EPISODE 49

Inside the Shifts Shaping CMO Roles and Hiring

Host: *Alan Hart, leader in marketing and customer strategy, Deloitte Consulting LLP*
Guests: *Richard Sanderson, Sales & Communications Officer Practice Lead, Spencer Stuart Marketing*

Alan Hart: Today the show, I've got Richard Sanderson. He leads Spencer Stuart's marketing, sales, and communications officer practice in North America. He advises CEOs, boards, and people leaders on recruiting and retaining transformational marketing, customer, and growth executives. He's worked across industries, solving some of the most complex leadership mandates with some nuanced understanding of modern marketing, product, and customer strategy.

Over the years, Richard has shaped and executed high-impact executive searches ranging from CMOs to senior customer, revenue, brand, digital, growth, and experience leaders across a range of Fortune 500 companies, middle-market, and private equity-backed businesses, as well as early-stage category disruptors.

On the show today, we've welcomed Richard back. He's been on before. We spend quite a bit of time talking about C-suite hiring trends. What are CEOs and boards discussing and looking for? What does that mean in terms of the org composition and dynamics within the marketing and growth executives?

And what should CMOs and executives be doing? What should they have the type of experience? We take a twist on my normal questions we ask everyone on the show.

That and much more with Richard Sanderson.

Alan Hart (voice-over): Are you ready to go beyond the basics of marketing? I'm Alan Hart and this is Marketing Beyond, where I chat with the world's leading chief marketing officers and business innovators to share ideas that spark change and inspire you to challenge the status quo. Join us as we explore the future of marketing and its endless potential.

Alan Hart: Well, Richard, welcome back to the show.

Richard Sanderson: Thank you. Second time, Alan, I think?

Alan Hart: I think it's second; it could be third, but you might be right, you might be right. I always enjoy talking to you. So you always have an open invite to come on.

All right. Well, before we get talking about business and the C-suite and all things business, I hear you had a recent milestone.

Richard Sanderson: Yes, Alan, not one I was excited about, but I turned 50 a couple of weeks ago. It comes at you slowly and then it hits violently. I think I woke up the day after and had terrible lower back pain, which I'm trying to shake off. It's the "welcome to your sixth decade in life." And then, of course, the mailing from AARP arrives almost to the day. I mean, it is remarkable. They've got great data, kudos to whoever the chief marketing officer is over there, but they hit me I think literally on my birthday with the "welcome to your AARP membership." I don't know what to make of that, but they're doing good work.

Alan Hart: Well, it makes your birthday feel like an expiration date. If you've got like back pain and other things.

Richard Sanderson: Right.

Alan Hart: I'm not quite at that milestone, but I'm coming up on it. Somebody in my life, who will remain nameless, also got an AARP card in the mail and I was like I was excited for discounts potentially.

Richard Sanderson: Yeah, I think 10% offered at hotels maybe, Alan. Congratulations! Yep.

Alan Hart: I love it. Well, from turning 50 to marketing about that milestone, let's talk about business and the C-suite. You guys at Spencer Stuart, you're in the hot seat, if you will, in talking to CEOs, boards, ultimately kind of recruiting for CMOs. What are you seeing in C-suite hiring trends today?

Richard Sanderson: Well, first of all, I'd say the market is more active than it felt a year ago, which surprises me. I think we all know there have been very significant macroeconomic events. And yet, what we are seeing is at least the executive search market for marketing officers and leaders has continued to grow double digits.

So there was a little bit of a reset moment, Alan, to late 2022, 2023—inflation, there was some economic pressure—but the demand for marketing, senior-level marketing leadership, has been high and even accelerating. And so we have personally experienced double-digit growth in 2024, 2025, and year to date

2026 in a level and manner that I didn't expect. And we can talk about it, but that growth or that demand for marketing leadership is occurring in places that you might not be predicting or expecting.

Alan Hart: Yeah, it does surprise me a bit, but let's come back to CMOs and the equivalent-type titles. If you start at the top of the house, like the board and the CEO level, what are some of the hot topics or pressure points you guys are seeing?

Richard Sanderson: Yeah, so it starts even at an existential level sometimes, Alan. I mean, a way that I have seen some boards and CEOs frame it, it's not so much they're asking, do we need marketing anymore? So, it's not an existential question, but rather they're asking, how do we make sure that marketing is actually connected to the few things that actually drive enterprise value? And the point I would make is we're seeing this now, and this is maybe back to an earlier point, we're seeing this occur with different intensities in different industries.

So, for example, the industry or where we're having conversation with CEOs is an industry that may be not obvious or predictable. For example, specifically financial services and the health care industry right now are the most active. And the nature of those conversations varies even within those industries.

Take health care. Health care is an enormous industry in this country. It accounts for something like 19% or 20% of GDP on the health care providers. So think of that as, for example, large hospital systems. We're seeing CEOs really think about how do we recast the role? How can chief marketing offices and health care providers actually explicitly support growth and patient experiences versus some of the conversations we used to have, which is the role has often been around traditional marketing communications activity.

In other parts of health care, we have seen rollups of middle-market pet vet, dental, urgent care, you name it. These are middle-market businesses where now they typically are operating at newer scale with new technology and have new mandates. These are often private equity-backed businesses, and they're creating the CMO role often in new ways.

Similarly in financial services, we're seeing a sharper focus on how can the role have commercial impact, and what is that balance of brand and performance. And so, the conversation with boards and CEOs now isn't so much, do we need marketing anymore? And by the way, there's a separate stat that we might come to, which is a large and meaningful share, almost a third, of S&P 500 companies don't even have an enterprise CMO role. It manifests itself in different ways, but I think we have gone beyond the fact, do we need marketing anymore? To how do we balance the tension between growth and efficiency? And can you have both?

How do we still keep ourselves focused on customer needs, trust, culture? How do we have lasting relevance? And so, you see this tension between how do we manage the short-term pressure without starving long-term asset and brand creation that does drive durable value. So it's this sense of going beyond existential questions to actually how do we balance short term and long term? How do we balance both growth and efficiency?

And how does marketing therefore play a role in overseeing these often intangible assets that increasingly drive value: brand equity, reputation, trust, customer lifetime value. These are some of the topics that boards and CEOs increasingly want to talk about and how it manifests itself in the marketing leadership role.

Alan Hart: Interesting. I mean that tension and the balance between growth and efficiency, are you hearing any more defensiveness? And what I mean by that is like with AI and some of the advancements in the ecosystem, if you will, especially thinking about the two industries you highlighted, financial services and health care, impacted in very different but meaningful ways with those new technology shifts. And just curious if you hear any nuances or differences in terms of who's pushing for growth versus maybe who's taking a more defensive or efficiency play?

Richard Sanderson: Yeah, OK. So the AI impact on CMOs is a huge topic in its own rights. I mean, we at Spencer Stuart have done specific surveys on this. We did one, we published earlier this year, just trying to get a sense of where are CMOs, and to your point, Alan, what those tensions look like. The broad sense was, the highlights I would say, most chief marketing officers are stuck in what I'll call the messy middle of AI adoption. When you ask them, do they view themselves as a laggard or a leader, guess what? Most are putting themselves right in the middle.

When we also ask them questions around where is your team in the journey? Most of them are saying, look, we're scaling proven use cases. I think where it gets a little bit more controversial is when we ask marketing leaders, how has AI impacted your hiring, your org structure, and do you expect there to be cost pressures, and how will that manifest itself over the next 12 to 24 months? That's when we start getting some varying answers.

Most CMOs are telling us that up till this point, they've kept headcount steady, but shifting headcount and capabilities towards AI-related activities and roles. Looking forward, however, there is a clear pressure on CMOs.

We found that not to be the case, however, in smaller businesses. For those, for example, with revenue under $5 billion, only 6% of CMOs were telling us that they face those similar pressures. So what we're finding, I guess, is when does AI impact enterprise and marketing leadership decisions? When does it move beyond productivity to efficiency? And how does that manifest itself?

Alan Hart: Right.

Richard Sanderson: And when we looked at this by—we actually couldn't find any statistical difference across industry, category. It actually only mattered statistically at size of company. And it's pretty clear the large company CMOs are under significant more pressure to go beyond productivity to efficiency. So I'll leave it there, Alan, because it's an enormous topic.

Alan Hart: Yeah.

Richard Sanderson: But the dimension of difference was actually on scale of business. That's where we found the biggest and most variant impact of AI on marketing leaders.

Alan Hart: It's interesting. I mean, it's somewhat intuitive for me to think about as somebody that serves businesses of various sizes, but that the largest ones have the potentially biggest efficiency gains to be had. Because there's just literally more people. There's more work probably.

The smaller ones, it's an interesting dynamic. I will leave it here, but it does pose the question is it that marketing was small to start with and they see AI as an accelerator to reach throughput that they couldn't reach before, and so therefore it's a scale game? It's an interesting dynamic though.

Richard Sanderson: I think that's right. I mean, we did ask CMOs in our survey, what is the impact you expect AI to have? And for the vast majority, and this is particularly true of those at the bottom end of the S&P 500 or more in the middle market, they are seeing undoubtedly increased productivity. There's no doubt this is a productivity tool that is leading to more effective marketing. And in some cases, a better customer experience.

However, it is also clear that for those larger companies, this is going into an efficiency savings game that I think the feeling is CMOs have had a couple of years of experimentation and some of the CFOs, CEOs, particularly at larger companies are, OK, look, you've had your two years, now show us the money. They are making significant AI gains or AI investments, I should say, and now it's OK, we need to see some returns on that investment.

Alan Hart: Interesting. All right. Well let's switch to CEOs and the hiring managers of the CMOs. What are the big questions they're bringing to you as they're thinking about a new CMO or replacing or creating a CMO job?

Richard Sanderson: Yeah, I think the first point to make is that it's very situation specific. And so the hiring conversation has become situational. What I mean by that is all companies are using typically the same term, chief marketing officer. But even that, we may come to that, is the fragmentation of the title. But broadly speaking, it's come and talk to us about marketing leadership. But what marketing leadership means is very different based on your situation and context. What it means for a growth-stage company versus, for example, a highly regulated health care company versus, say, a mature consumer business looks very, very different. But we're all using the same word: marketing. And so therefore, the question very quickly becomes around structure and scope.

And so we are often being asked, what should marketing own? What should it influence? What should it support? And it's very important to deal with that up front. The second question becomes around how much commercial impact can and should the role have, and what explicit targets are associated with that? I would say the third order of question then actually becomes title and what exactly is the role? Is this a classic—and I use that in quotes—a "classic" CMO role? Is this what I'm sometimes calling now a "CMO+" role? Is this a, for example, we've seen a wave of chief customer officer roles in retail, chief growth officer roles in consumer products, chief commercial officer roles, for example, in the leisure and hospitality practice.

We actually looked at the S&P 500 and only 55% of top marketing leaders actually have the chief marketing officer title; 45% are using some other title or some other construct or "marketing and." I know there's been debate about that in the past, but the CMO title itself is only being used in about half the situations where marketing leadership roles does exist. And this just speaks to how much the role has evolved and become fragmented.

Alan Hart: Yeah. At Deloitte, we do a lot of transition labs for various leaders across the C-suite, and one of the ones particularly it touches the marketing domain area, if you will. And I say marketing domain, because it's, like you said, it's very morphous, or shape shifting, depending on the business. But we always have to ground ourselves even before we start a conversation with the executive: What is the role? How is it defined today, and what are you being asked to achieve? Which I have to believe you don't have those same conversations with CFOs.

Richard Sanderson: Yeah, I've had this discussion with some of my CFO colleagues in the past that when you look at the org chart for a chief financial officer, it's 80% the same across, even across industries and size of companies. Most CFOs all have a head of treasury, a head of tax, a head of audit, a head of FP&A. I mean, there's very clearly defined, consistent functions that always report into a chief financial officer. That is not the case with marketing.

Indeed, if I can just pick up that thread you've put out there, Alan, I mean, a lot of our discussions is now around structure and scope. And indeed, we're bringing a framework to most of our clients when we have marketing conversations. I mean, it's not complex, but it's a simple sort of 4S framework, which starts with: What is your strategy? How does strategy inform structure? How does the organization structure therefore inform the scope of role? And how does the scope of role inform the skills that you need in your marketing leader? And that's become really critical because the customer journey now has become so complex and cuts across so many capability sub-areas. Think of that as everything: marketing, products, digital, data, sales, service, loyalty, pricing, operate. I could go on and on.

All of this now touches and shapes the customer journey and customer experience, and some of those old functional boundaries that people had or conceptions about marketing are really hard to defend. When I think about some of the conversations—just to pick on a specific industry, financial services—I think we've had more conversations with CEOs and chief HR officers around when should the marketing function be centralized versus decentralized versus operating in a hybrid structure.

And even that lens, I increasingly feel may be too simple. But we do need to ask ourselves, at what point when you have scale, which most financial services businesses have, how do you handle capabilities around scale, governance, data, AI investments, the infrastructure, your brand? And then on the other hand, recognizing that you're trying to drive accountability and decision-making down to an accountable level. Therefore, OK, but when should you decentralize work and decisions that require some speed, some judgments, some proximity to customers? Increasingly, we're trying to ask our clients what is the business problem we're trying to solve, not just what is the title.

And so, when you're trying to pull that and wrap it around, you know, is this retention, is this loyalty? Maybe a customer officer construct makes sense. If growth depends more on pricing, merchandising, sales, maybe a commercial officer or a revenue officer title, may be a better fit. But this just speaks to the complexity of these go-to-market functions now, Alan. These conversations are really important to have up front. But to your point, tying it back to where you started, I suspect the conversations we have about marketing leadership look different to those that we might have when we kick off a CFO search.

Alan Hart: No, exactly. And I mean, we've talked a lot about the titles and the various flavors of marketing leaders, but as you think about the evolution, if you will, of the title, it feels like we're still—I think your number was roughly like 60% still have a CMO title of some sort. And so, less about the title, but are you seeing this evolution but despite all the change and the flux, still some consistency that the role is still needed?

Richard Sanderson: Yeah, right. So even where the CMO role or title does not exist, the point I've made is it doesn't mean that marketing capability or marketing activity is not happening. So let me just start at a high level and give you some stats on this.

When we have looked through the S&P 500, 31% of the S&P 500 companies do not have an enterprise CMO. To me, that's actually a mind-blowing number. Zero percent don't have a CFO. I think maybe 1% don't have a chief HR or chief people officer. But apparently 31% of companies can live without a chief marketing officer.

Now look, some of it depends on industry, certain maybe industrial companies. Some of the big oil refinery companies don't need an enterprise-level chief marketing officer. I get it. However, it doesn't mean that marketing doesn't exist. It's simply structured differently.

I would also say then this title conversation is an extension of that, which is the title I think often reflects what is a company's strategic pressure point. A great example I love talking about is actually what we've seen take place in the retail industry and this move towards the chief customer officer role. I think we'll be publishing something later this year, but we've looked across all retailers to understand who has had this chief customer officer role, and what is it? And importantly, how long does it last?

Alan Hart: Right.

Richard Sanderson: Because actually the cynical, the skeptic, in me says sometimes these roles just exist for a certain moment of time dealing with a certain situation. And that's actually what our data suggests. But when we look at these chief customer officer roles and what they are in the retail industry, there's certain table-stakes activity, which is nearly always marketing-related work. Brand, creative, media, insights, analytics, experience, digital marketing, customer strategy sits within this role.

We'll frequently see CRM, customer loyalty programs, increasingly retail media networks, maybe some responsibility for e-commerce or omnichannel activation may sit within these chief customer officer roles. In the most expansive examples, we'll see financial services activities and credit cards and the margin that they deliver is often a very significant contributor to the EBITDA for retailers, but that can sometimes be in there as well. And so, you're seeing these sort of monstrously large roles for a part. I think what our data has also suggested is that the average tenure of people in these roles is actually quite short.

I'll give you a bit of a scoop here if you don't mind, Alan. The average tenure of a chief customer officer is 2.5 years. These roles are often designed as build-and-transition mandates that aren't meant to be long-term operator roles.

Alan Hart: Wow.

Richard Sanderson: So, we're seeing that, yes, OK, so there's a big evolution. Retail's a great example of that. I think it's handling the complexity. We spoke about how do you bring a single point of ownership over loyalty, retention, experience, omnichannel activation, customer strategy. The chief customer officer role has attempted to be an antidote to that. And it may exist for a period of time, but it's not—we do not believe it is a longitudinal role that lasts much more than a few years.

Alan Hart: It's interesting. I mean, I agree with—anecdotally, I agree. You have the data, but anecdotally I agree with what I see, too, that a lot of times these roles—or other specific kind of title roles—exist for a transformation period.

Richard Sanderson: Correct.

Alan Hart: And it's almost like a couple of different things. One, you need somebody to lead that transformation. That's a certain type of person. But the other aspect I've seen as well is when marketing gets a little stale and I need to shake things up a little bit, right? And I need to push it in a direction because maybe we weren't always using marketing with a capital M. We were using marketing with a lowercase M, and you invariably see a new executive, a new function come onto the scene. And over time, I've also seen them merge the functions back together. It may not be either of the same people sitting in those roles when they go back to merging them together, but it does seem like there's this transformational need from a period of time like you're describing.

Richard Sanderson: Correct. I mean, it also reminds me a little bit of the chief digital officer role that was hot in the 2010s. In many instances, those roles existed for a period of time, often three to four years, and then the capabilities were integrated or the role scope evolved.

Alan Hart: Hm. Yeah, agreed. Well, we always have a series of questions, and you know these because I've asked them to you before, but I want to take a different tact with these questions today. Instead of asking you to respond from your own personal side, we'll ask you to respond in terms of how you think marketers need to be answering these questions. And so, I'm curious if there's an experience that you think CMOs need to have had. Maybe something that separates the ones who are thriving right now from the ones who are struggling.

Richard Sanderson: OK, that's a good question. I think I'd probably—three topics immediately come to mind on this. I mean, number one is this sense of being able to, I mean, particularly for CMOs operating at the highest levels of the company, one is enterprise point of view. You've got to think beyond marketing.

The strongest CMOs and increasingly the route up to CMO, by the way, is nonlinear and nontraditional. I mean, increasingly we're seeing those that have worked across strategy or product revenue functions, even data or finance in some instances. But there's the sense of a CMO needs to bring some, I think, enterprise-level experience.

The second one, which—it's not a new one, but I'll just reinforce it—is the sense of CFO fluency. You've got to talk the language that matters to CFOs. You've got to be fluent in the language they want to talk about—EBITDA, even earnings per share. I remember one interview I did with a CMO still sticks with me today, and he spoke about the impact that his investments and return on investments wasn't just having in terms of revenue, but how they could cascade it down to earnings per share. Wow.

Alan Hart: Yeah. That's… [laughs]

Richard Sanderson: Now, I wasn't able to check and double-check their calculation on that, but I mean, the point that they can think in that language and have that CFO fluency matters. The reality is you've got to have some sort of hands-on AI literacy. This can't just be AI sponsorship. We are finding most CMOs, I do ask them, how are you becoming fluent, and the reality is you've got to learn by doing.

Got to use the tools daily, got to build your own simple agents, got to test the AI and work inside projects. Yes, work with your peer communities, make sure you're getting the right external learning, but you've got to get that hands-on AI literacy. This is coming up in interviews all the time.

Alan Hart: Yeah, yeah. Well, if you look at—I don't want to say young CMOs, the wrong word—early CMOs. What advice would you give an early CMO?

Richard Sanderson: The single biggest reason why I think CMOs have a reputation for high turnover, when I've asked people about it specifically, it's because there's a misalignment between your agenda as the chief marketing officer and your CEO's agenda as the enterprise leader.

You've got to, for a first, if the question is around what the first-time CMOs need to really get right in their first 90 or 100 days to ensure they'll have some longevity in the role: One, you've got to be crystal clear on the mandate that you have. And don't assume that everyone else knows it. You should not. And then secondly, make sure that your agenda is aligned particularly with the CFO. I mean, if you can get those two things right, I think as a first-time CMO, I would say odds on you're going to last. But if there's misalignment around the mandate or misalignment around your agenda and how it fits with others, you're going to have a problem on your hands quite quickly.

Alan Hart: Yeah. Going back to those transition labs, I see this a lot as well. It the… you claw your way to the top of the marketing mountain, right? And there's the CMO job. And then you don't necessarily quite make the shift that I'm now working in a different team. I am at the top of my functional mountain, but now I am a teammate to all the other functions across the enterprise. And to your point, your boss's objective has to cascade to your function, and then a lot of times, you're going to have shared objectives with your peers. It is a mental shift I've seen in real life.

Richard Sanderson: Right. Yeah.

Alan Hart: Well, you may have already answered this question, but I'll ask it. Is there a topic or area you think CMOs need to be studying or getting fluent in right now, even if they don't have the total answer?

Richard Sanderson: Yeah, I would say, I've hinted at it because this is the conversation that we're having with our clients, but I think this is something that CMOs need to get smart on, which is around organizational design. I think CMOs are being asked more questions about do they have the right org design with the right capabilities structured the right way with the right investment. So I think getting smart on org design, and I don't necessarily advocate benchmarking, but certainly, the marketing function is not just the same team with AI bolted on. I think that's the point I would make. You've kind of got to go beyond that.

The conversation that's really been cropping up—this is sort of more real time in the last few months with a number of clients, and this is, I think, having some impact on chief marketing officers, particularly those in more performance areas—is we are seeing and hearing that the customer acquisition engine is really under a lot of pressure and in need of reinvention. Guess what? Because of AI. And specifically, there's a structural shift in customer or consumer discovery that is driven by AI.

Just when we got to the point where everyone had mastered SEO, SEM, all that whole thing, guess what? AI is going to scramble it yet again.

Alan Hart: That's right.

Richard Sanderson: And these engines for driving demand generation are going to look very different very quickly. And we are seeing some concern from our clients who are really clearly asking us, the traditional lead-gen channels are declining in effectiveness; help us find a CMO who understands or can help us rethink our channel strategy, our digital presence, and what it looks like in an AI or generative engine GEO-driven world. That's now coming to the fore very quickly just this year.

Alan Hart: Yeah. We are hearing that as well in our line of business. The GEO, the AEO for agentic engine optimization, which is on the next horizon. I think all of those make a lot of sense. The other thing I've seen—and your point about pressure on the acquisition engine—is also a resurgence of brand and the need to make sure that we're top of mind in whatever category or shopping occasion that we need to be in. Because if you're if you're top of mind, then people are talking about you. And guess what? They're talking about you on those platforms that are fueling the LLMs of the world.

Well, a couple more questions and I'll let you go. But what do you think CMOs need to be curious about right now in the world?

Richard Sanderson: I'll build off some of the points I think we've made so far and just reinforce them here. I mean, clearly look, there's a lot of forces reshaping demand, this AI-mediated customer journey. The bit that, as we're recording this Alan, there's a lot of folks that have come back from Cannes and I'm sure, like me, you see endless posts.

I don't go to Cannes, it's not my thing exactly. But it is really interesting reading these messages and what some of the trends are that CMOs are picking up and reflecting on. I think the biggest trend that I can see consistently coming through is the sense of humanity in an AI-driven world. It's going to be a balance and finding meaning and not just efficiency-driven messaging through optimized channels where AI has the risk of dumbing this down, or not driving points of differentiation. This real sense of humanity I think is coming through now.

Alan Hart: I agree.

Richard Sanderson: And so, what does humanity, how does that manifest itself in, for example, creative-driven processes? Or even how do you manage your team at this moment of intense AI-driven change? I mean, that I think is what I'm seeing many CMOs focus on increasingly be curious about in this moment of transformation.

Alan Hart: Yeah. I've had the pleasure of going to Cannes the last two years, and two words this year that stuck out to me in the conversation I was having was humanity, like you just said. I totally agree with that. The other one that came up was taste, and I think it was in response to where does the human and the AI marry together to create tasteful art and tasteful creative.

And I think there's also something else around taste that is purposeful as well. So, it's interesting what you're taking away kind of marries the words I was hearing the most.

Well, last question for you. What do you think is the largest opportunity or potential threat to marketers today?

Richard Sanderson: Yeah, just to pull this up a level and always back to where we started with a more strategic holistic lens on this. I mean, there has never been more opportunity to be the enterprise's growth leader, customer/consumer advocate. The "woe is me—change transformation is coming"? That's the very negative ostrich burying her head in the sand.

I do feel this remains just an incredible moment to be a marketing leader in our industry right now. I think AI, for example, only accelerates that opportunity for curious, even ambitious, marketing leaders to separate themselves and their businesses. At the end of the day, do I think of this moment in time as more of an opportunity or a threat to marketers? More than ever, I believe it's an opportunity. I mean, this role of evolution we spoke about, in many instances, it is the former marketing leaders stepping into some of these expanded roles.

And we continue to see a small but steady path of marketing leaders move into the CEO role. I'm not saying it's the definitive track. It's not, but it's very clear that the chief marketing officer role does not need to be the terminal role in your career, but rather I've increasingly felt it's a platform role onto other opportunities. It's both the best of times and the worst of times, if you want to use a bit of a Charles Dickens metaphor in there. But the emphasis is very much on the best of times, not the worst of times.

Alan Hart: And I agree with you. I love your stats that you're able to bring to the conversation because the marketer role has to tame complexity in a completely ambiguous situation, almost every single day of their existence. And it doesn't surprise me that that leads itself, if you do a good job at it, right? First and foremost. It leads yourself to bigger and more complex, more impactful, more business-driving roles.

There's probably no role other than the CEO that that would trump it in terms of complexity, ambiguity that they face, having to make gut calls and decisions without endless information to make it precision. I agree. It's an exciting time for marketers. It's a challenging time, but it's an exciting time.

Richard Sanderson: No doubt.

Alan Hart: Well, Richard, thank you again for coming on the show. I'm sure we will have you on again. But until then, have a great rest of your year.

Richard Sanderson: Thank very much. Great to be here. Thank you for having me on.

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