

8

Signs You're
Ready To
Outsource
Your Marketing



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Does outsourced marketing make good business sense? For many B2B firms, the answer is yes. But it's more than just a question of the work you want done and what you're willing to pay for it.

At PMG, we've been doing this long enough to know that hiring an outsourced marketing department is not right for every organization. Sometimes a company is better positioned for an in-house vs outsourced marketing support staff. Sometimes a full-time marketing manager is the way to go.

Marketing initiatives are as unique as the products and services they represent. So the real question is: **does outsourced marketing make sense for your organization?** Here are some considerations and tips to help you decide.



What Is Outsourced Marketing?

Generally speaking, outsourced marketing is the engagement of a professional marketing firm to serve as your own firm's marketing department.

It's no secret that B2B marketing best practices across different marketing channels (social media, paid advertising, website optimization, lead nurturing email campaigns, etc.) are changing every day. Rather than divert time and money trying to learn the necessary tools and techniques, many companies are outsourcing these tasks.

Outsourced marketing lightens the load for company owners and busy managers who are already wearing too many hats within their organizations. Not everyone has the time, resources, marketing savvy or copywriting/design chops to handle marketing on their own – so outsourcing to an agency is sometimes the perfect solution!



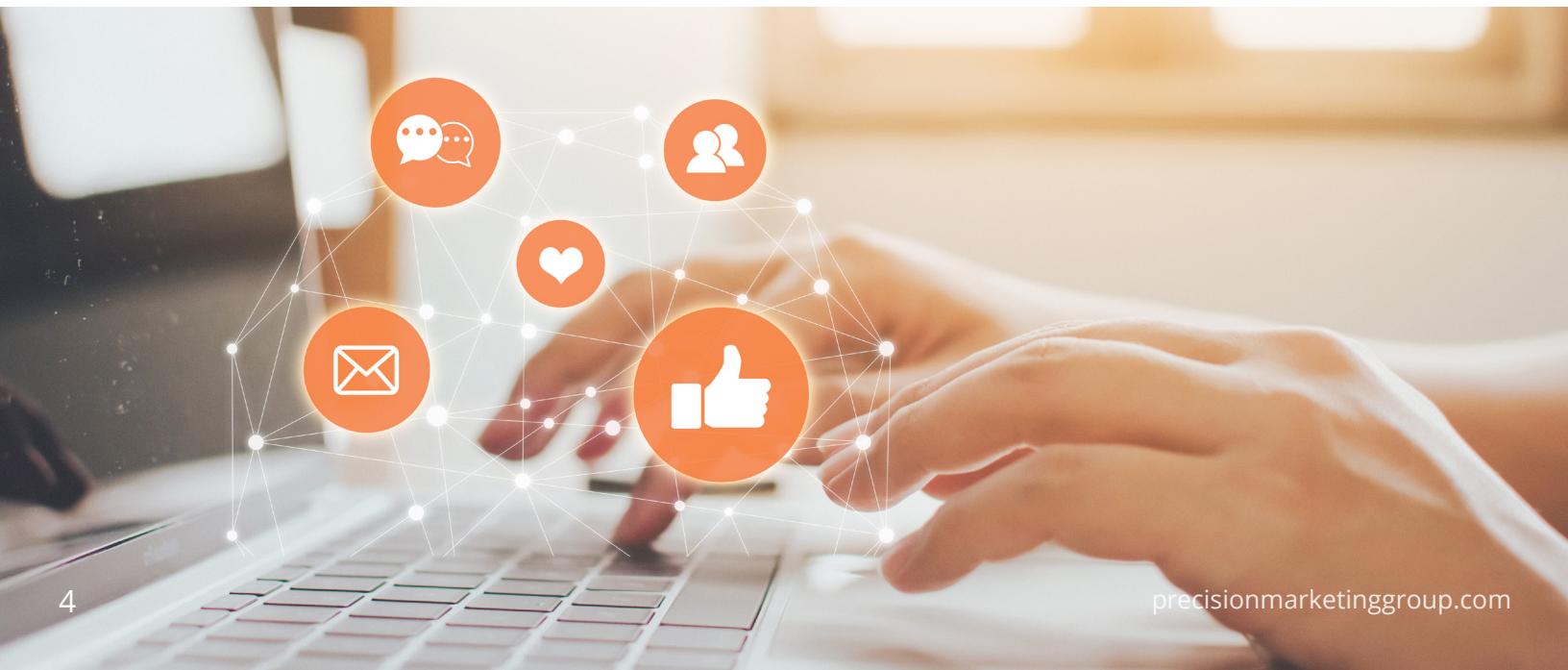
How Does Outsourced Marketing Differ from Working with an Ad Agency?

Because so many people use the terms “marketing” and “advertising” interchangeably, you might think outsourced marketing isn’t anything new. After all, ad agencies have been around since the 1800’s. But outsourced marketing is different in some very key ways—and most of them will significantly benefit small or mid-sized businesses like yours.

First, marketing is more than simply promoting your business.

When you enlist the help of a good marketing agency, you aren’t just looking for jingles and taglines. Marketing agencies can research your target demographics, understand their online habits, and better align your company’s online presence with those habits.

Marketing agencies can help you **educate, nurture and enable sales opportunities** with prospective clients—a strategy that modern consumers prefer over hard-sell tactics and tired rhetoric. Outsourced marketing lets you meet and engage prospects at many different stages of their buy cycle. Another difference: marketing agencies are generally better handholders than ad agencies. At PMG, for example, we don’t drop the work on your doorstep—leaving you to figure out where it goes and how to get it there. The implementation side of what we do is just as important as the researching, writing, and designing. Even beyond execution, we’ll help you test and measure the results of a marketing campaign, so you have a clear idea what’s working—and what you’re paying for.



Types of Organizations That Benefit Most from Outsourced Marketing

Outsourced marketing is a particularly good investment for organizations that don't employ a large, in-house marketing team. You might have a few people (or zero people) dedicated to your website, your email list, your newsletter, your social media strategy—i.e. all those big items you keep avoiding. Understandably, you don't want the overhead that comes with hiring a fulltime web developer, designer, copywriter, SEO or PPC consultant, etc. Most marketing agencies have all those experts on staff. You only pay for what you need, when you need it. And since you don't need major redesigns every month, you can save a lot of money—without skimping on quality.

In a nutshell, the types of organizations that benefit most from outsourcing tend to be small to mid-sized, privately held organizations where:

- You are a business owner who has been coordinating or executing his/her own marketing
- You have little to no in-house marketing staff or department
- You are the dual role of VP of Sales and VP of Marketing
- You have an in-house marketing manager who is swamped with an assortment of tasks – and they're struggling to keep pace with the ever-growing list



8 Signs You're Ready to Outsource Your Marketing

So now you're probably wondering – hmm... should I be outsourcing? This sounds like me. There's no exact formula for figuring out the answer to that question, but if you can identify with a number of the following statements, you might be a sure-fire candidate. Alright, you asked for 'em! If you're still on the fence about outsourced marketing, here's a look at seven solid reasons why it's probably a smart solution for your business.

1. You do marketing activities, but you have no real plan.

There's no limit to the kinds of projects and campaigns a marketing agency can produce. You can commission an agency to rebuild your website, plan and execute your social media strategy, design your print and digital ads, draft press releases and white papers, coordinate your tradeshow materials, ghostwrite your blogs and newsletters, etc. And they can do all of that in accordance with a strategic plan! Not to mention they can effectively analyze the results of said plan – and refine campaigns accordingly.

2. You want to get out of the weeds and focus on running / growing your business.

If you're the entrepreneurial type, or you're a sales executive or marketing manager simply overrun by the long list of marketing initiatives you've got on your mind 24/7, you could probably use some outsourced assistance. You might experience a feeling of euphoria once you're finally able to really do what you do best, while the outsourced marketing team becomes the primary handler of your branding, communications collateral and website work.



3. Your marketing is not getting done consistently.

So many business owners, and even dedicated marketing professionals, simply lack the bandwidth to regularly plan, produce and promote fresh content on their website pages, blogs and social channels. Unfortunately, this is important, not only for producing enough steam to see actual results, but for the search engines to recognize your company site as relevant. Consistency is key.

4. You want / need to take your marketing to the next level.

Ever see an awesome website, or a cool infographic, or even a super clever email that strikes a chord and then you think to yourself – man, I wish I could market to my target audience like that. Enter an outsourced marketing agency. They'll provide the resources and expertise you need to upgrade your programs, sharpen your messaging and leverage the latest and greatest tools and channels.

5. You believe you can “let go” and partner with a trusted marketing team.

The best outsourced marketing engagements have a thick layer of trust built in. At the onset of the engagement, there may be a few growing pains – and surely, a reputable agency should prove themselves sooner than later to be effective and adaptable to your industry. But once that proof is in the pudding, giving up the majority of that “control” over your marketing is going to be a critical determinant of success. Can you handle that? If so, then outsourcing might be right for your business!

6. You know you can't get all the skills you need in a single hire.

The beauty of outsourcing is the practically limitless access to resources. Adept in-house hires may be able to tackle content writing and strategy, email marketing, social and/or a number of other marketing categories – but can that individual additionally handle PPC campaigns, design work, optimization, and all the specialties today's marketing landscape calls for in order to stand out? That's unlikely. But by all means, if you happen to find a single jack-of-all-trades super specialist with every marketing skill and certification known to man, please let us know!

7. You feel overwhelmed by the many ways that marketing is changing – and changing fast!

Who has the time to keep up with all the trends taking shape across the marketing world? Well... an agency does. The right firm's employees live and breathe marketing, and because there's a collection of marketers at each agency specializing in various areas, you know you've got all your bases covered.

8. You view outsourced marketing as a partnership, not a hand-off

Already preparing to hire an outsourced marketing agency? Great! Think you'll never have to mention the word "marketing" again? Not so fast...

While it's true that your outsourced marketing agency will take a huge chunk of work off your plate, you still want to sit at the table and be a part of the conversation.



Here are seven bonus tips to help you effectively manage your outsourced marketing engagement:

Set Goals Together

When interviewing potential marketing firms, make sure to talk about the goals you have for your business, the general budget you have to achieve them and the timeline you hope to achieve them in. With an outsourced marketing firm, you will be setting and tracking goals regularly, so you have to be on the same page throughout this process.

Clarify Expectations Together

Decide how often and in what format you and your outsourced marketing firm will communicate with each other. Both of you must agree on the frequency and type of check-ins and accountability you need in order to be comfortable and successful. You may want to have a bi-weekly conference call to get an update on projects, a weekly email summary or a monthly face-to-face meeting, for example. When you're mutually clear about the best times and ways to reach each other, you pave the road to success.

Understand the Difference Between Outsourcing and Employing

While an employee works exclusively for your company during his or her working hours, your outsourced marketing firm serves several clients simultaneously. You should expect a high level of response from any partner you work with, but it is unrealistic to expect that an outsourced partner will be able to provide instantaneous response to every question or request. By setting clear expectations on communication and response times, as well as project deadlines, you will avoid a frustrating experience.

Hire a Firm to Work with You, Not for You

The best outsourced marketing partner will not simply take your direction and execute. The right firm will be a partner in your business, a partner that brings new ideas to the table, suggests new ways of doing things, gives you information and insights to make decisions, and pushes back on your ideas when appropriate. This is what you want in a successful marketing relationship.

Designate a Leader of Your Marketing Team

Top marketing teams are collaborative and cooperative, with several people offering their talent, ideas and insights. But there does need to be a designated leader, a chief marketing officer of sorts. For the most productive outcomes, the outsourced marketing firm serves as the chief marketing officer, owning all decisions, sign offs, etc. (with critical input from you and all appropriate parties) and having the responsibility to keep the marketing moving forward in the right direction. To be successful, your outsourced marketers need to have your trust and confidence so they can do their jobs and make decisions on behalf of your company.

Share Your Expertise, Provide Timely Feedback

A successful relationship with an outsourced marketing group relies on an open, steady flow of communication so that your marketers can use your industry knowledge and subject matter expertise to create meaningful, relevant content for your key audiences. Success is also dependent on providing feedback and sign offs to your outsourced agency – or assigning someone in your firm to handle them – so that your marketing will progress efficiently.

Embrace Creative Differences

Much of marketing involves a creative process, and how much – or how little – you like a piece of copywriting or a design is highly subjective. While it's critical to offer honest feedback, it's just as important, however, to not give up on your creative team if their first efforts do not work for you. Give them the opportunity to rewrite, redesign, and rework as part of the process. You may be pleasantly surprised with how well a good writer or designer can take your feedback and transform a previous piece into something that works perfectly!



Think you might be ready to take that next step? Check out some of our **B2B client success stories** for a healthy dose of outsourced marketing inspiration. Our two companies might be a marketing match!

If you'd like to learn more about what we do, don't hesitate to **contact us for a complimentary consultation**. We'd be happy to discuss your business goals – and what we can do to help you achieve them!

About Us

Could your company benefit from some great marketing? Precision Marketing Group, LLC offers topnotch outsourced marketing services to B2B organizations, with a focus on inbound marketing that drives qualified leads. As a HubSpot Certified Platinum Partner, PMG has the capabilities to serve its clients with the absolute best in integrated marketing strategies and services that deliver real business results.

Of course, our team of experts enjoys providing B2B marketing strategy and execution to companies of many different sizes and types. Mixing it up keeps life interesting! However, we've found our sweet spot to be teaming up with privately held businesses with a complex sale – most often, companies in the manufacturing, technology and professional services industries.

Interested in receiving your own B2B inbound marketing assessment? Send us a message or call today! For more information, visit **PrecisionMarketingGroup.com** or contact us at **508.656.0291**.

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