STRATEGIC REPORT

The Marketing Verdict 2026

The Commercial Mandate

Unlocking the Commercial Value of Marketing in Greece

In partnership with Alternative Research Solutions
Based on Marketing Pulse 2026, the CEO Perspective Study & The Marketing Arena
www.themarketinghub.org

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NOTES

This report draws on three primary sources — Marketing Pulse 2026, the CEO Perspective Study, and The Marketing Arena — conducted in partnership with Alternative Research Solutions. Findings are directional strategic intelligence, reflecting the views of respondents and participants at the time of fieldwork.

Survey responses are anonymous and reported in aggregate; no individual or organization is identified. Arena quotes are transcribed from a live recording and attributed as accurately as possible; any quote with uncertain attribution is flagged where it appears.

Full Marketing Pulse and CEO Perspective results are available to The Marketing Hub and Marketing Leaders Club (MLC) members or upon on request.

A LETTER FROM OUR FOUNDER

Five years ago, we asked a simple question inside The Marketing Hub: does the value of marketing actually get realized inside Greek businesses, or do we just say it does? We built the Marketing Pulse studies, and eventually The Marketing Arena, to find an honest answer, not a flattering one.

This report is that answer, and it is more encouraging than we expected, with one important catch.

The good news first: marketing has won the argument it spent more than a decade making. 93% of CEOs now want the function to take a more strategic, more leading role in their business, and 63% already rate it as more strategic than Sales. The mandate marketers have been asking for is not something they need to win anymore, it has already been granted.

The catch is that a mandate is not the same as a capability. When we put CEOs, CFOs and marketers in the same room, unscripted, at the first Marketing Arena, the same five fault lines kept resurfacing: an authority gap, a trust gap with Finance, an AI leadership gap, a commercial-fluency gap, and a scope-and-focus gap. None of them are marketing's fault alone. All of them are marketing's to close.

That is why this report does not stop at diagnosis. The chapters ahead set out five battles worth fighting, each with its own evidence and its own chapter, and each honest about which ones The Marketing Hub can help with directly and which ones every marketer has to fight inside their own building. Where we can help, we intend to, and while the path forward is still taking shape, we would rather build it with this community than announce it alone.

If there is one thing the Arena proved to me personally, it is that none of this gets solved by any one of us alone, not the CEOs, not the CFOs, not the marketers. It gets solved faster when we are all in this together, the same room. That is what The Marketing Hub exists to keep open, all year, not just for one afternoon.

Thank you for reading this, and for being part of that room.

Katerina Nikolaou
Founder, The Marketing Hub

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Executive Summary

The Situation

Marketing in Greece has achieved an unprecedented level of formal organizational access and strategic recognition. 73% of marketing leaders say the function's importance has increased compared to the past (47% "much more important," a further 26% "somewhat more important"), and a forward-looking 60% expect Marketing's position to strengthen further still. Separately, 63% of CEOs explicitly rate Marketing as more strategic than Sales, and 78% of Heads of Marketing report directly to the CEO. **Marketing is no longer viewed merely as a tactical promotion desk; it is acknowledged as a vital driver of enterprise direction.**

73%	63%	78%
of marketing leaders say the function is more important than in the past	of CEOs rate Marketing more strategic than Sales	of Heads of Marketing report directly to the CEO

The Complication

Despite this formal seat at the table, a critical Capability & Credibility Paradox threatens Marketing's long-term legitimacy. While 93% of CEOs state that Marketing should take a more leading strategic role in driving corporate growth, that mandate is conditioned on an immediate, substantial capability upgrade. **A pervasive perception gap exists across the C-suite:**

- CEOs perceive Marketing as overly fixated on short-term content creation and channel execution, while failing to demonstrate accountability for unit financial economics, such as Customer Acquisition Cost (CAC), Customer Lifetime Value (CLV), and overall P&L contribution.
- **0%** of CEOs believe Marketing is leading enterprise AI transformation (viewing tool usage as purely tactical), and **34%** of CEOs remain dissatisfied with current ROI attribution models.
- Marketers suffer from extreme operational scope-creep, managing an average of **10.4 distinct functional areas**, which dilutes their capacity to deliver strategic impact.

The Resolution

Unlocking Marketing's true commercial value requires a fundamental shift from an "execution communication partner" to a "commercially fluent growth interpreter." The five chapters that follow the evidence base set out the battles that shift requires, each with its own chapter, a clear owner, and a clear role for The Marketing Hub where one exists:

1. Claim the Commercial Mandate: convert CEO trust into formal, board-level authority.
2. Win the CFO's Trust: replace post-campaign negotiation with a business case co-designed with Finance from the start.
3. Lead AI Transformation: reposition AI from a content-creation shortcut into a genuine enterprise transformation lever.
4. Build the Talent & Capability Pipeline: close the commercial-fluency gap and the generalist-leadership gap together.
5. Curate Scope, Focus the Function: shed low-value tactical work to make room for the four battles above.

1. The Mandate

CEOs have already granted Marketing the mandate it spent a decade asking for. 93% want the function to take a more leading strategic role in driving growth, and CEOs are unanimous on direction: 83% strongly agree Marketing should be more directly tied to business growth over the next three years, with the remaining 17% agreeing somewhat and none disagree. This is not a vague sentiment. **CEOs already name the specific ground they want Marketing to own: growth initiatives (68%), customer intelligence (54%), innovation (46%), CX/CRM (46%), and technology and AI initiatives (44%).**

93%	83%	68%
of CEOs want Marketing to take a more leading strategic role	of CEOs strongly agree Marketing should be tied more directly to growth	of CEOs want Marketing to own growth initiatives outright

Formal authority has not caught up with that appetite. What stands in the way is not permission, it is capability, evidence, and five specific battles, each given its own chapter next in this report. Section 2 lays out the evidence base behind them: two structured surveys, and The Marketing Arena, an unscripted debate where CEOs, CFOs and marketers argued out, in their own words, exactly where the gap sits. Their arguments run throughout the five battles that follow.

2. Our Evidence Base

This report draws on three sources, cited throughout the five battles that follow rather than gathered in one place: Marketing Pulse 2026, a structured survey of 116 senior marketers (95% Heads of Marketing / Marketing Directors); a parallel CEO Perspective Study of 41 enterprise CEOs (59% from large companies, 78% with an international presence); and The Marketing Arena, a live, unscripted debate The Marketing Hub convened to pressure-test both, two panel rounds ("The Value Challenge" and "The Capability Challenge"), an Open Table breakout, and a closing Final Verdict.

Marketing Pulse 2026	CEO Perspective Study	The Marketing Arena
n=116 marketers · 86.6% completion · Dec 2025–Feb 2026	n=41 CEOs · 69.5% completion · Nov 2025–Jan 2026	Unscripted CEO/CFO/CMO debate, two rounds + Open Table

The Arena's participants, quoted throughout this report:

- **Round 1 — The Value Challenge:**
  - **Giannis Vasilakos:** CEO, Fourlis Holdings (IKEA, Intersport, Foot Locker, Holland & Barrett).
  - **Giorgos Roussos:** CFO, Kotsovolos.
  - **Kostis Papachristopoulos:** Executive Lead, Accenture Song Greece.
  - **Katerina Gkini:** Corporate & Marketing Communications Director, Volton / Orizon.
  - **Ioanna Gavrielatou:** Marketing Director, Sunlight.
- **Round 2 — The Capability Challenge:**
  - **Giorgos Mathios:** President of the Board & CEO, ESA Security Solutions.
  - **Niki Sotiropoulou:** Chief Marketing Officer, XTM.
  - **Katerina Papazachariou:** Head of Marketing, Insurance Market.
  - **Andreas Georgopoulos:** AI & Data Director, Accenture.
  - **Marina Kounalaki:** Managing Partner, Avocado Learning Experiences.
- **Open Table Facilitator:** Vali Bouligaraki, Senior Facilitator & Career Transformation Coach, Avocado Learning Experiences.
- **Host & Moderator:** Katerina Nikolaou(Founder, The Marketing Hub) and Titos Simitzis (General Manager, Alternative Research Solutions), who also delivered the closing "Final Verdict" synthesis.

The full Marketing Pulse 2026 and CEO Perspective survey results, are available in full detail to The Marketing Hub and Marketing Leaders Club (MLC) members and upon request.

The Five Battles: At a Glance

CEOs have already granted Marketing the mandate it asked for, 93% want the function to take a more leading strategic role. **What remains is not a question of permission, but of execution**. Across the survey data and The Marketing Arena, the same five fault lines recur. Each gets its own chapter next, each has a clear owner, and where The Marketing Hub can help close the gap, that role is called out explicitly rather than assumed.

#	Battle	The Stakes	TMH's Role
1	Claim the Commercial Mandate	Only 24% of SME and 42% of large-enterprise Heads of Marketing hold a Board seat.	Indirect
2	Win the CFO's Trust	Only 35% of marketers and 24% of CEOs are satisfied with current ROI tracking.	Facilitated
3	Lead AI Transformation	0% of CEOs say Marketing is fully leading their company's AI transformation.	Facilitated
4	Build the Talent & Capability Pipeline	Commercial acumen and strategic thinking are, respectively, the hardest hard skill and hardest soft skill to find.	Facilitated
5	Curate Scope, Focus the Function	Marketers manage 10.4 activities on average; 32% call their own resources inadequate.	Indirect

3. Battle 1: Claim the Commercial Mandate

Formal authority has not caught up with informal trust. CEOs rate Marketing more strategic than Sales (63%) and want it driving business outcomes, yet only 24% of SME and 42% of large-enterprise Heads of Marketing hold a Board seat. Access is not the problem, 88% of SME CMOs and 71% of enterprise CMOs report directly to the CEO, but access has not converted into formal authority.

3.1 What the Data Shows

The same gap shows up in who actually owns the customer relationship. 66% of CEOs say they trust Marketing as the voice of the customer, but that trust hasn't translated into ownership:

MARKETERS SAY	CEOs SAY
We naturally view ourselves as the sole, rightful owner of the customer journey and the customer experience.	*Ownership is split: the CCO holds the largest share (54%), Marketing itself only 51%, and I personally hold 32%.*

3.2 From the Arena

Giannis Vasilakos (CEO, Fourlis Holdings) opened the Value Challenge by rejecting the idea that marketing should confine itself to communications:

> *"Marketing is everywhere, it touches the whole P&L, from the top line through personalization, segmentation and value proposition, down to the OPEX line through media spend and production cost. A marketer has to decide where to lead: on the value proposition and the top line, which means owning total commercialization, or by staying in content and creative, which means choosing a role narrower than what marketing can be."*

— Giannis Vasilakos, CEO, Fourlis Holdings

Katerina Gkini (Corporate & Marketing Communications Director, Volton / Orizon) grounded the same case in brand value, then named exactly what happens when marketing is left out of the room where strategy gets set:

> *As marketers, we are the guardians of the brand, its value, and ultimately its contribution to the overall value of the company. In many companies, strategy is developed without marketing having a seat at the table, and from that point on, the marketer's role is reduced to execution. But when marketers are involved from the very beginning and help shape the company's strategy, they can bring the customer and brand perspective into the conversation, influence strategic decisions, and take full responsibility for delivering against them."*

— Katerina Gkini, Corporate & Marketing Communications Director Volton / Orizon

Ioanna Gavrielatou (Marketing Director, Sunlight) pushed the marketer's side further, then made an unusually candid admission about why boards sometimes tune marketers out:

> *"Communication is not marketing. What we have to prove is the return on marketing investment. But it's also genuinely hard to talk to boards and be understood, we're often operating on ideas ten years ahead of the consumer, and then the CEO asks why the campaign's face was one color and not another. Often we marketers step outside reality."*

— Ioanna Gavrielatou, Marketing Director, Sunlight

Kostis Papachristopoulos (Executive Lead, Accenture Song — a marketer himself for fifteen years before moving to the agency side) argued the responsibility runs both ways:

> *"I think the truth is somewhere in the middle. It won't be black and white, it won't be zero and one. As important as it is for marketing to win its place at the table, it's equally important for the CEO to be open-minded about it, but marketing has to claim it. It definitely needs to be part of the table."*

— Kostis Papachristopoulos, Accenture Song Lead

Closing the round, Titos Simitzis distilled the exchange into three takeaways:

- Shouldering commercial responsibility is part of the job description, not a bonus mandate;
- CEOs, CFOs and marketers need a shared language to compare investments on equal terms; and
- A real clash persists between short-term pressure and long-term strategy.

He illustrated the last point with brand value as a hard financial asset: when Kotsovolos (ex. Dixons group) was sold to PPC (Public Power Corporation), brand value was a core component of the valuation, proof that the mandate marketers are asking for already shows up on a balance sheet, whether or not it shows up on an org chart.

FROM THE ARENA

"A marketer has to decide where to lead: on the value proposition and the top line, which means owning total commercialization, or by staying in content and creative, which means choosing a role narrower than what marketing can be."

— Giannis Vasilakos, CEO, Fourlis Holdings · The Value Challenge

3.3 The Battle Plan

- **What Marketers Must Do:** Stop waiting to be offered the mandate and start acting on it. As Mr. Vasilakos put it at the Arena, a marketer who stays in content and communications has chosen a role narrower than what Marketing can be.
- **How The Marketing Hub Helps:** This is the one battle TMH cannot fight on a marketer's behalf, it plays out inside each company's own boardroom. What TMH can supply is the ammunition: this report, the annual Pulse studies, and the Arena's peer testimony, all built to be put directly in front of a CEO or Board. Support is also available through the Marketing Leaders Club and through specific initiatives designed to build leadership skills, giving marketers a space to work through this exact conversation with peers who have already had it.

4. Battle 2: Win the CFO's Trust

Only 35% of marketers and 24% of CEOs are satisfied with current ROI tracking. Marketers report tracking CAC and CLV roughly twice as often as CEOs personally do (CAC 26% vs. 12%; CLV 25% vs. 15%), a sign the figures marketing calculates aren't reaching the CEO's own dashboard. Budgets are directionally improving, 58% of marketers expect their 2026 budget to increase, by an average of 4.2%, but only 28% call their current resources adequate. **Underneath the numbers is a mismatch in time horizon: the CFO is measured on this quarter's number, the CMO on a multi-year growth and brand outcome, and neither side has agreed how the two get reconciled.** The money and the trust are not rising together.

4.1 From the Arena

Giorgos Roussos (CFO, Kotsovolos) gave the clearest account of the relationship from Finance's side, admitting Finance has effectively trapped marketing in a rigid, transactional dynamic:

> *"Our arena has black and white in it, either you bring the number, or you don't; if you're somewhere in between,… next. We don't really have a partnership with marketing, we have a relationship of passion, and* ***instead of collaborating, we negotiate****. You come to our office to ask for more budget, and you come back afterwards to tell us what happened. We've put you in a trap of value, because we never followed the value-creation path properly. Put us in the game from the start. Come and collaborate with us instead of negotiating with us, and since we both care about creating value, we can do this together."*

— Giorgos Roussos, CFO, Kotsovolos

Pressed on what actually happens when a marketer walks into his office, Roussos was even more direct about how a CFO reads the room in real time:

> *"When it's an opportunity, I pull my chair in and say, sit down, tell me. When it's a risk, I push my chair back, ask you questions you're not ready for, and within two minutes I've cornered you, asking for three numbers you won't know, telling you to go get them."*

— Giorgos Roussos, CFO, Kotsovolos

He was candid, too, about why Finance treats marketing budget as expendable the moment conditions tighten:

> *"Finance is our friend... we are one big budget... the budget is a hot potato, we're better off not holding it. We're the first to go."*

— Giorgos Roussos, CFO, Kotsovolos

Niki Sotiropoulou (CMO, XTM) described what this dynamic looks like once it's fully institutionalized, a company where financial ownership has moved so far into marketing's own targets that brand barely factors in at all:

> *"Right now I'm CMO at a global company that has acquired products from many countries. I've been folded into the go-to-market side, which means I carry sales targets myself, because we're private-equity owned, even the marketing-qualified lead is treated as a vanity metric. Brand, frankly, doesn't even factor into the picture at my company."*

— Niki Sotiropoulou, CMO, XTM

Synthesizing the friction Roussos described (rather than a list he enumerated himself), three recurring failure points define the CFO-marketing relationship today:

1. **The Budget Negotiation Trap:** Marketers treat Finance as a gatekeeper to negotiate with, rather than a co-designer of commercial strategy.
2. **Post-Mortem Measurement:** Finance evaluates marketing investments after the fact, acting as an auditor rather than a partner from the start.
3. **The Language Barrier:** Marketers bring passion to external brand storytelling but struggle to make the same case internally in the language of margin, ROI and unit economics.

FROM THE ARENA

"Put us in the game from the start. Come and collaborate with us instead of negotiating with us, and since we both care about creating value, we can do this together."

— Giorgos Roussos, CFO, Kotsovolos · The Value Challenge

4.2 The Battle Plan

- **What Marketers Must Do:** Bring Finance in from the start with a co-signed business case, margin impact, target CAC, forecasted CLV and retention, and sensitivity to price and inflation, not a post-campaign report.
- **How The Marketing Hub Helps:** Formalize the CFO-CMO conversation, that the Arena proved has an appetite: recurring cross-functional dialogue, not a once-a-year event.

5. Battle 3: Lead AI Transformation

5.1 What the Data Shows

MARKETERS SAY	CEOs SAY
We are technology pioneers, 88% of us already use AI for content creation.	*0% of us believe Marketing is fully leading AI transformation; 51% say it's involved but not leading, and 22% say not involved at all.*

The gap is sharper outside large enterprises: only 12% of SME CEOs say Marketing leads AI transformation, versus 38% at large enterprises. Data Analytics & BI compounds the problem, needed by 47% of teams and the second-hardest skill to find (29% scarcity), right behind commercial acumen.

5.2 From the Arena

Giorgos Mathios (President of the Board & CEO, ESA Security Solutions) opened Round 2 with the commercial cost of losing brand distinctiveness, then argued **the AI question can't be answered until marketing itself is redefined**:

> *"**Without branding, a commoditized product sells for nothing, you can't sustain its growth.** The consumer is educated to buy functions, not brands. I believe we need to go back to basics: understand and redefine what marketing even is in the age of AI, so we can figure out what talent we have and what talent we need."*
>
> **— Giorgos Mathios, CEO, ESA Security Solutions**

He extended the branding point directly to AI: for years, a single trusted human gatekeeper could make or break a sale regardless of the campaign behind it, "the master influencer when I was doing marketing at L'Oréal was the hairdresser; the marketer's nightmare in pharma is the pharmacist." AI shopping assistants that research and recommend on a consumer's behalf risk becoming exactly that kind of gatekeeper, at far greater scale, a point picked up later by Katerina Papazachariou (Head of Marketing, Insurance Market), who described using an AI agent to research a purchase:

> *"I don't know anything about microphones. I want you to bring me the top four brands in the market, pull together the Google reviews and the user reviews, the pros and cons, and tell me which one you'd recommend I buy."*
>
> **— Katerina Papazachariou, Head of Marketing, Insurance Market**

Her conclusion was that branding now has to work inside the AI tools consumers are already delegating research to, not only on TikTok, in the salon, or on the shelf. Andreas Georgopoulos (AI & Data Director, Accenture) pushed back on equating AI in marketing with content generation at all:

> *"I'm surprised marketing isn't driving the transformation. I take it as a given that a CMO has to team up with a CTO on tech strategy."*
>
> **— Andreas Georgopoulos, AI & Data Director, Accenture**

Closing the round, Titos Simitzis was direct: "**AI is now a function of marketing, because its impact on how people approach brands is too profound to ignore.**"

FROM THE ARENA

"I'm surprised marketing isn't driving the transformation. I take it as a given that a CMO has to team up with a CTO on tech strategy."

— Andreas Georgopoulos, AI & Data Director, Accenture · The Capability Challenge

5.3 The Battle Plan

- **What Marketers Must Do:** Reposition the AI roadmap away from content-creation shortcuts, like writing captions and ads faster, and toward real enterprise transformation: predictive churn modeling, dynamic pricing, and attribution models that show the CEO actual revenue impact, not just faster content.
- **How The Marketing Hub Helps:** Not by training this expertise in-house, but by facilitating access to it: connecting marketers with the community of AI experts & practitioners, so guidance keeps flowing year-round rather than resetting at each annual event.

6. Battle 4: Build the Talent & Capability Pipeline

Commercial & Financial Acumen is needed by 52% of teams and is the single hardest hard skill to find (34% scarcity), the primary barrier standing between Marketing and boardroom influence. At the same time, Strategic Thinking & Business Alignment is the single most-needed soft skill of all (66%) and the hardest to find (41%): **CEOs and marketers independently point to the same shortage of generalists who can hold the wider strategic view.** Depth and breadth are both missing at once, and the profile CEOs want differs by company size: enterprises expect a "fully equipped executive" spanning strategy, brand and P&L, while SMEs look for a "hybrid leader" who can combine strategy with hands-on execution.

6.1 From the Arena

Presenting the underlying survey data to the room, Katerina Nikolaou (Founder, The Marketing Hub) named the pattern directly:

> *“We have filled the industry with specialists, but we are missing the generalists, people who are excellent at managing one specific channel, but who lack the broader strategic overview of where the whole effort should go.”*

— Katerina Nikolaou, Founder, The Marketing Hub

Marina Kounalaki (Managing Partner, Avocado Learning Experiences) brought the talent-development lens, recounting being turned away from a strategy workshop, and argued the fix has to reshape how teams are built, not just how individuals are trained:

> *“We asked for marketing to be in the room for a strategy workshop, and we were told: no, they're not senior enough. It shouldn't be about teaching someone to use ChatGPT, training has to substantively upgrade real capability. The people who come to interview are hyper-specialized; in the past a marketer was just a marketer. We need to reshape our teams too, moving from specific roles toward T-shaped teams.”*

— Marina Kounalaki, Managing Partner, Avocado Learning Experiences

Mr. Mathios pushed back on that exact prescription, a genuine disagreement, live, between two panelists in the same room:

> *“This T-shape idea, expecting everyone to do everything, I disagree. The role will just go flat. We need a new breed of marketers instead, who understand the brand's importance: brand stewards.”*

— Giorgos Mathios, CEO, ESA Security Solutions

Whether the fix is T-shaped generalists or a new breed of brand stewards, both panelists agreed on the destination even while disputing the route: **the current specialist-heavy hiring model isn't producing people who can hold the strategic view CEOs are asking for**. Closing the round, Tito Simitzis put the mandate in structural terms: "Change the job description, both for the people you want to hire into marketing, and for what marketers and CEOs alike expect marketing to be. Encourage specialists to become a little more generalist: to see the forest, not just the tree."

FROM THE ARENA

“We asked for marketing to be in the room for a strategy workshop, and we were told: no, they're not senior enough.”

— Marina Kounalaki, Avocado Learning Experiences · The Capability Challenge

6.2 The Battle Plan

- **What Marketers Must Do:** Build financial fluency, CAC, CLV, margin, P&L literacy as a core competency, while deliberately developing breadth across functions and strategic thinking, rather than depth in a single speciality.
- **How The Marketing Hub Helps:** The Marketing Leaders Club already provides peer mentoring toward this broader profile; TMH is exploring, with the community, how to extend that support, through upskilling, financial-literacy initiatives, and toward a real pipeline of generalist talent that enterprises can hire from.

7. Battle 5: Curate Scope, Focus the Function

Marketers manage an average of 10.4 distinct functional areas, and 32% describe their own resources as inadequate to cover that scope. The mismatch is that CEOs aren't asking for all ten:

MARKETERS SAY	CEOs SAY
We are overwhelmed, managing 10.4 distinct functional areas on average, and 32% of us call our own resources inadequate to cover it.	*Marketing's job is building Brand Equity (90%), creating Strategy (66%), and driving Innovation (54%), generating leads and sales ranks last, at just 17%.*

7.1 From the Arena

Andreas Georgopoulos (AI & Data Director, Accenture) argued the point directly: the fix for scope-creep and the fix for AI adoption are the same fix, because AI should be absorbing the tactical load marketing is currently drowning in:

> *"The marketer should stay focused on critical thinking, strategy, and branding, without having to spend time doing research and the tactical work AI can now do instead."*
>
> **— Andreas Georgopoulos, AI & Data Director, Accenture**

Giorgos Mathios (CEO, ESA Security Solutions) made the stakes of getting this wrong explicit, framing scope discipline as existential rather than a matter of workload:

> *"The marketer is called to do far more important work than executing a media plan and placing ads. They're the company's protector against its product becoming commoditized, otherwise, five years later, nothing saves the EBITDA."*
>
> **— Giorgos Mathios, CEO, ESA Security Solutions**

FROM THE ARENA

"The marketer is called to do far more important work than executing a media plan and placing ads. They're the company's protector against its product becoming commoditized, otherwise, five years later, nothing saves the EBITDA."

— Giorgos Mathios, CEO, ESA Security Solutions · The Capability Challenge

7.2 The Battle Plan

- **What Marketers Must Do:** Run an annual "stop-doing" audit, identify low-value tactical work to shed, automate, or outsource, and free capacity for the four battles above.
- **How The Marketing Hub Helps:** Not a program TMH can run on marketers behalf, this fight happens inside your own operating model. What the annual Pulse benchmark gives you is a peer yardstick: knowing what 10.4 activities looks like elsewhere is real ammunition for a scope conversation with your own CEO.

8. Closing the Gaps Together

Every one of these five battles is easier to win together than alone. A marketer arguing for a board seat, a CAC target, or an AI budget is easy for a single CEO or CFO to dismiss as one person's ambition; a marketer backed by an entire community's data, peer experience, and shared vocabulary is much harder to ignore.

That is the real lesson of The Marketing Arena: put a CEO, a CFO, and a marketer in the same room, unscripted, and it turns out they are not fighting each other, they are circling the same five problems from different sides of the table, and they make faster progress together than apart. In his closing Final Verdict, Titos Simitzis brought both rounds together into a single mandate: "**The CFO, the CEO and the CMO have to start speaking the same language, focused on a long-term plan, not just what happens in the next three or four months."**

FROM THE ARENA

"What I see is a transition full of opportunity for marketers looking forward. The Marketing Hub and the Marketing Leaders Club are here to open these conversations and, together, to find the ways we seize them."

— Katerina Nikolaou, Founder, The Marketing Hub · The Final Verdict

The Community Is Already Asking for This

The appetite for exactly this kind of shared capability-building is not a hope, it is measured. 73% of marketers say they are interested in joining a professional community, 82% want structured knowledge and trend sharing, and 69% want structured peer networking. Asked what form that support should take, the clearest preferences are mentoring (58%), training and seminars (56%), coaching (48%), and peer learning (48%).

73%	82%	69%
of marketers are interested in joining a professional community	want structured knowledge and trend sharing	want structured peer networking

The Marketing Hub exists to keep that room open beyond a single afternoon a year: through the Marketing Leaders Club, through the Arena itself, and through whatever new initiatives the community builds next to answer these five battles directly.

> ***If your team is fighting any of these five battles on its own, it doesn't have to. Join The Marketing Hub, bring your CEO, bring your CFO, bring your team, and make the next Arena the place this conversation continues.***

Summary Comparison: The Transformation of Greek Marketing

TRADITIONAL MARKETING OPERATING MODEL	TRANSFORMED COMMERCIAL MARKETING MODEL (2026+)
Focus on communications, ads, and creative campaign content.	Focus on total commercialization, 4Ps, and P&L drivers.
Negotiates budget with Finance as a post-planning adversary.	Co-designs strategy with Finance from "Day Zero."
Uses AI as a text/image copy generation tool.	Uses AI for predictive analytics, churn reduction, and forecasting.
Manages 10.4 tactical activities resulting in operational burnout.	Curates scope to focus on brand equity, innovation, and growth.
Evaluates success via clicks, likes, and short-term sales.	Evaluates success via CAC, CLV, market share, and brand equity.

Publication and Contact

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