

MARKETING AND SALES ROLES IN ACCOUNTING



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As accounting firm leadership expands to include dedicated marketing and sales professionals to supplement the partners and managers in generating new clients and engagements, the question arises, “What marketing and sales roles do we need and when?” This document is intended to answer this question and provide guidance regarding the various marketing and sales roles a firm may have, how these roles may be measured and the timing you may consider when adding these positions in your firm to achieve your business development goals. Compensation considerations will not be included in this document as the Association for Accounting Marketing plans to conduct a survey in the next year to gauge marketing and sales compensation trends among members.

Marketing and Sales Defined

Before we explore the potential roles in detail, let us first define marketing and sales.

Marketing is defined as the branding and lead generation activities that generate prospective client opportunities that may lead to a new client for the firm. Marketing includes:

- Developing and/or refining your strategy
- Creating your brand identity and story
- Defining your firm’s product/service mix and pricing
- Identifying your ideal target clients
- Executing brand and lead generation activities
- Driving prospects into your sales pipeline

Sales is defined as the one-to-one activities that occur after the marketing function with the goal of having them engage your firm to fulfill their need. Selling includes:

- Qualifying prospects
- Identifying and presenting the best solution and how your firm would deliver it
- Handling objections
- Closing the “right” engagements

Both marketing and selling are critical to your firm’s ability to generate revenue and achieve your growth goals, and they require different resources and skills to fulfill on each.

Marketing and Sales Roles

When preparing to define your firm’s marketing and sales roles, begin by dedicating a partner within your firm to champion each function. A marketing partner should be identified as well as a sales partner and, in a smaller firm; they may be the same person. The next position that should be identified and filled within the marketing function is the marketing coordinator, who provides administrative support for the



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tactical implementation of marketing activities for the marketing partner and other marketing roles as they are incorporated. Then a marketing director or marketing manager should be added as the firm’s marketing activities flourish and the firm poises for future growth. For larger firms, a chief marketing officer is often added to the leadership team to manage both the marketing and sales functions with all marketing and sales roles reporting into him or her.

Within the sales function, similar to the marketing function, the first position to be filled after the sales partner is identified is the sales coordinator. The sales coordinator is an administrative role that will support the sales partner and the other sales roles as they are added. The sales coordinator will manage the firm’s sales pipeline, create proposals and follow up with prospects during the sales process. The next position to be added is a dedicated business development manager who supports the partners in generating new client opportunities. The business development manager will work closely with the partners to scope services, create proposals and close client opportunities. The last sales role to be added is a sales manager, and only the largest of firms with several business development managers will employ this role. The duties and responsibilities of each of these specific marketing and sales roles are outlined in detail in this document, in addition to potential measures of success, to aid you as you develop your firm’s marketing and sales functions.

MARKETING ROLES



SALES ROLES





To be a core component of your firm culture, marketing must be represented by a partner at the partner or shareholder table and throughout the entire firm.

MARKETING ROLES

MARKETING PARTNER

The first role you will want to identify is the firm's marketing partner. To be a core component of your firm culture, marketing must be represented by a partner at the partner or shareholder table and throughout the entire firm. Your marketing partner does not have to be the managing partner, but it may be. When identifying your marketing partner, you should select the partner with the most experience in building a service line or industry niche, building the firm's brand image or positioning or other proven marketing competencies.

Duties and Responsibilities

The marketing partner's responsibilities include:

- Setting the firm's marketing strategy and positioning and aligning it with your firm's growth goals and vision for the future
- Ensuring the partners are committed to the firm's marketing plans and keeping the owners informed related to marketing
- Establishing the firm's marketing processes and ensuring that all members are clear on what their roles entail within these processes
- Establishing accountability mechanisms for the activities in the marketing process
- Ensuring that internal marketing education is in place and ongoing
- Managing the appropriate marketing resources

As your firm's marketing team and activities grow, the marketing partner may find that more of his or her time is focused on the firm's marketing activities and, until the addition of a Chief Marketing Officer (CMO) or marketing director occurs, adjustments to his or her "line" role and associated goals may have to be made to ensure that the marketing partner build and retain marketing momentum.

Measures of Success

Your firm's marketing partner should have at least one marketing performance measure, but could have several, including:

- The development and execution of the firm-wide marketing plan
- Hiring planned marketing resources
- Sending monthly marketing communications updates to the team
- Achieving any new client or cross-selling goals
- Achieving the top-line revenue goals of the firm

The CMO's role is to lead the firm's practice growth initiatives and guide the partnership in making the proper investments in sales and marketing to achieve the firm's vision and strategic goals.

CHIEF MARKETING OFFICER (CMO)

The CMO's role is to lead the firm's practice growth initiatives and guide the partnership in making the proper investments in sales and marketing to achieve the firm's vision and strategic goals. The CMO acts as part of the firm's executive management team and works closely with the firm's partners in developing the overall marketing and sales strategies to support the strategic plan of the firm. Because the CMO is an executive level position, both marketing and sales functions often report in to the CMO, and the CMO sets the strategies and policies for each.

Duties and Responsibilities

The CMO is accountable for:

- Setting the marketing and sales strategies and aligning them with the firm's goals
- Enhancing the sales and marketing culture of the firm
- Increasing overall visibility of the firm in its major markets and industries
- Developing and maintaining the firm's marketing budget
- Working with the partners and key leaders to support the growth strategies of the firm
- Developing programs to enhance client satisfaction and retention
- Developing and implementing cross-selling initiatives
- Directing the development of new services and packaging and pricing of current services
- Working with niche or service line leaders to identify and implement marketing and sales programs to achieve their goals
- Identifying and implementing the customer relationship management or contact management software and appropriate processes throughout the firm



- Overseeing all internal and external firm communications and public relations programs
- Overseeing all marketing and sales communications developed by each department, including recruiting marketing with HR
- Developing personal marketing plan initiatives, managing the annual roll-out and monitoring ongoing performance
- Developing firm-wide sales pipelines and managing regular pipeline meetings with all resources with sales responsibility
- Managing and training all sales and marketing team members with the marketing director as a direct report

The CMO is often a partner of the firm and usually reports to the managing partner. A bachelor's degree in marketing is required, MBA preferred, in addition to at least 10 years of demonstrated sales and marketing experience in a professional services firm.

Measures of Success

The CMO may be measured as being successful when they have:

- Achieved the firm's annual revenue goal
- Developed and executed a firmwide marketing and sales plan and respective budgets
- Generated a certain number of new prospects that are then tracked in the sales pipeline
- Achieved new client add goals or cross-selling goals
- Held specific marketing or sales educational events, such as lunch-and-learns on networking or the firm's sales process
- Implemented and measured personal marketing plans for the professional staff

MARKETING DIRECTOR

As your firm grows and the number and variety of marketing activities expands, you will be ready to add a marketing director to your team. In small to mid-size firms, a marketing director is far more likely to be added well before a CMO but usually after a marketing coordinator is hired to support existing marketing activities. The marketing director will work together with the leaders of the firm to create the firm's overall marketing strategy.

Duties and Responsibilities

The marketing director is accountable for:

- Creating and implementing the marketing strategy for the firm and each initiative
- Directing all marketing related activities
- Overseeing the lead tracking process to conduct ROI on all marketing activities
- Overseeing the firm's annual marketing plan, budget and calendar and ensuring the marketing coordinator maintains them
- Overseeing the firm's web site content, structure and ranking on search engines
- Directing appropriate PR and other branding activities
- Working with HR to create recruiting marketing campaigns consistent with the firm's brand and positioning
- Acting as the liaison between the marketing personnel and those involved in selling to ensure that needs and commitments are being met
- Supervising the marketing staff members, either as direct reports or with a dotted line

The marketing director likely has a bachelor's degree in marketing or communications and over five years of marketing experience in a professional services firm. The marketing director will report to the CMO, if the firm has one, or the marketing partner.

Measures of Success

The marketing director's measures of success may include:

- Developing and implementing a firm-wide marketing plan
- Achieving the firm's growth goals in terms of new clients and cross-selling of services
- Executing on the marketing activities in the firm's marketing calendar on time and within budget

Completing any specific marketing projects, such as implementing a new firm web site

The marketing manager is usually added to larger firms that require support for the marketing director or CMO...

MARKETING MANAGER

The marketing manager is usually added to larger firms that require support for the marketing director or CMO and is less strategic than those two roles but has more managerial responsibility than the marketing coordinator.

Duties and Responsibilities

The marketing manager is responsible for:

- Assisting in the development of the marketing strategy for the firm and each initiative
- Overseeing and managing all marketing related activities
- Implementing a lead tracking process to conduct ROI on all marketing activities
- Interfacing with and directing marketing vendors on various marketing campaigns and/or components
- Managing the implementation of the annual marketing plan and calendar of firm-wide activities
- Maintaining or working with the web developer to ensure the firm's web site content is current and search engines are maximized
- Implementing PR, branding and lead generation activities
- Working with HR to create recruiting marketing campaigns consistent with the firm's brand and positioning
- Supervising the marketing coordinator

The marketing manager usually reports to the marketing director or CMO if the firm has one. A bachelor's degree in marketing is preferred with three to five years of marketing experience in a professional services firm.

Measures of Success

The marketing manager's measures of success may include:

- Executing on the brand and lead generation activities in the firm's marketing calendar on time and within budget
- Achieving a certain number of leads from the marketing activities
- Completing specific marketing projects, such as updating or creating new flyers for the firm or specific service lines, obtaining client testimonials or gaining public recognition for the firm at an event or in a local business journal

MARKETING COORDINATOR

The marketing coordinator, which is usually the second position added after the marketing partner is identified, may initially be a part-time position, a combined marketing and sales coordinator role or a shared job as part of a current administrative support staff person's position.

Duties and Responsibilities

Your firm's marketing coordinator will be responsible for supporting your marketing partner and the other marketing roles in the administration and coordination required to implement your firm's marketing activities. Responsibilities include:

Coordinating outside marketing activities when assigned to do so including:

- Direct mail campaigns
- Trade shows
- Seminars
- Speaking engagements
- Press releases
- Advertising
- Maintaining inventory of promotional materials (i.e. brochures, flyers, giveaways, etc.)
- Coordinating the mailing and disbursement of promotional materials
- Managing external vendors, including copywriters, designers, printers, list brokers, mailing houses and telemarketing firms
- Managing the firm's marketing calendar, tracking the progress of each marketing campaign, budget, current status and results
- Maintaining the firm's web site to ensure information is current and accessible
- Writing collateral materials such as manager and partner bios, PDF flyers and other materials as necessary, with the assistance of outside vendors when appropriate
- Owning, scheduling and writing the recaps for monthly marketing meetings

This position is best filled by someone with a degree in marketing, communications or business and a strong disposition to administration and project management. This position does not require extensive experience in CPA firm marketing. He or she will report to your firm's marketing partner, marketing director or marketing manager if in place.

Measures of Success

The marketing coordinator may be measured on:

- Maintaining and updating the brand and lead generation activities in the firm's marketing calendar on a monthly basis
- Scheduling, holding and writing recaps for monthly marketing meetings
- Developing a process for and managing the central database of all firm collateral materials

Your firm's marketing coordinator will be responsible for supporting your marketing partner and the other marketing roles in the administration and coordination required to implement your firm's marketing activities.



Outsourcing can be an effective method of building your marketing capability, but vendors and contractors should report into a designated marketing person within your firm to ensure they are well managed and their actions are consistent with achieving your firm's goals.

Other Marketing Roles

Additional marketing abilities will be required to implement all the marketing strategies and activities in your firm's marketing plan, including:

- Graphic designers
- Web developers
- Copywriters
- Public relations and media specialists
- Teleprospectors

You are unlikely to find these abilities in the people inhabiting the roles defined above, and when you do it's a plus, but the good news is these skills are usually easy to outsource both locally and nationally. Outsourcing can be an effective method of building your marketing capability, but vendors and contractors should report into a designated marketing person within your firm to ensure they are well managed and their actions are consistent with achieving your firm's goals.



SALES ROLES

SALES PARTNER

In addition to a marketing partner, you will need to identify a sales partner who owns ensuring that you have a sales-oriented culture throughout your firm from the top down. In smaller firms, the marketing partner and sales partner roles may be fulfilled by the same individual. The sales partner can be the managing partner, but often is another partner within the firm. Your sales partner will be the person primarily responsible for driving your sales methodology and processes. Select a person who has strong leadership skills and possesses the required sales skills with proven success in closing business.

Duties and Responsibilities

The sales partner is responsible for:

- Establishing team and individual sales goals for all sales team members including himself or herself
- Achieving the overall sales goals of the entire firm
- Directing the sales team and associated processes, either in a direct or dottedline reporting relationship
- Managing and reporting on the firm's sales pipeline to keep the rest of the partner group informed as to the outlook of new revenue generation in the firm

As your firm's sales team and activities grow as well as personal sales accountabilities, the sales partner may find that more of his or her time is focused on business development activities and adjustments to his or her "line" role and associated goals will have to be made. This will ensure that the sales partner is being measured on the appropriate responsibilities and proper expectations are set within the partner group.

Measures of Success

Your firm's sales partner can be measured on:

- Achieving the firm's revenue and growth goals
- Hiring planned sales or business development resources
- Implementing and facilitating regular (bi-weekly perhaps) pipeline review meetings
- Developing and ensuring consistency with a firm-wide sales process
- Achieving any new client addition or cross-selling goals

SALES COORDINATOR

Similar to the marketing coordinator role, the sales coordinator is the first position that should be filled after the sales partner is identified and may start out as a part-time position or a shared job of another administrative support staff person that you already have within your firm. The sales coordinator may handle other duties, such as coordinating marketing activities. A full-time sales coordinator position may be required as your firm and sales pipeline grows.

In smaller firms, the marketing partner and sales partner roles may be fulfilled by the same individual.

Duties and Responsibilities

The sales coordinator is responsible for supporting your firm's sales partner and sales or business development manager in performing his or her administrative responsibilities as required throughout the sales cycle. These responsibilities include:

- Developing and maintaining a CRM or contact management database
- Maintaining a detailed pipeline of prospects and conducting follow up calls and activities as required
- Preparing and presenting a synopsis of prospect activity bi-monthly
- Screening and qualifying new prospects
- Coordinating and scheduling sales/prospect meetings as needed
- Maintaining a calendar of calls and meetings for the sales partner, sales manager and/or business development manager
- Preparing and mailing proposals
- Maintaining the pipeline to track all proposals delivered and the status of each activity
- Following up on proposals that have been delivered when assigned to do so
- Tracking and reporting on reasons for lost proposals
- Coordinating and managing the fulfillment of an engagement after a sale is closed, including setting up the client in the firm's billing system and other firm databases and coordinating with billing
- Preparing and coordinating correspondence and mailings
- Placing follow up calls on marketing and sales literature mailed out

The sales coordinator reports to the sales partner, CMO or the sales manager if the firm has one. The sales coordinator may have a college degree and should have a minimum of three years of marketing, sales and/or client service administration or support experience.

Measures of Success

The sales coordinator may be measured on:

- Achieving the firm's revenue or growth goals
- Scheduling, holding and writing recaps for bi-weekly sales meetings
- Keeping the pipeline current and updated each week
- Responding to all prospect inquiries to the firm within 24 hours

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

The business development manager may be multiple partners or managers in your firm who have business development responsibilities as part of their overall firm role. This role may also be a dedicated position hired from outside of the firm but should not be filled before the sales coordinator is in place and functioning effectively because the sales coordinator is critical to provide administrative support to the business developers.

Duties and Responsibilities

Business development managers are responsible for new business development, and the sales manager or the sales partner acts as his or her “wingman” supporting his or her efforts in a team sales approach. The business development manager’s primary responsibilities include:

- Meeting assigned sales goals for bringing in new business to the firm
- Conducting personal lead generation activities as required to fill the pipeline with new name opportunities and attain sales quotas, including cold calling, seminar or tradeshow participation and networking in the local community
- Developing and maintaining required expertise in assigned services and products to independently qualify prospects for appropriateness of fit
- Managing the sales process including developing, qualifying and managing the prospect through the sales cycle
- Generating and qualifying sales leads and then meeting with prospects
- Bringing partners and others with technical expertise and specialized knowledge into the sales process at the appropriate points
- Providing specific information for proposals to be generated by the sales coordinator, including complete prospect information, engagement and service details and any special terms and conditions
- Maintaining pipeline and forecast information as well as prospect contact information and status in your firm’s CRM or contact management database
- Responding to requests for information from prospects with appropriate documentation, using the sales coordinator when available and appropriate
- Transitioning closed engagements to the assigned partner

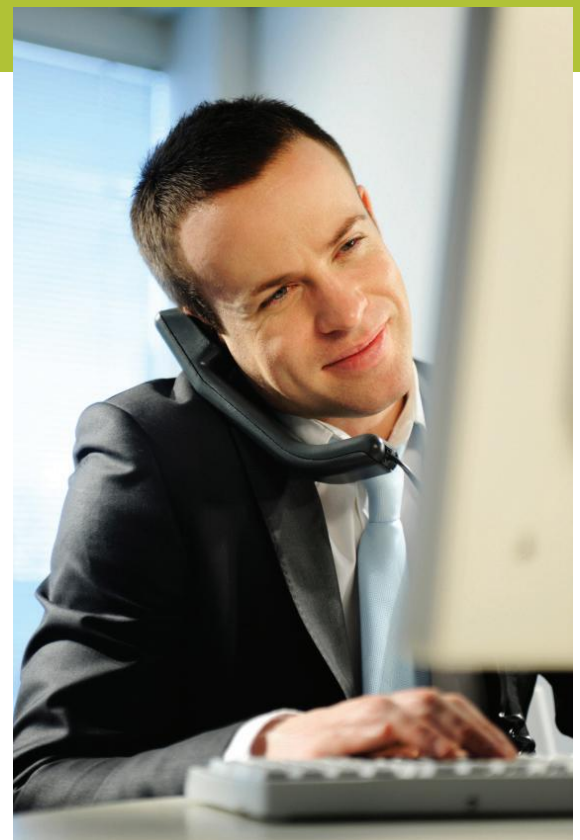
The business development manager reports to the sales manager or CMO, if the firm has one, or to the sales partner and should have a bachelor’s degree, over five years of business development experience in a professional services firm and a proven track record and ability to close business.

Measures of Success

The business development manager’s measures of success may include:

- Achieving his or her personal revenue and/or new client goals
- Personally generating a certain number of new leads independent of the firm’s marketing activities
- Maintaining a certain percent of sales tasks in your contact management system in a current status each month
- Keeping the pipeline current and updated for their assigned opportunities each week

Business development managers are responsible for new business development, and the sales manager or the sales partner acts as his or her “wingman” supporting his or her efforts in a team sales approach.



NEXT STEPS



For more information to aid you in developing the sales and marketing roles within your firm, visit <http://accountingmarketing.org/survey.asp> to download results of one of AAM's Salary and Compensation surveys or contact AAM Headquarters at info@accountingmarketing.org.



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