

CMO PERSPECTIVES C-SUITE RELATIONSHIPS

Deloitte.

Strong relationships across the C-suite are essential to unlocking growth. To help CMOs focus on what matters most to their CEO and CFO peers, we leveraged data from recent Deloitte surveys—offering CMOs quick insights that can refine their strategies and strengthen executive-level alignment.

Reference the below as you lead with greater insight and impact, fortify the partnerships that matter most, and be the CMO your CFO brags about.

PROTECT REVENUE AMID BUDGET UNCERTAINTY

WHAT WE'VE HEARD

Only 30% of CEOs¹ and 19% of CFOs² express a positive outlook on the economy as economic optimism stagnates.

To combat this, CEOs look to budget cuts while CFOs cut key growth forecasts, most notably lowering revenues and earnings projections.

80%

of CEOs are likely to make budget cuts over the next 12 months.³

OUR PERSPECTIVE

Moving beyond visibility-focused creative campaigns, CMOs should maintain a razor-sharp focus on the functional drivers of sales and removing friction from the customer experience.



"All along my career, I've always been close to the CFO because they're the one who helps you make things happen. When that relationship happens, it's magic—real, total magic."

Aude Gandon
Global Chief Digital and Marketing Officer,
Estée Lauder

PROVE BRAND VALUE TO BOOST INVESTMENT

WHAT WE'VE HEARD

Most CEOs signal a cautious approach with more than a third (36%) of CEOs likely delaying new investments, while 63% are maintaining instead of growing.⁴

However, CFOs have expressed an uptick in risk appetite this quarter, with nearly six in ten (59%) of CFOs signaling that now may be a good time to take greater risks.

59%

of CFOs say now is a good time to be taking risks.⁵

OUR PERSPECTIVE

While CEOs and CFOs may be split, risk aversion shouldn't hold your brand back from growth. CMOs can gain permission to innovate by leading tactical and tangible pilots that show incremental success within six months.



"Conversations with the CEO/CFO get really hard when you try to explain KPIs that don't ladder up to the business or make sense to them. Marketers' first job is to drive sales and traffic."

George Felix
Chief Marketing Officer,
Chili's Grill & Bar

AUTOMATE TIME-CONSUMING OPERATIONS

WHAT WE'VE HEARD

CFOs view cost efficiency and talent challenges such as hiring, retention, and productivity as the most significant internal risks to future enterprise growth.⁶

52%

of CFOs say efficiency and productivity is one of the top internal enterprise challenges today.⁷

OUR PERSPECTIVE

To boost talent and cost efficiency, CMOs should look to streamline teams with automated processes, such as developing briefs, creating first drafts, and synthesizing consumer intelligence.



Gabrielle Wesley
Chief Marketing Officer, Mars Wrigley North America

"If it's not moving cases, it's not worth the investment. Performance gives you the space to build brand equity."

TURN AI USERS INTO SUPERSCALERS

WHAT WE'VE HEARD

Many (45%) CEOs say their business is in the early stages of piloting agentic artificial intelligence (AI), while another third are still exploring its potential.⁸

Even without fully AI-integrated workstreams, most say that GenAI has met or exceeded their expectations.

62%

of CEOs say GenAI has met or exceeded expectations.⁹

OUR PERSPECTIVE

CMOs should consider building nimble, early-adopter teams that can create new AI-powered workflows to reskill and level up the broader organization.



Don McGuire
Chief Marketing Officer, Qualcomm

"The AI natives of my team caught on quickly; evangelized about the time they were saving, how much easier it was; created that FOMO, and suddenly—mass adoption."

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¹Deloitte, [Fortune/Deloitte CEO Survey, Fall 2025](#).

²Deloitte, [CFO Signals](#), December 2025.

³Deloitte, [Fortune/Deloitte CEO Survey, Fall 2025](#).

⁴Ibid.

⁵Deloitte, [CFO Signals](#), December 2025.

⁶Ibid.

⁷Ibid.

⁸Deloitte, [Fortune/Deloitte Survey, Spring 2025](#).

⁹Ibid.