

# Innovation Allies: The Chief Marketing Officer

by Bill Poston

The Chief Innovation Officer needs a [coalition of executives](#) to successfully transform the innovation competencies of a large, established enterprise. The head of marketing for the corporation should be a key ally. In some companies I have served, the Chief Marketing Officer was the de facto head of innovation.

A good marketing executive is not just packaging and selling whatever the company produces, but is shaping, informing and influencing what a company develops. The marketing function represents customers and brings their voice into the room while concepts are developed and features are debated. The folks in marketing will be the first to sign up for a program to transform innovation.

It is much easier to market products that people really want, and that are at just the perfect spot in the price/value matrix. This happens when marketing has an active role in shaping the idea and guiding it through development. Marketing should also have a role in most innovation governance decisions. This helps avoid the problem of developing really cool products that have no market or are priced out of the core demographic. Marketing needs to be intimately involved throughout the innovation process.

In the absence of a formal Chief Innovation Officer, the heads of marketing and R&D could work together to fill the role as partners. Getting the head of marketing on board should be an easy sell. You might even position him or her as a co-champion of the effort. We need friends to tackle the tough challenge of improving innovation. Marketing should be your bestie.

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For the past 30 years, Bill has helped executives in technology-driven industries transform their competencies to deliver results. He is a highly regarded consultant, speaker, and writer on the topics of innovation strategy, product development, portfolio management, technology commercialization, and the software systems that enable innovation. Keep up with Bill's latest research and thoughts on innovation and the rising role of the Chief

Innovation Officer at [www.TheChiefInnovationOfficer.com](http://www.TheChiefInnovationOfficer.com).