



# Marketing Operations, Accountability and Disposability

By Gary M. Katz

As a tough economy and demanding CEOs call for more disciplined, streamlined, accountable marketing, what impact does this new reality have on how marketing professionals are valued and treated by their organizations?

Is [Marketing Operations](#) a protector of individual marketers, helping them optimize and mobilize their talents toward achieving enterprise strategic objectives? Or is it a sinister means to shift responsibility from the system to individuals, making them even more vulnerable and disposable in the name of efficiency and profitability?

It all depends, really, on an organization's fundamental view of its people. Are your people truly valued or easily replaceable?

A Marketing Operations mindset, and related aspirations such as a culture of measurement and accountability, can be used for good or evil. They can empower marketers or enslave them.

## Empowered Marketers

- Have a clear sense of what is expected of them and wholeheartedly buy into the vision
- Are able to focus on what is important, not just urgent
- Continually earn the trust of their management through their willingness to stay accountable, challenge their own [mental models \(discussed in my "Building Upon the 5Ts of Marketing Operations post\)](#), and act with clarity and courage
- Understand and are able to demonstrate how their efforts contribute to the success of the organization

## Enslaved Marketers

- Blindly do what they're told, what's always been done, refusing to rock the boat (even when it is sinking)
- Focus on firefighting, pleasing the boss, pointing fingers and playing politics
- Live in constant fear of "Big Brother"; of being exposed, losing their power (if they have any) and, ultimately, their jobs
- Spend much more time justifying their existence than creating real value

What type of marketer are you, empowered or enslaved?

If your organization empowers you, you have an incredible opportunity to really experience the best of Marketing Operations — to be part of the transformation, the shift in Modus Operandi (MO).

If you're inside an organization that enslaves you, Marketing Operations is yet another vehicle to maintain the status quo — to keep a sick system sick. Is this the future you envisioned for yourself when you first entered the workplace?

You have a choice.



*For more on the relationship of Marketing Operations to the stature of Marketing and Marketing professionals, check out my article, "Integrated? Strategic? Why Marketing Needs a New MO."*

## **Call to Action**

If your company is facing challenges in any of the areas discussed in this article, or if you are thinking about creating a marketing operations function or increasing the effectiveness of the one you already have, you should start with a "current state assessment" that will help you evaluate the overall health of your marketing and/or Marketing Operations today. Doing so will help you zero in on those areas that represent your most difficult challenges as well as your greatest opportunities for bringing the significant benefits of MO best practices to your organization.

## **About the Author:**



Gary M. Katz is founder and chief strategy officer of Marketing Operations Partners, a firm that helps enterprises overcome dysfunction, execute strategy, build shared vision and accountability, and strengthen strategic impact in all areas of marketing. To find out more, please contact Gary at [gary.katz@mopartners.com](mailto:gary.katz@mopartners.com).