

# Is Marketing a Leadership issue in your Business?

A 5-minute diagnostic for senior leaders in growing SMEs

## Why this matters

When marketing feels busy but harder to steer than it should, the issue is rarely effort or capability.

More often, it's a lack of clarity around priorities, decisions and focus.

This short diagnostic helps you sense-check whether marketing leadership, rather than execution, is the real constraint in your business.

## The diagnostic

Tick the statements that feel familiar.

- Marketing priorities change frequently
- Success is difficult to define beyond activity and output
- Decisions are often made reactively, under time pressure
- Marketing and sales alignment relies on individuals rather than structure
- We invest in execution before fully agreeing direction
- There are too many priorities and not enough progress
- Marketing feels important, but not clearly anchored to business goals
- Teams are busy, but confidence in impact is low
- Leadership expectations of marketing are implied rather than explicit
- It's hard to explain, commercially, what marketing is actually delivering

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## What your answers may be telling you

- **0–3 ticks**

Leadership clarity is likely in place. Any issues may sit in execution or capacity.

- **4–7 ticks**

Leadership clarity is inconsistent. Marketing effort may be diluted or difficult to steer.

- **8+ ticks**

Marketing leadership is likely the bottleneck. Activity may be compensating for a lack of clear direction.

## A useful perspective

These patterns are common in growing businesses. They are not a sign of failure, they are a sign that complexity has increased faster than clarity.

Strong marketing outcomes tend to follow leadership decisions, not the other way round.

## A sensible next step

When this diagnostic resonates, the most valuable next step is usually a leadership-level conversation about priorities, decisions and focus before changing tactics, tools or suppliers.