

7 SIGNS IT'S TIME TO HIRE A FRACTIONAL CMO

Your guide to knowing when to bring senior marketing leadership into your growing business



Purpose of this checklist:

If you've been wondering whether now is the right time to bring on a Fractional Chief Marketing Officer (FCMO), this guide will help you quickly evaluate your business readiness.

A FCMO provides executive-level marketing leadership without the full-time salary, aligning marketing and sales with smart systems and technology to drive revenue, increase efficiency, and scale sustainably.

Use this checklist to:

- Identify clear signs that it's time to bring in senior marketing support.
- Pinpoint where inefficiencies are holding back growth.
- Determine your next best step, whether that's hiring, optimizing, or planning ahead.

How to Use This Checklist

For each section:

- Check off any signs you see in your business today.
- Answer the self-assessment questions honestly.
- Review the action steps to understand what needs to change.



Tip: If you check 3 or more boxes, your business is likely ready for Fractional CMO support.

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1. Your Tech Stack Is a Tangled Mess

Signs:

- ☐ Tools don't talk to each other (CRM, email marketing, project management).
- ☐ Manual work is eating up hours every week.
- ☐ Team members are unclear on which tools to use, or why.

Self-Assessment Questions:

- Do you have a single source of truth for customer data?
- Can you pull accurate reports quickly and confidently?
- Are you paying for multiple tools that overlap in functionality?

Action Steps:

- Audit all marketing and sales tools.
 - Identify gaps, redundancies, and integration opportunities.
 - Create a prioritized tech stack map for clarity and cost savings.
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2. Your Brand Feels Inconsistent Across Channels

Signs:

- ☐ Messaging varies between your website, social media, and sales team.
- ☐ Visual branding is outdated or applied inconsistently.
- ☐ Customers are confused about what you offer, or why you're different.

Self-Assessment Questions:

- Can every team member clearly explain what you do and who you serve?
- Does your visual identity reflect your brand's current stage of growth?
- Are marketing materials stored in one central, organized place?

Action Steps:

- Build a clear messaging framework aligned to your brand strategy.
- Implement brand governance and templates for consistency.
- Create a shared content library to keep assets organized and accessible.

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3. Teams Are Siloed and Communication Breaks Down

Signs:

- ☐ Marketing, sales, and operations rarely collaborate.
- ☐ Projects get delayed due to miscommunication.
- ☐ Goals between teams don't align.

Self-Assessment Questions:

- Do you have regular cross-department strategy meetings?
- Are your KPIs (key performance indicators) shared across teams?
- Do departments understand how their work impacts one another?

Action Steps:

- Identify breakdowns in team communication and handoffs.
- Set up shared KPIs everyone can rally around.
- Establish clear workflows to keep projects on track.

4. Marketing Is Reactive Instead of Strategic

Signs:

- ☐ Campaigns are launched on the fly, with no clear plan.
- ☐ Content creation feels rushed and inconsistent.
- ☐ Marketing decisions are made based on gut feelings rather than data.

Self-Assessment Questions:

- Do you have a documented marketing strategy for the next 6–12 months?
- Are campaigns tied directly to measurable business goals?
- Is there a content calendar everyone follows?

Action Steps:

- Create a 90-day marketing roadmap aligned to your marketing strategy.
- Build a content engine that supports business objectives.
- Balance proactive planning with flexibility for real-time opportunities.

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5. You're Drowning in Data but Starving for Insights

Signs:

- ☐ Reports exist, but no one knows what they mean.
- ☐ Different teams track data in different ways.
- ☐ Decisions are made without clear evidence of what's working.

Self-Assessment Questions:

- Do you have one dashboard that shows key metrics at a glance?
- Can you confidently explain what's driving growth, and what's not?
- Are you able to pivot quickly based on performance data?

Action Steps:

- Identify the top 3–5 metrics that matter most to your business.
- Build a unified reporting dashboard.
- Train your team to interpret and act on data, not just collect it.

6. Growth Is Stalling or Feels Chaotic

Signs:

- ☐ Sales are increasing, but so are mistakes and bottlenecks.
- ☐ Projects feel rushed, with unclear priorities.
- ☐ Team members are constantly firefighting instead of innovating.

Self-Assessment Questions:

- Do you feel confident your systems can handle double the current volume?
- Are there clear processes for onboarding new customers or clients?
- Does your team spend more time reacting than planning?

Action Steps:

- Identify critical bottlenecks slowing growth.
- Document key processes to create repeatable systems.
- Build workflows that scale without adding chaos.

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7. You're Not Ready (or Able) to Hire a Full-Time CMO

Signs:

- ☐ The cost of a full-time CMO isn't realistic right now.
- ☐ You need high-level strategy but not 40 hours/week of leadership.
- ☐ Local talent pool doesn't offer the expertise you need.

Self-Assessment Questions:

- Could your team benefit from senior-level guidance without full-time overhead?
- Do you have projects or initiatives that need strategic leadership now?
- Would flexible, remote support make it easier to access top talent?

Action Steps:

- Define your ideal level of marketing leadership.
- Explore Fractional CMO options and engagement models.
- Start with a 90-day pilot project to test fit and impact.

Scoring Your Results

- 0–2 Checks: You may not need a Fractional CMO yet, but it's time to start planning.
- 3–5 Checks: Your business is ready for outside expertise, start exploring options now.
- 6–7 Checks: Hiring a Fractional CMO should be a top priority to prevent stalled growth.

Your Next Steps



If you've checked three or more boxes, it's time to take action:

1. **Book an Interest Call:** keenelaneco.com/interest-call. Let's talk about your goals, challenges, and how a Fractional CMO can help.
2. **Take the Marketing Ops Quiz:** keenelaneco.com/mops-quiz. Dive deeper into your systems to uncover hidden gaps.
3. **Explore Fractional CMO Support:** Start with a 90-day engagement to bring clarity, strategy, and operational alignment to your business.

NEXT STEPS WITH KATY KEENE



About Katy Keene

I'm Katy, a Fractional CMO and Marketing Operations Strategist. Through my ALIGN Framework, I help small to mid-sized businesses align their people, processes, and technology for smarter, more sustainable growth.

I bring unique expertise as a:

- **Canva Agency Partner:** helping teams stay on brand at scale.
- **HubSpot Solutions Partner:** streamlining marketing and sales tools.
- **SHE IS AI Global Advisory Council Member:** advocating for human-led AI and ethical technology use.

Why This Matters

Hiring a Fractional CMO isn't just about marketing leadership — it's about creating harmony across your marketing, sales, and systems to drive sustainable growth.

If you're ready to align your business and scale with clarity, let's connect and explore your next steps together.

Let's Connect

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