

Before Hiring a Marketer

A 2026 Guide for Small and Mid-Sized Companies

WHAT DO YOU NEED?

In many regions, experienced marketers are difficult to find. Many seasoned candidates are already employed, which means small and mid-sized firms often compete on **fit, growth, and flexibility** rather than salary alone.

In this employee's market, it's critical to be specific about who you want to hire and why.



Here are some questions to start you off:

1. What needs to improve in the next 12 months after this person is hired?
2. Which responsibilities must be managed internally vs. outsourced?
3. What personal characteristics will be important for any candidate to fit into our organization and the role?

INDUSTRY KNOWLEDGE

- Chances of finding a person who has any marketing experience and understands your industry inside and out are very small unless you're stealing from a competitor.
- Most skilled marketers can adapt their marketing skills and knowledge once they get to know the industry and your company's role in it. Demonstrating curiosity to learn and giving situational examples in an interview would be helpful.
- Marketers are like dentists who don't need to see every patient's cavity to know how to fix the problem.

SKILLS

- Most people come to a marketing role with varying skills depending on their previous experience.
- Find the right person for the job is more important than finding someone with specific skills. Freelance markets have made filling skill gaps easy and inexpensive. Hiring freelance talent ensures that you have people with the most current skills or a depth of subject matter knowledge that you won't find in a single candidate. This is especially important in areas like digital marketing, technical writing or website design.

EXPERIENCE

	COORDINATOR	MANAGER	DIRECTOR
Years marketing experience	0-3	3-7	7+
Understands business	No	Yes	Yes
Takes past, current, and future situations into consideration when acting or planning	No	Maybe	Yes
Creates a full marketing plan	No	With direction	No
Executes tactics in a marketing plan	Yes	Yes	Maybe
Identifies opportunities for business to grow and improve	Yes	Yes	Yes
Identifies, analyzes, and mitigates risk in recommendations and actions	No	Maybe	Yes
Consults appropriately	No	Maybe	Yes
Works well in teams and business situations	Yes	Yes	Yes
Understands the industry	No	No	No

* Ranges vary by mark considering availability of people and number of marketing positions

SUPERVISORY REQUIREMENTS

One of the biggest mistakes we see in small & mid-sized B2B companies when hiring a marketer is underestimating the amount of supervision a person will need and not having the people committed to providing the supervision necessary for the new employee to be successful.

	COORDINATOR	MANAGER	DIRECTOR
0-3 Months	Daily contact Weekly direction Task and project management	Weekly contact Weekly direction Project management support	Contact as needed Weekly direction
6-12 Months	Weekly contact Weekly direction Task and project management	Contact as needed Weekly direction Project management check-ins	Contact as needed Monthly direction
1-2 Years	Weekly contact Weekly direction Project management support	Contact as needed Weekly direction	Contact as needed Monthly direction

BUDGET

Compensation should always be comparable within your organization ensuring that people with similar responsibility, accountability and experience are paid a similar amount. Based on the current market, here are some guidelines for compensating marketers.

COMPENSATION	COORDINATOR	MANAGER	DIRECTOR
Base salary	\$40,000 - \$60,000	\$50,000 - \$70,000	\$90,000+
Performance bonus	None	Optional \$2,000 - \$5,000 additional compensation for subjective performance measures	Optional 15-20% additional compensation for achieving hard targets
Benefits	Full benefits	Full benefits	Full benefits

MARKETING IN YOUR COMPANY

If this position is the first marketing role in your business, here are a few things to consider:

This person will need some time to consolidate all of the marketing work that is already being done, set up new systems and processes and teach everyone in the organization how the marketing function works. This is not an entry level role. It will take time for this person to organize the role so expect little output initially.

If your business does not have someone with marketing experience to supervise and develop a junior marketer, considering hiring a coach to manage the new marketer's performance and activities until they are settled. Even though it may cost more initially, it will be worth the investment in employee retention and productivity.

In companies without a marketing function, we generally recommend that their first marketing hire be a Marketing Manager with experience and an understanding of what they need to build to be efficient and effective. They are also better at managing supplier relationships and ensuring you receive value from them.



More questions to ask yourself to determine needs:

1. How much time and experience do you really have to manage a marketer? Daily, weekly or monthly?
2. Is your business experiencing challenging times that require new marketing direction or do you just want someone to take care of marketing tactics?
3. Can your management team develop the marketing strategy and execution plan?
4. What is your budget for a marketing role?