

The great marketing debate: Hiring an agency vs building an in-house team

As you begin to work on growing your brand online, one decision every business leader must battle with is whether to outsource their marketing efforts to an agency, or continue to create campaign in house.

Temps de lecture : minute

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With one-quarter of small business leaders now claiming that they have recently outsourced part of or all of their marketing strategy to a third-party team, could it be time to switch up your own business processes?

In the most competitive era yet for online brands, the great debate between in-house and agency marketing continues. While many fear a loss of their brand voice and a lack of control when outsourcing their campaigns, others are prioritising fast-tracked SEO success and a third-party team of specialists that can get the job done effectively.

“When it comes to marketing, businesses are plagued by a never-ending quandary—whether to hire an in-house marketer or contract a marketing agency,” says Owen Garitty, Founder of FPW Media.

“While proponents of an internal marketer might assert that they're more cost-efficient and personalized, the reality is that working with a marketing agency offers numerous benefits that many businesses don't seem to consider.”

With this in mind, we're sinking our teeth into the newest marketing debate. We'll discuss the pros and cons of agency outsourcing and help you decide what step to take next in your business growth journey.

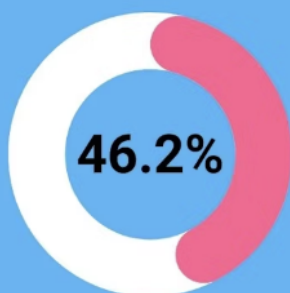
Are more businesses outsourcing their marketing efforts In 2024?

How many small businesses are choosing to outsource their marketing efforts in 2024?

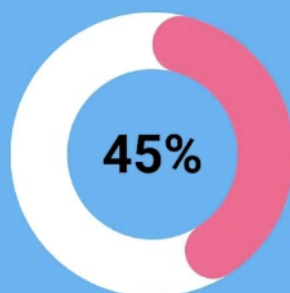
As online brands brace themselves for increased pressure from consumers to create fresh, personalised campaigns at lightning speed, it's no surprise that many are turning to agency specialists for that extra strategy boost.

Let's look at the stats. In 2024, 46% of marketing efforts were outsourced to an external provider, up from just 25% in 2020, while 45% of businesses chose to build their own in-house marketing team instead.

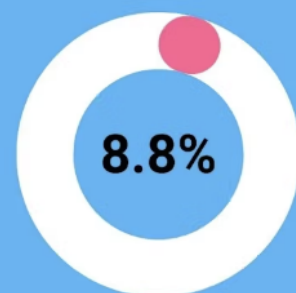
Have areas of marketing been outsourced to an external provider (e.g. agency, specialist or consultancy) over the past 12 months?



Yes



No



Don't know

(Image Source: [MarketingWeek](#))

However, with no clear front runner, the debate about whether agency or in-house marketing is best for small business marketing is still very much in session.

In response, we've prepared a guide on how to make the right choice for your own brand and weighed up the pros and cons of agency vs in-house so you don't have to.

Agency Vs in-house: How to make the right choice

Whether you're leaning towards building your own in-house marketing team or preparing to outsource your first online campaign, it's important to consider the advantages and disadvantages of both processes before you make a large decision for your business.

Powerful marketing can make or break a brand. Creative online content, social strategies, and innovative campaigning can help boost brand awareness and, more importantly, get your target audience talking.

Before you begin working on your first marketing campaign, ask yourself the following questions:

- Have you or your team had experience in creating a successful marketing campaign?
- Do you have the skills and resources needed to make your vision a reality?
- Do you have the budget to hire an expert in-house to lead your marketing team forward?

While it is important to weigh up the risks associated with partnering with

a specialist marketing agency, brands that are unconfident of their own marketing ability or simply new on the scene shouldn't engage in an in-house approach before researching both options thoroughly.

The benefits of hiring an agency

First, let's discuss the benefits your small business could see from outsourcing its marketing efforts to an agency.

A marketing agency is a third-party team of experts that help their clients create compelling campaigns for their customers. As the market for agency marketing grows, brands can now choose to work with competitive all-rounders or set their sights on SEO specialists or social media content masters.

Depending on which area of your marketing strategy you're looking to improve, you can outsource your whole campaign or simply enlist a specialist to fine-tune the edges.

Here are some benefits of hiring an agency to consider:

Specialised skills And resources

It's no surprise that specialist marketing agencies have access to some of the best resources on the market. Not only are agency marketers more equipped to optimise and tailor your campaign, but they are experts in their field, providing you with extensive data from existing clients and more knowledge on the best direction to take your branding.

"Using an agency can give you access to a whole team that has a diverse range of skills, from copywriting and PPC campaigns to graphic design and videography," says Simon Kingsnorth, author of *The Digital Marketing Handbook*. "Very few businesses need these roles to be fulfilled by full-time or even long-term part-time team members. There's no need

to go through the hassle of hiring and managing your marketing dream team when an agency already has everything you need.”

In order to continue creating successful campaigns, agency teams also keep up to date with current industry trends, viral content formats, and, of course, competitor monitoring. With the ability to predict niche trends ahead of the curve, the combination of expertise and high-quality resources makes agency marketers an unstoppable force when it comes to creating a killer campaign.

Improved scalability

If a product or service takes off, online businesses can expand exponentially in a matter of months. If you're using an in-house team for your marketing efforts, this places more stress on your employees to keep up with growing consumer demands and could be expensive if you need to recruit.

For those who outsource their marketing to an agency, scaling up your business is much easier. With a third-party team under your belt, you have access to as many specialists as you need and can increase or decrease their workload based on how your business is performing.

Access to an established network

“Marketing agencies also typically have a wide network of connections and relationships within the industry. This established network can provide access to new opportunities and resources, leading to even more impactful marketing strategies,” says Owen Garitty, founder of FPW Media.

For example, if you're looking to build links on competitive domains, enlisting a specialist SEO agency like [Solvid](#) could give you access to hundreds of publications and high-ranking blogs that the agency already

has an established connection with.

Rather than relying on countless hours of in-house outreach, specialist marketing agencies have the skills, resources, and connections needed to help you easily build new partnerships.

What challenges could you face?

Outsourcing your marketing to an agency reduces pressure and can fast-track campaign success for a small business.

However, there are still some risks to consider before partnering with a third-party brand:

- **Lack Of niche understanding:** While agencies are brilliant all-rounders when it comes to creating a successful marketing campaign, they are likely to lack familiarity with all niche industries. This can often result in a campaign that does not resonate with your target demographic or struggles to generate the right leads.
- **Lack of communication:** If you employ an in-house team of marketers, you have a constant line of communication and can be part of each step of the campaign's creation. When you opt for a third-party agency, you have less control over how your external team chooses to work with you and must rely on them to keep you updated and meet the deadlines.
- **Hidden costs:** before you outsource your next marketing campaign to a third-party agency, ensure that you choose an agency with set pricing structures and a defined scope of work. If not, you could be asked to pay hidden costs at the end of your campaign that were unclear to you when signing up.

When to choose in-house

If you've got a larger budget and a team with experience in crafting compelling campaigns, you may opt for an in-house marketing strategy.

While this can be costly, some businesses prefer the in-house approach to ensure that they remain in control over the direction of their campaign and retain their voice as a brand.

Here are some of the benefits you could see when keeping your marketing efforts in-house.

Improved brand control and alignment

It can be tempting to outsource your marketing efforts to an agency, but you lose control over how your campaigns and links are crafted.

“Having a dedicated team that is part of your businesses means that you can have direct control over marketing campaigns and can monitor them on a personal level. Agencies may not be able to offer this level of immediate communication,” says Kingsnorth

Your in-house team will not only better understand your target audience but also have more knowledge of the businesses' values and short-term and long-term goals. This makes them better equipped to craft a marketing strategy that perfectly aligns with your desired business direction.

Retaining your brand's voice

Unless you enlist the help of an agency that specialises in your industry niche, they will struggle to emulate your brand's true voice within the content they create.

Your in-house team are more likely to create a campaign that authentically aligns with your audience.

This authentic voice is often what is needed to help build trust with target leads and foster loyalty with existing customers.

Is in-house marketing a financial risk?

While businesses save on some of the more tactical elements, such as agency service fees, when employing an in-house marketing team, they are instead faced with the financial challenges that come with taking on new employees.

Business revenue constantly fluctuates during the first few years of operation, meaning that at one time, your profits could be climbing, and then, the next, they would drop.

This alone poses a challenge to small business startups that invest in in-house employment.

While scaling down your agency-based marketing efforts is easy, handling potential redundancies is much harder. This is why many opt for an agency-based approach for their marketing efforts until their company is well established.

If you're aiming to build an internal marketing team, these additional salary payouts must be factored into your expenditure early on in the process.

The bottom line

The bottom line is that it is up to you to decide how you tackle your marketing efforts.

There are advantages and disadvantages of both the agency and in-house approach. However, we recommend researching both extensively before you make your choice.

The marketing world is always evolving, so it's important to consider your best path forward in a busy competitive landscape.

Article by Rebecca Barnatt-Smith