up to speed on EVERY new trend that hits the marketing world, but you also can't let results suffer just because marketing trends have outpaced your resources. This is where a marketing consultant can come in handy.



When **NOT** to Choose a Marketing Consultant

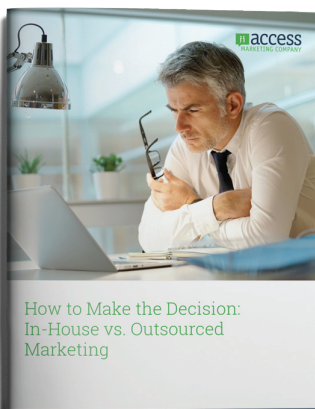
The coin always has another side. Following are a couple of tell-tale signs that you absolutely should NOT partner with a marketing consultant.

A consultant is not your best investment if:

1 YOU ONLY NEED TACTICAL RESOURCES.

If you feel you've got your marketing strategy down pat and just lack the skilled resources to execute it, a consultant is likely a misplaced investment for your company. In this case, your best bet is probably an agency that has a bench of specialized talent to carry out your marketing plan and can lend a strategic perspective if and when you need it.

Notice we didn't explicitly prescribe WHAT to measure. That's because every business, customer and campaign are different, so you'll need to exercise some marketing common sense to outline what things are important to track and measure.



Facing the in-house vs. outsource marketing dilemma? Let our white paper guide your decision!

[CHECK IT OUT NOW](#)



2 YOU LACK THE BANDWIDTH TO SUFFICIENTLY PARTICIPATE IN MARKETING.

Maybe you're a CEO or you're dividing your attention between sales and marketing efforts. In these cases, you may flat out lack the time, energy and staff to participate in strategy development with your consultant while managing tactical execution, measuring results, etc. If this is you, a consultant can only do so much. Sure, he or she can come up with your marketing strategy, but who's making sure it gets executed correctly? And sure, you can pay them to strategize and manage your marketing efforts, but how much will that run you? On top of that, if you go this route, is your strategic consultant also an adept project and people manager?

If you find yourself in a bandwidth crunch and would prefer to get as many marketing tasks off your plate as possible, a consultant might not be the best solution. Instead, you may benefit from hiring an in-house project manager of sorts or partnering with an agency that can offer a wider breadth of support and expertise.

Proceed with Caution . . .

Whether you go the consultant route or discover your needs are better suited for a marketing agency, exercise caution. The old adage of “you get what you pay for” is never truer than it is with marketing talent. If you opt for an agency just because their rates are dirt cheap and they claim they can achieve unheard-of results, pump the brakes. Also, make sure you deeply and comprehensively vet any consultant candidate, taking into account their strategic and tactical experience, professional track record, previous results and current and former clients. Many people claim to be marketing “consultants” when all they can really do is give great interviews and use vague buzzwords like “disrupt,” “optimize” and “pivot.”

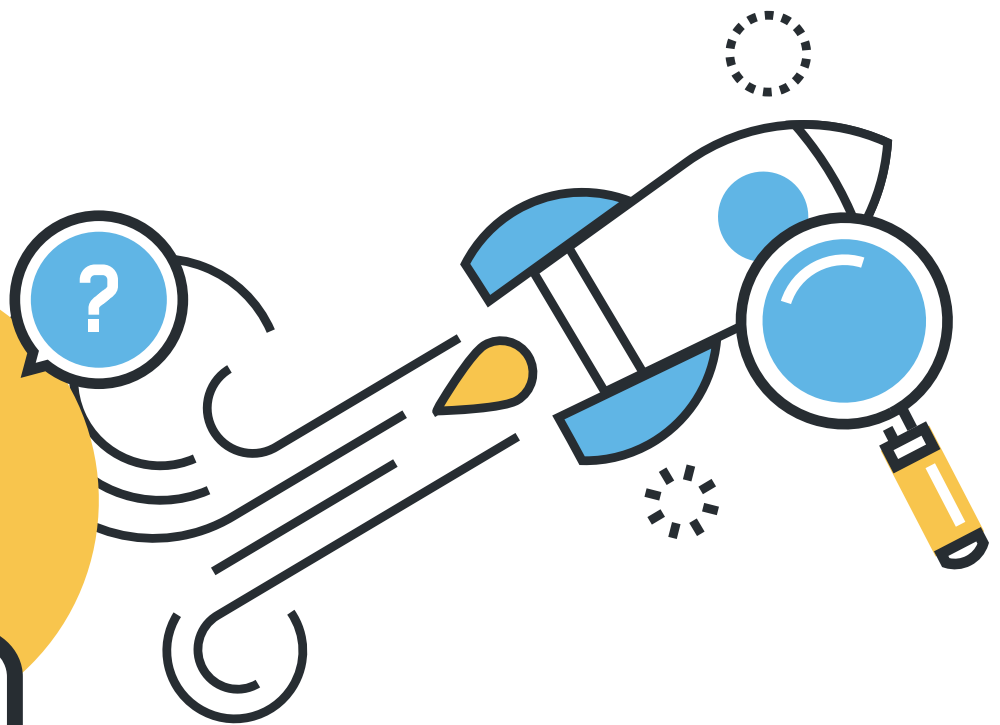
But Wait –There’s an Agency-Consultant Hybrid?

Thanks so much for asking because, yes, there does exist such a beast. At Access Marketing Company, we combine the best of both the agency and consultant worlds. We offer a wide range of tactical skills and services along with strategic experts who can advise, design and implement your marketing strategy to boot. Whether you need a strategic consultant, tactical resources or your own virtual marketing department, we’ve got you covered. So, the next time you find yourself stuck in the marketing rut with no other option than to consider hiring a marketing agency or a marketing consultant, think of AMC because we can do it all.

In fact, we’ll even help you figure out if we’re the right fit for your marketing needs right now!

Give us a call at 720.536.8650 and let’s talk marketing.

If you opt for an agency just because their rates are dirt cheap and they claim to be able to achieve unheard-of results, pump the brakes.





ABOUT ACCESS MARKETING COMPANY

Access Marketing Company is a marketing partner for B2B companies. Our team is great at the "hard stuff" other agencies can't or won't do like market technical products and services to nontechnical audiences, develop in-depth yet engaging content pieces and take on top-to-bottom funnel marketing. Essentially, we "engineer your marketing program" with measurable tactics to increase business profit.

Our methodology focuses on clearly identifying and segmenting audiences, developing audience-specific messaging and building marketing systems and campaigns around those elements — using marketing tools *and* expert marketing practices — to increase the flow of prospects through your funnel.

¹HubSpot, 2017. *The State of Inbound*.

²Sagefrog, 2018. *2018 B2B Marketing Mix Report*.