

# Building Winning Regional Marketing Teams

Insights and Opportunities for APAC Leaders and Global Brands



# Foreword

Marketing leaders have a tough job this coming year. They have to balance a competitive hiring landscape with economic uncertainty and higher-than-ever customer expectations. Most businesses are facing challenges to growth, whether that's related to supply chain issues, talent shortages, or drastically reduced budgets.

What are companies doing to grow and scale when they have less to work with? We asked leaders at top brands in the Asia-Pacific region and they told us their priorities are localisation, education, and investing in better technology — why? They all have proven ROI and a near-endless limit to how far they can take your brand.

It makes sense that brands are realising the power of localised and regionalised marketing — people expect personalised campaigns, and with so much competition, those using relevant and contextual communication are succeeding.



**KAT WARBOYS**

Marketing Director, APAC, HubSpot

Companies growing internationally are expanding their presence in new markets, and investing in local community-building efforts to meet consumer expectations and build brand affinity.

People want to see themselves reflected in campaigns, down to accent, local references, language, and culture. Doing this the right way means **building out regional marketing teams who truly understand the local market and its nuances**. Rather than directly applying org structures and playbooks from HQ to new offices, regional leaders are leveraging different types of team structures and marketing campaigns that work for their specific local needs.

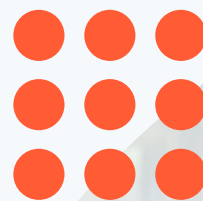
To better understand how global organisations can develop successful regional growth strategies, we partnered with LinkedIn to gather new data from marketing leaders in Australia and Singapore, and spoke with top brands to provide insights into these high-growth markets.

We hope you find this report helpful, whether you're expanding into a new market, or growing your business in new regions.



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# Introduction

Over the past several years, companies around the world have seen growth in new regions, both among their employees and customers. With more infrastructure now in place to support global teams, there are no longer costly barriers preventing business leaders from exploring new markets and strategies.

Today, people expect relevant, contextual marketing campaigns and communications that show a deep understanding of cultural differences and regional specifics. Brands need to respond and get ahead of these increasing consumer wants by investing in local marketing, brand awareness, and building relationships with these audiences.

With a rise in global hiring and the use of collaborative technology, there are more opportunities to grow local and regional teams and offer services in new areas of business. These markets can lead to significant, scalable growth, and support future expansion — but regional teams need the right structure, alignment, and autonomy to thrive.

Based on a survey of 1,000+ marketing leaders from Australia and Singapore, along with insights from experienced executives at top companies in the region, **it's clear that the key to successful international growth is giving regional teams the freedom to adapt strategies to their specific markets.** These markets are incredibly diverse, and require hyper-localised campaigns led by people who understand the audience.

Regional marketing is a scalable, sustainable strategy that leaders are prioritising during a time where budgets are tight and hiring is a challenge. It's time for leaders to invest in regional and local marketing, lay the groundwork for international expansion, and engage with growing audiences in areas like Australia, New Zealand, Singapore, Philippines, and surrounding markets in the region.

“Localisation has always been a focus for Canva, not just because it helps fulfil our mission to be truly accessible to everyone in the world, but also because it fuels our growth.”



**ZACH KITSCHKE**  
CMO, Canva



## Report Methodology

HubSpot commissioned YouGov to conduct research among marketing leaders in Australia and Singapore to learn more about how APAC companies bring products and services to market.

We surveyed 1,000+ marketing leaders in E20+ Singapore and Australia (with 500+ leaders from each country) in September 2022. Respondents included marketing decision makers (managers+) at a mix of local, regional, and global companies, and the survey was conducted online.

Our survey asked about what makes a successful marketing team in this region, how teams in the APAC region work with out-of-region HQs, the state of talent and hiring, what marketing channels have proven successful, and more.



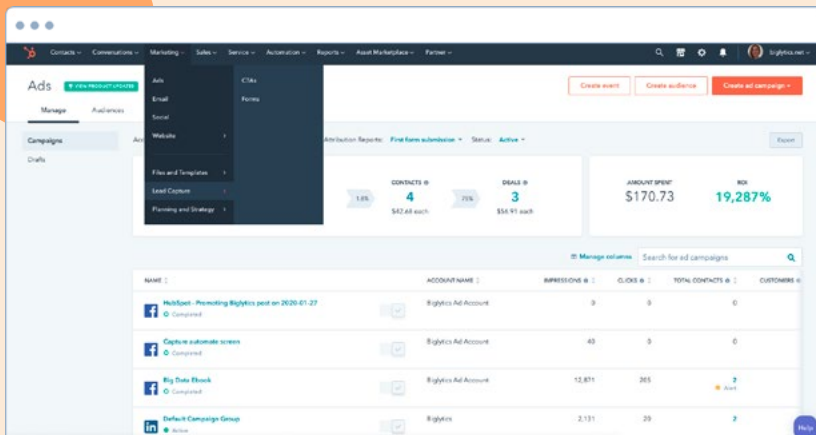


# HubSpot helps global companies grow better

A powerful marketing platform with features to support international teams

- Built-in security and data privacy
- Multi-language tools, websites, and support
- Smart content by IP country

Explore the Marketing Hub

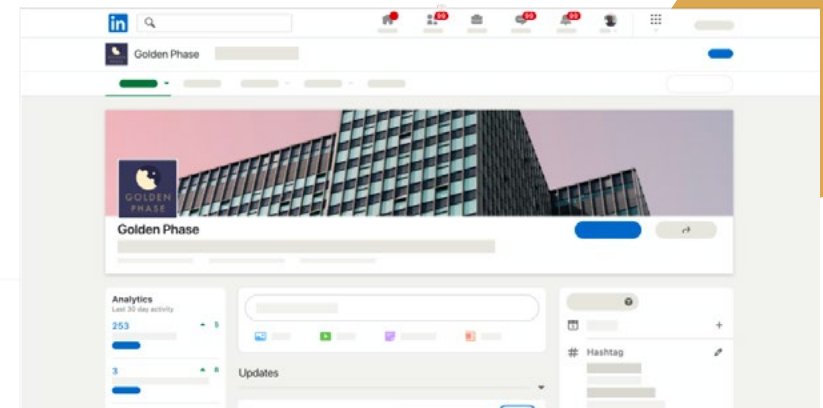


# Achieve B2B marketing goals with LinkedIn

Connect with targeted professional audiences

- Run regional campaigns
- Find local decision makers
- Automatically personalise ads to multiple audiences
- Build brand awareness in new areas

Try LinkedIn Marketing Tools



# The Rise of Regional Marketing

From early on in their growth, companies like HubSpot and LinkedIn established regional teams in Australia, Ireland, Germany, Japan, Singapore and other locations worldwide. These local teams run unique campaigns and have distinct audiences from their U.S.-based headquarters. And, they contribute significantly to each organisation's bottom line.

International teams and audiences represent new avenues for business growth, and have helped these brands maintain momentum after decades of growth, rather than hitting a plateau in a saturated market. Now, more companies are adopting similar international growth strategies from successful brands — which largely means creating regional and local marketing teams.

Recent data shows that Australian and Singaporean marketing leaders have come to rely on localised strategies as a top business priority, and will continue to invest in regional growth in the years ahead. These strategies rely on finding the right talent in new markets, giving them autonomy, support, and resources, and keeping virtual collaboration and people ops running smoothly.

**Expanding internal operations to support distributed teams is an opportunity to grow brand presence in emerging markets and scale business growth.**

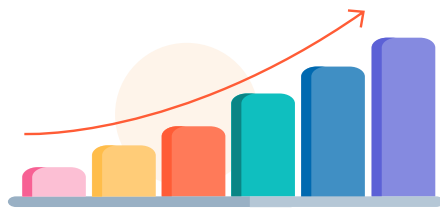


## HubSpot's Journey to International Growth and a \$1B Valuation

Jeetu Mahtani, currently EVP of Customer Success and formerly SVP of Sales and Managing Director of HubSpot's International growth team, built an [international marketing program that contributed 46% of HubSpot's total revenue in Q1 of 2022](#). By opening thirteen new global locations (and counting), these international markets were a significant part of how the company scaled to a [\\$1B business](#). There is a massive opportunity in getting regional growth marketing right, both for local and global brands.

But, how do leadership teams know when it's time to expand globally? "It started with people in new markets finding our content," [Jeetu Mahtani](#) shared on the [European Startup Show podcast](#). "We were generating demand in English-speaking countries in the UK, Benelux, and the Nordics. Brian [Halligan] [said, 'Call them,'] so I started calling prospects in these

markets, and soon enough we built out a small sales team out of Cambridge, Massachusetts to target the UK audience. Things started picking up and we got to a point where I couldn't hire any more folks to show up in the Boston office at 4 am."



To continue scaling beyond the UK, the HubSpot team analysed the total addressable market (TAM), local talent, barriers to entry, and conducted other "math and science" related research. "Ask yourself, is the market pulling you in? Is your content being found in new areas? That was our first sign that there was something there. Then, our partners started doing really well in the region. When we began selling, our customers did great and retention was strong — showing good product market fit. That's how we knew it was time to expand internationally," Mahtani adds.

Today, marketing leaders in Australia and Singapore are relying on localised marketing and customised content campaigns to help them grow their business during an economic downturn. By a strong majority, marketing decision makers in both regions are investing in increasing mindshare and brand affinity in local markets.

## TOP 5 PRIORITIES FOR DRIVING BUSINESS GROWTH

	Australia	Singapore
1	Implementing effective local strategies that deliver results for the business 39%	Implementing effective local strategies that deliver results for the business 41%
2	Increasing focus on building brand awareness and affinity 31%	Delivering strategies/results within budget 32%
3	Developing/implementing a new GTM strategy 31%	Delivering ROI for marketing activity 31%
4	Developing in-language content or localising content 30%	Increasing focus on brand awareness and affinity 31%
5	Delivering ROI for marketing activity 29%	Retaining great talent in the marketing team/department 30%

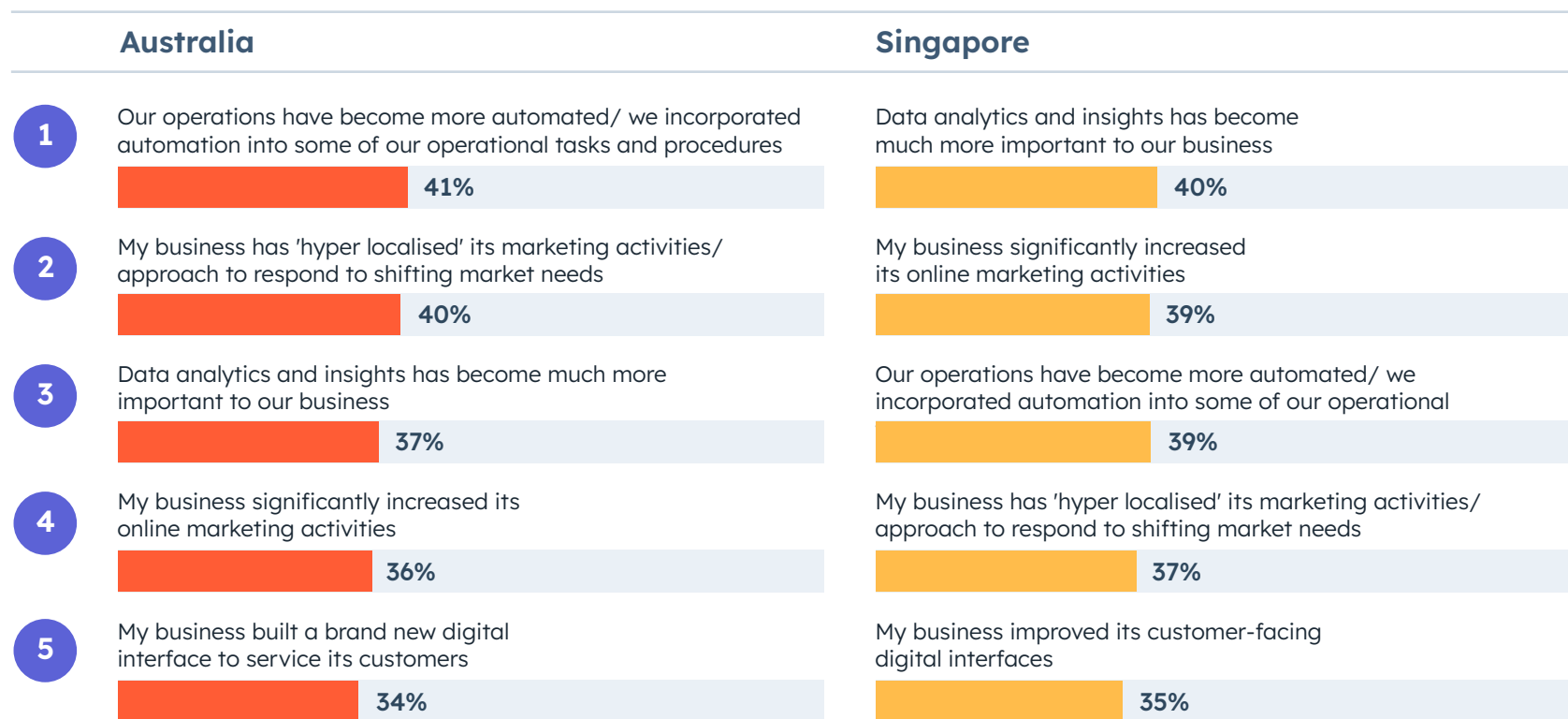


# Regional + local marketing in a digital economy

Marketing and sales software, AI, and automation have empowered SaaS companies to grow and scale, even with limited resources or geographical distance from their target audiences. Post-pandemic, most tools that companies use are collaborative, cloud-based, device-agnostic, and offer asynchronous communication features. Employees in many corporate functions can work from anywhere. HR and recruiting teams are using the entire globe as their talent pool.

Global organisations and APAC teams have overall invested more heavily in digital transformation than local teams, but in Australia, 41% of local organisations have adopted more automated strategies since COVID-19, versus 42% of APAC/global teams.

## IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON LOCAL MARKETING STRATEGIES



“There’s been a huge demand for all-in-one tools that deliver real-time collaboration, communication and creativity. This shift to remote and then hybrid working coincided with Canva’s biggest period of hypergrowth yet,” shares [Zach Kitschke, CMO, Canva](#). “We shifted our marketing strategies away from just targeting individual content creators and small businesses to now targeting knowledge workers and workplaces with a major focus on large enterprises around the world.”

See how HubSpot uses Canva for Teams to collaborate better, together

While marketing teams from HQ can use tools like HubSpot and LinkedIn to send emails and clone marketing and sales campaigns for different regions, it’s not in their best interest to. There are regional nuances far beyond selecting the right time zone and language. The companies doing regional marketing right are tailoring each campaign, message, tool, and reference to their local audience.



# Who is growing regional marketing hubs? Why?

B2B tech brands are some of the early adopters of global strategy — they have fewer logistical considerations than B2C and D2C companies, and there are now established markets in which to sell integrated platforms and tools.

## How Leading Brands are Growing with Regional Marketing

### 1. HubSpot

HubSpot now has 13 global offices, with plans for future expansion. In Q2 2022, [HubSpot's international revenue accounted for 46% of the business's total revenue](#), which is up 68% year-over-year from 2021. HubSpot has dedicated regional marketing teams in their international locations outside of North America, including a team based across Australia and Singapore who look after the Asia-Pacific region.

### 2. Canva

Over the last few years, Canva grew from a 100-person company in Australia to a global team of more than 3,200. During that time, their marketing team doubled as well. Now, they're valued at \$40B and generating more than \$1B in annual recurring revenue.

“My biggest priority is to continue scaling our brand and awareness of Canva and the solutions we're providing for millions of people and organisations around the world,” says [Zach Kitschke, CMO, Canva](#).



### 3. Semrush

Semrush began creating regional marketing teams and expanding internationally back in 2015. [VP of Brand Marketing Olga Andrienko shares](#), “Budget was \$100 - \$150,000 of marketing spend on average per team annually.” By investing in local organic channels, connections with influencers, content quantity, and testing, they mastered the regional tactics in Spain, then branched out from there.

### 4. MessageMedia

MessageMedia, an Australian-founded SMS platform, has focused on regional growth and become a market leader in Australia, while also growing their app internationally. The company used [strategic acquisitions, like the \\$1.3B deal to acquire Sinch, and integrations to grow in new markets](#), and has been able to drastically increase their total addressable market through international expansion.

“It’s vital to foster regional marketing teams that can build go-to-market propositions catering to local nuances,” [Tara Salmon, former CMO at MessageMedia says](#).



## Leadership Insights

To grow internationally, leaders need to invest in local brand awareness efforts and regional teams who own go-to-market strategies.

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Tech companies are largely growing internationally due to the scalable nature of their products and services.

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To decide where to expand, look at the total addressable market (TAM), the talent pool for future hiring, how locations align with company values, and financial forecasts.

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Most companies have undergone a digital transformation in the past few years, which has led to more worldwide hiring, global expansion, and the adoption of new technologies to support remote and hybrid teams.

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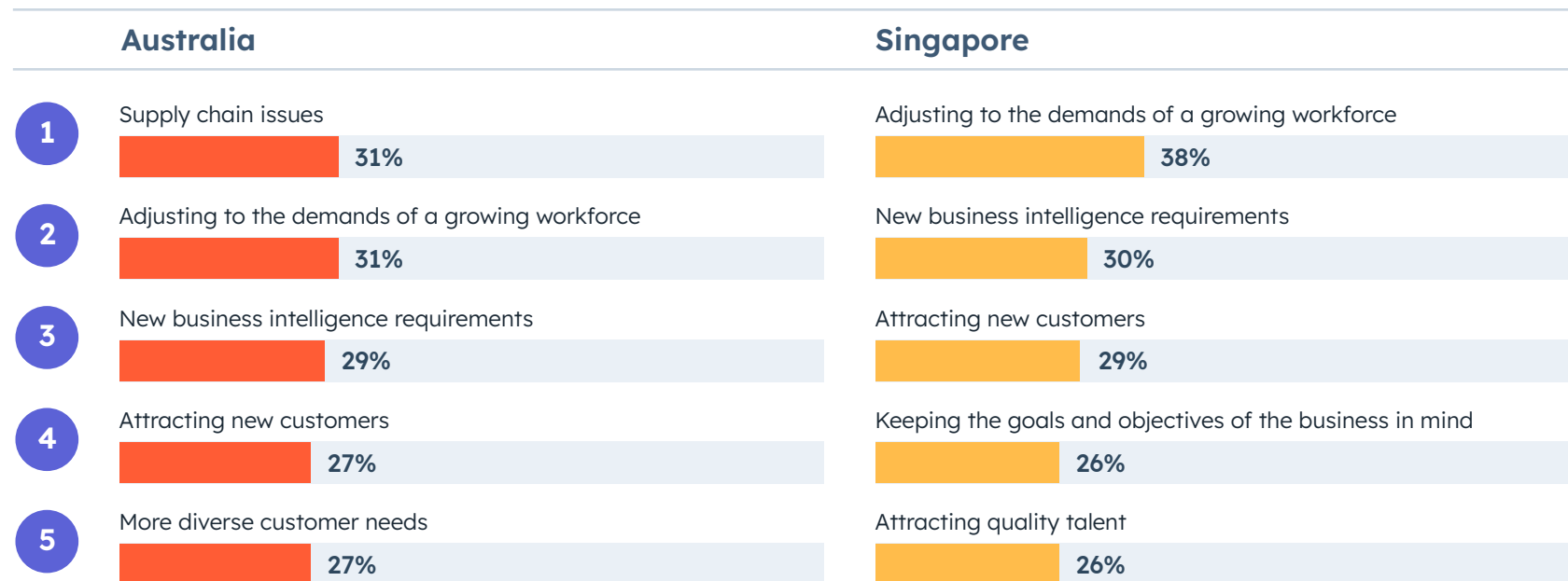
# Marketing Strategies to Grow in APAC

Nearly all marketing leaders report that they're facing challenges in terms of growth. These concerns come from a combination of internal and external factors, including supply chain issues and global economic uncertainty, new business intelligence requirements, finding quality talent, and increasing customer needs. Having the right, and most advanced, tech has become a key requirement for sustainable business growth.

As global leaders expand into Australia, Singapore, and other markets in APAC, and as regional teams in these areas increase their business reach, they'll need to adapt by using local marketing strategies, and establish a strong brand presence in these areas. Brand awareness impacts both prospective customers and potential talent, which leaders currently cite as major barriers to growth.

**99%** of marketers in Australia and Singapore report that their business is currently facing challenges to growth.

## TOP 5 CHALLENGES TO GROWTH



# Overall Marketing Growth Challenges

Leaders in both Australia and Singapore are facing internal challenges including new business intelligence requirements and more diverse customer needs. External influences that are hindering growth include supply chain issues, which are the top challenge for Australian businesses, and attracting and retaining great talent, which is more of a priority issue in the Singapore market. Additional challenges include new regulations and compliance requirements, keeping business goals and objectives top of mind, and dealing with more competition in the industry.

## Key findings from the data

- Three in ten marketing leaders in Australia (29%) and Singapore (30%) are experiencing challenges with new and more complex business intelligence requirements.
- In Singapore, marketers with an HQ outside of their market are more likely to have challenges with more diverse customer needs, attracting quality staff + talent, and increased staff turnover, when compared to those organisations with a local HQ.



## Shrinking Marketing Budgets are Challenging Growth Plans

- Eight in ten marketing leaders in Australia and Singapore say economic uncertainties have reduced their organisation/team’s budget (82% respectively) and their client/buyer’s budgets (80% and 79% respectively) compared to previous years
- **More than half of marketing leaders in Australia** (67%) say their organisation’s budget was “significantly/somewhat reduced (by 25%+)”
- **More than half of marketing leaders in Singapore** (71%) report that their organisation’s overall budget was also “significantly/somewhat reduced (by 25%+)”
- 13% of Australian marketing leaders say their organisation/team budgets have dropped by 50%+  
11% say their client/buyer’s budgets have dropped by 50%+
- 11% of leaders in Singapore say their organisation/team budgets have dropped by 50%+  
8% say this is true for client/buyer budgets

## BUDGET CHANGES

● Net reduced ● Not reduced at all ● Don't know

Our organisation's budgets overall



Your team/ departments' budgets



Your clients/ buyers' budgets



“In today’s economic climate, the work for today’s regional marketers is pretty cut out. They need to show more engagement and better ROI with less resources. Customers today desire personalised engagement experiences. They are looking for more meaningful opportunities to engage with brands they love. While that sounds difficult with limited resources, for marketers, this translates into unleashing their creativity, building more authentic content and below-the-line campaigns to maximise the reach of their limited budgets and reap the rewards”, said Sarah Tucker, Head of APAC Marketing, LinkedIn Marketing Solutions.



## Challenges to Scale as a Regional Team

Regional marketing teams have a whole different set of challenges from the greater marketing team — they need to advocate for resources, educate internally on market nuances, develop and present new marketing strategies for their audience, and build local brand awareness.

Regional teams who feel supported by HQ report that they have autonomy to run their own programs and change the sales and marketing playbook when it's necessary for local growth.

Leaders who report disconnects between regional teams and the larger corporate team cite budget, ownership, organisational culture, channels and levers, resources, and team structure as pain points. In Australia, decision makers feel strongly about having clear 'swimlanes' to distinguish job sharing and responsibilities between regional teams and HQ using a [DACI or RACI framework](#). Clarity and authority empowers regional teams and enables them to move faster.

Global organisations expanding in new countries or regions need to consider how they can choose thoughtful locations based on business goals and values and find the right teams to lead them. Regional brands scaling in new areas also need to consider that their marketing and sales channels, messaging, and strategies may not be as effective in new local markets.





## For leaders at global brands expanding in new regions

“Choosing an office location may seem like a fairly tactical project, but it was a vital opportunity to hold ourselves accountable to our values, and to demonstrate to our employees around the world that we were committed to living our DI&B values,” shares [Nataly Kelly, VP of Localisation at HubSpot](#) in an article for the [Harvard Business Review](#).

## For leaders at regional brands as they scale in new areas

Australian and Singaporean businesses are branching out in new regions to find new, engaged audiences. New McKinsey data showed that nearly [half of Australian businesses generate over 30% of their revenue from overseas](#). In [Singapore, seven in ten companies plan to expand overseas](#), and feel that the local market is too small to support consistent growth. As they scale, companies with their HQ in the APAC region should start with brand awareness and in-region content localisation or market reports.



**1/2** of Australian businesses generate **over 30%** of their revenue internationally.



**70%** of businesses in Singapore plan to expand overseas and feel the local market is too small.

“We solve for the regional need, then tweak that to have a local flavour,” Sarah Tucker advises. “We think about how we are educating local audiences not just about our products, but about the industry at large and trends that are affecting them.”

# Opportunities to Scale as a Regional Team

Regional marketing leaders identified brand marketing as the **number one channel that regions should have greater control and ownership over**. And in Australia and Singapore, decision makers cited effective local strategies, building brand awareness, creating local go-to-market (GTM) strategies, and developing local content as main contributors to business growth.

Marketing leaders in Australia and Singapore identified **local strategies to increase mindshare, brand affinity, and brand awareness as the #1 priority for brand growth**.



For local strategies to deliver impactful results, regional marketing teams need strong leadership, autonomy over brand campaigns, resources to help them scale, and access to centralised support. When tactics differ between markets, local teams should feel empowered to make their own decisions using their own data and market intelligence.

For example, a [We Are Social + Hootsuite report found that in APAC](#), there are 2B+ active social media users, representing 50% regional penetration. But there are twice the mobile phone connections (4B+), and messaging apps have proven to be extremely effective in these regions. In comparison, there are almost 700M active social media users in the Americas, and just over 1B with mobile phone connections — the market is hardly a quarter of the size of the potential in APAC.

## Americas



**1B+** mobile phone connections

## Asia-Pacific



**4B+** mobile phone connections

“In Australia, SMS is at the heart of what we do, and it’s what Aussies search for; it’s different in the US. We still need centralised teams to think about those things as they’re working to service different markets,”



**TARA SALMON**

Former CMO, MessageMedia

Three in ten (31%) Australian marketing leaders face the challenge of meeting the needs of a larger, more diverse workforce, and even more in Singapore (38%) see this as a challenge in terms of growth. Attracting quality talent is a pressing need, too — 30% of Singaporean leaders and 28% of Australian leaders are prioritising hiring marketing talent this year. As organisations grow and expand internationally, they should consider the local talent pool and experience levels of local leaders.

## Business Growth Opportunities for Regional Marketing Start with Educational Content + Trust



The biggest opportunity for decision makers in both Australia and Singapore is to attract customers using educational content, which inspires loyalty and trust. Finding more qualified audiences and teaching them how to succeed helps keep customer acquisition costs down, shortens the sales cycle, and fosters a community of advocates to promote your brand.

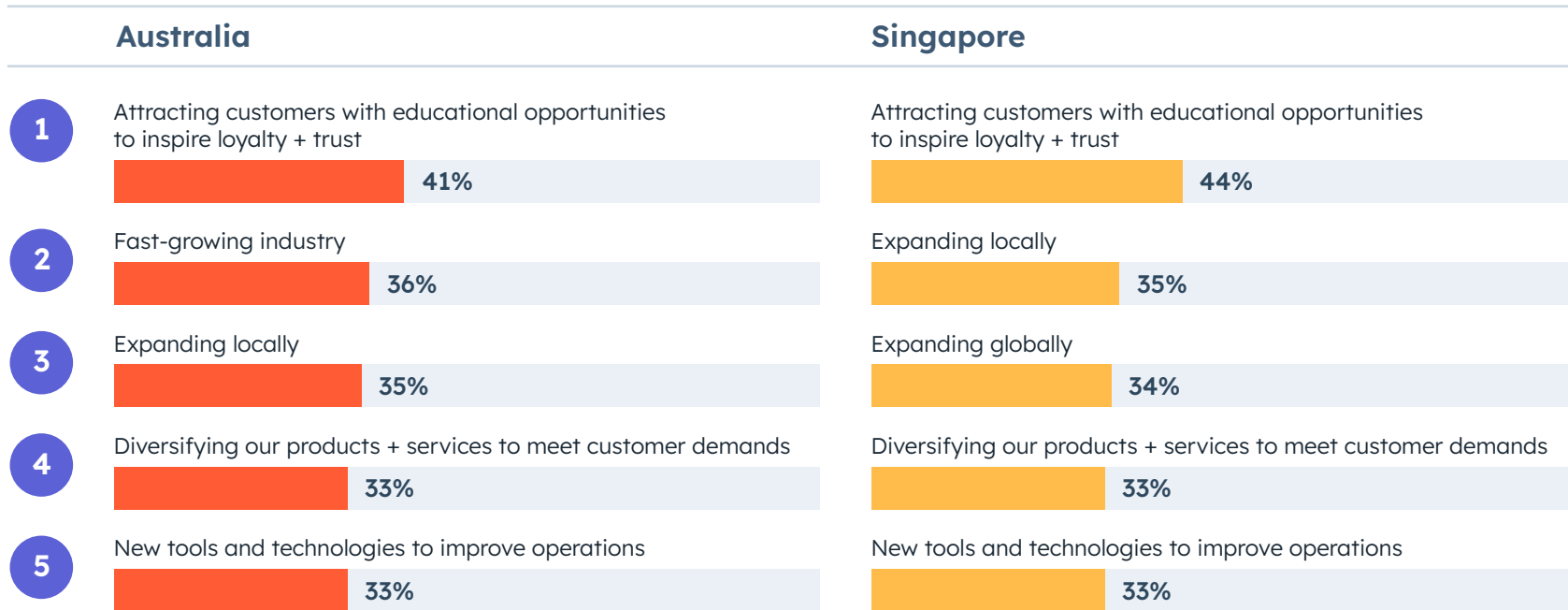
Over four in ten of marketing leaders in Australia (41%) + Singapore (44%) say that **attracting customers with educational opportunities that inspire and drive trust is key to growth.**

Making regional marketing efforts a larger business priority requires investment in building local brand awareness, creating localised content, and leveraging technology. Tech is essential for international expansion for a number of reasons — but, currently regulatory and compliance requirements and business intelligence capabilities are the most critical functions.

Over a third (35%) of teams in Australia are looking to new local markets to grow their business, and in Singapore both local and global expansion are key priorities.



## TOP 5 OPPORTUNITIES FOR GROWTH



“The Southeast Asia market represents a huge opportunity for brands. The region is vast and incredibly complex due to the differences in culture, language, race and ethnicity. For Spenmo, the total addressable market, digitalization trends and the pain businesses experience when it comes to B2B accounts payable presents massive opportunities. The challenge for marketing leaders in this region are localization, delivering a clear value proposition and market education,”



**AARON GOH**  
Head of Marketing, Spenmo



# Localising Marketing Assets and Strategies is More than Translation

Forty percent of marketing leaders in Australia, and 36% in Singapore agree that it's critical to localise marketing to resonate with local audiences (e.g. language, humour, diversity) and say this isn't always well understood by global offices and central HQs. The importance of knowing the markets and audiences in a region when marketing a business cannot be overstated, 31% of leaders in Singapore, and 35% in Australia feel that it's critical. Yet, marketing leaders say that **localisation is still not well-recognised as an important marketing strategy.**

“There's a myth that localisation only needs to happen in non-English speaking regions. It's humour, imagery or our own local diversity, which may be missing from U.S. D&I work. The challenge is to demonstrate and argue the uplift you can get from going down the hyper-localised route.”



**KAT WARBOYS**

APAC Marketing Director, HubSpot

The companies succeeding with local marketing have tested repurposing content and running regional sales and marketing from HQ without dedicated teams and found that this method doesn't scale. Everything that drives marketing forward, from ad channels to the tools that HQ might use, such as a transcription software or payment processing app, might not be available or effective in other regions. Or, local audiences communicate differently than the HQ audience. This affects advertising, marketing, sales, customer support, and overall business operations.

“One challenge is that people think that translation is such a simple process. Sure, you can auto-generate content, but that doesn't mean that anyone will be able to use it, or that it will be good, and useful. It's about the overall meaning.”

On [The International Expansion podcast](#).



**NATALY KELLY**

VP of Localisation, HubSpot

[Learn how to do content localisation right](#)

# Strategic Localisation Efforts Drive Revenue

To calculate the business value of localisation efforts and global expansion, companies look at [revenue enablement](#) and impact.

“[The value of localisation] depends on your business goals. If you have a less complex product, maybe you don’t need localisation early on. You can just hire people who speak that language to sell to new markets. [HubSpot] is on the opposite end of that spectrum. If we want to extend an entire customer experience and go-to-market approach into another language, we need to think about that at a different scale than most companies do”

On [The International Expansion podcast](#).



**NATALY KELLY**

VP of Localisation, HubSpot

Kelly suggests that when [looking for metrics to evaluate localisation initiatives](#), use these questions:

- How much supported language revenue does localisation enable for the business?
- What is the cost of localisation efforts as a percentage of supported language revenue?
- How do local customer acquisition costs compare to the cost of acquiring a customer in your primary/HQ region?
- How do localisation costs factor into R&D budget?



Localisation efforts and their impact on business revenue and goals should also take into consideration future hiring plans, brand awareness in new regions, and the time that it takes to establish a presence in emerging markets. These metrics should be looked at over longer periods of time to account for market changes and growing in-region brand affinity.

Cultural identity and language are important to consumers, particularly in emerging markets. Prioritising in-language content and conversations creates a sense of inclusion and belonging for both employees and customers.



## Leadership Insights

Top marketing challenges include adjusting to the demands of a growing workforce, supply chain issues, and new business intelligence requirements — plan ahead to mitigate these risks to growth in the coming year.

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Global offices and central HQs need to recognise regional nuances and challenges, and give regional teams autonomy to manage their own channels.

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Localisation is important for both English and non-English speaking regions.

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The top strategies to grow in new regions are to establish trust with educational content and build brand awareness.

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Strategic localisation efforts drive revenue and represent substantial new markets for global brands.

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Businesses in Australia and Singapore are expanding internationally to drive more revenue.

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## CHAPTER THREE

# Top Marketing Channels in APAC

Australia, New Zealand, Singapore, The Philippines, and other Southeast Asian countries have established their place in the global tech industry. [Canva, a design platform based in Australia is valued at \\$40B](#) and has [100M+ users in 190 countries](#). [Atlassian, a software development and collaboration suite also founded in Australia, is valued at over \\$140B](#) and employs nearly 9,000 individuals worldwide. [Nium, a fintech company founded in Singapore was recognised by Fortune Magazine as a “unicorn”](#) with a \$1B valuation as a private company, making it the first B2B payments unicorn from the region.

Nium grew during the pandemic and helped to redefine the possibilities for other fintech platforms in Southeast Asia. [CEO Prajit Nanu says](#), “The [glass] ceiling [for Southeast Asian fintech start-ups] has been broken and we’re likely to see more unicorns, largely in fintech, coming out of Singapore”.



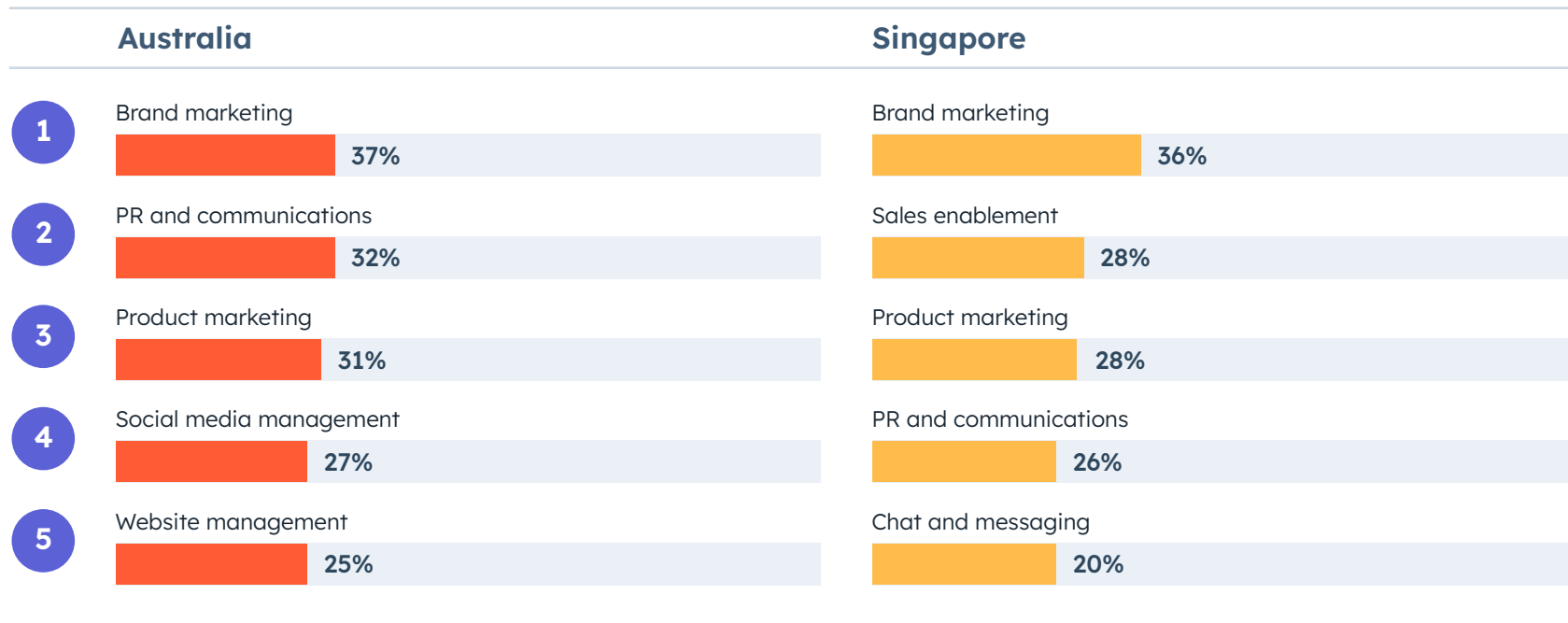


For those looking to grow in APAC countries and regions, communications are incredibly important to local teams, as well as technology and overall operational efficiency. Marketing teams in Australia and Singapore focus on building brand awareness, driving growth for the business, and educating their audiences, all of which require clear ‘swimlanes’ or well-defined job roles, and clearly defined lists to target.

Today, leaders in these regions are looking for areas to cut costs, ways to invest in technology and software training, and to implement new technologies and tools.



### TOP MARKETING CHANNELS LOCAL TEAMS WANT MORE CONTROL OVER



Australia n = 50 Singapore n = 59

Audience: Decision makers in E20+ businesses with an HQ outside of their market

## Brand, PR, + Sales Enablement Need to Be Owned by Local Teams

Brand, PR and communications, and sales enablement are the top channels across Australia and Singapore that local leaders want to own. They are the most challenging areas to understand without a local perspective, and are quickly rising on the priority list as the global market becomes more competitive.

“Because we’re founded in Australia, we have 15 years of brand reputation here, whereas in the U.S., we’re just trying to break into that market. My brand ads [in Australia] don’t have to tell the story of “Who’s Deputy?” We can go a little bit deeper, be more playful around the pain point that we’re trying to solve because we don’t have to introduce ourselves. Because of where we are in our journey, our brand strategy overseas has to be different.”



**SOPHIE PANK**

Deputy’s former APAC Marketing Director

“In Singapore, the tech market is exploding, and local leaders want access to use their company brand as a lever for growth and a channel that they have control over.”



**KAT WARBOYS**

HubSpot’s APAC Marketing Director

“There are three challenges for any tech company that are usually present in any market where you’re starting to build a digital world: (1) change consumer habits, (2) educate the market and merchants, and (3) build trust in your platform.”



**DANIEL MAROGY**

Managing Director, foodpanda



# Marketing Channels and Strategies Essential to Business Growth in APAC

Budgets are lower than they were in recent years, so to hit business goals, marketing leaders in both Australia and Singapore have identified a need for finding areas to cut costs, and using the latest technology.

The most popular marketing channels in these regions are video marketing (39% Australia, 35% Singapore), social media marketing (38% Australia, 29% Singapore), email marketing (35% Australia, 31% Singapore), influencer marketing (28% Australia, 33% Singapore), SEO (25% Australia, 27% Singapore), and podcasts (28% Australia, 27% Singapore). In [HubSpot's 2022 State of Marketing Trends report](#), video marketing and influencer marketing are two of the fastest growing marketing channels globally, and social media marketing is the top marketing channel overall. Digital marketing strategies tend to be less expensive than traditional marketing, and easier to test in new markets.

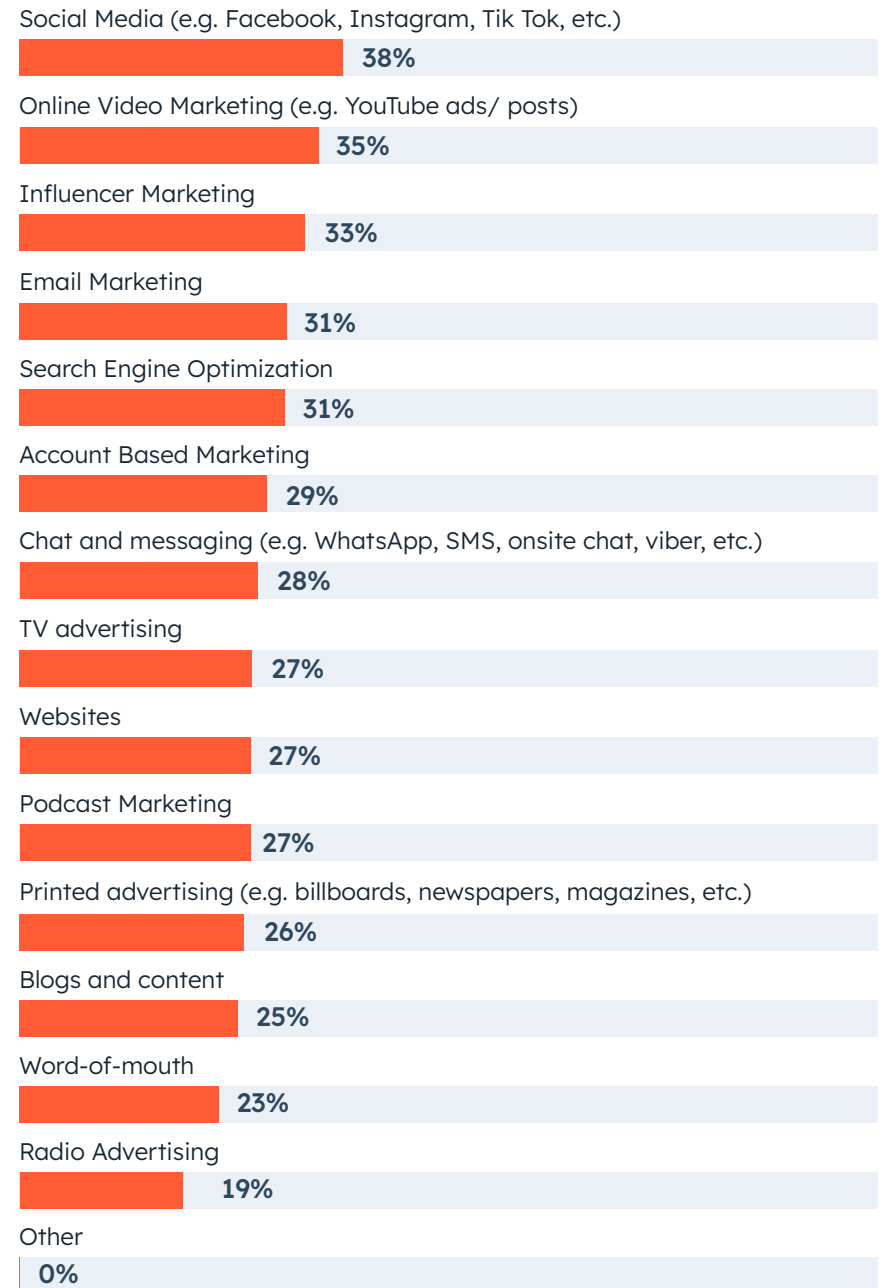
Marketers are looking for additional budget and resources to make localised content. For marketing teams in Singapore, leaders are looking towards new technology and additional software and technology training to hit goals and drive new growth.



## Top Marketing Channels for Growth in Australia



## Top Marketing Channels for Growth in Singapore



## Chat and Messaging are the Next Growth Channel in APAC

In the entire APAC region, messaging apps are a rapidly growing channel, with one in four marketers using chat and messaging as a successful marketing channel. Take note — your [go-to messaging app changes based on what part of the world you live in](#). 31% of the world (including Latin America, parts of Europe, India, and much of Southeast Asia) use WhatsApp, and 7% (including Australia and New Zealand) use Facebook Messenger.

Try the WhatsApp Integration with HubSpot



## What are locally-led channels?

Locally-led channels can include local events, press, PR, email marketing and social media, messaging, and local product marketing channels. Local marketing efforts typically include local influencers, humour, pop culture references, speakers, currencies, holidays, and other specific regional considerations.

“To truly empower the world to design, we need to deliver a hyper-local experience. We’ve had to optimise the platform and ensure our library is full of high-quality, market-bespoke content for all of our key markets. We want to be sure that all of our users have access to content that reflects the design aesthetics and trends in their market.”



**ZACH KITSCHKE**

CMO, Canva

## Why is it important for them to be locally-led?

Consumers are as informed as they've ever been, and they expect high-quality content that's customised to their preferences, from brands large and small.

Using local teams ensures a more engaged audience, better overall strategy and targeting, and an authentic and inclusive voice in messaging.

## The Power of Locally-Led Advertising Campaigns

Early on in their brand localisation journey, HubSpot's Australia marketing team wanted to test the impact of running localised audio ads with an Australian voice artist. We found that the localised ads had a 13% higher conversion rate than those read by the (American) host. And, the **localised ads influenced 40% more leads** than the control.

“The results speak for themselves — localisation matters, even when we're all speaking the same language,”



**KAT WARBOYS**

APAC Marketing Director, HubSpot



## Leadership Insights

[PR and brand awareness efforts need to be led by local and regional teams.](#) Why? Because what resonates and works in one country or region when it comes to communications and messaging, and how media interact with your brand, will not necessarily work in the next. Video marketing (39% Australia, 35% Singapore), social media (38% Australia, 29% Singapore), and influencer marketing (28% Australia, 33% Singapore) are top marketing channels for growth in the APAC region.

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Video marketing and influencer marketing are growing as top marketing channels globally

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Locally-led ads perform better and influence more leads — don't make regional teams fight for resources and ownership of the channels that will garner stronger results when led in-market.

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More than one in four marketers in APAC uses chat and messaging, and the audience size is bigger than social media in the APAC region - channel popularity differs from region to region and your regional marketers are well-placed to understand and advise on what levers to pull to win in-market.

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## CHAPTER FOUR

# How Organisations are Building Regional Marketing Teams

Who should be the first hire in a new region? The first marketing hire? “Think about how a regional marketer will fit into field marketing, and align with the whole go-to-market (GTM) team, with sales, services, and anyone else who’s customer facing. Then, plan for expansion from there,” says Kat Warboys. Successful regional marketers are flexible, curious, resourceful, and strong advocates for what they need.

A common first hire for regional teams is a field marketer, who learns about the region and can begin to lay the foundation for growth. Sales alignment and sales enablement are essential early on, too, and often form part of a field marketer’s role.

When marketing leaders were asked which roles were foundational and absolutely necessary for regional marketing versus roles they see as current or future ‘game changers’ to have on the team, responses differed between leaders in Australia and Singapore. In Australia, a brand marketer and customer experience manager are seen as ‘need-to-have’ roles, whereas in Singapore, they are seen as ‘game changer’ roles. In Singapore, on the other hand, a data analyst is a key part of the core team. In Australia, data analysts are a bonus or ‘game changer’ role.

Decision makers in both Australia and Singapore see field marketing managers as critical first hires, and paid marketing specialists as ‘game changers’.



“Finding an experienced field marketing manager is key to building a high-performing regional team. Field marketers wear a lot of hats and need to be comfortable with sales enablement, data analysis, solutions marketing, and brand-building. Plus, they should be able to navigate relationships with the centralised marketing team to get resources and executive buy-in. Look for individuals who can work well with sales and become a local industry expert.”



**KAT WARBOYS**

APAC Marketing Director, HubSpot



“A digital measurement specialist is going to be critical moving forward. Someone who’s able to bring a data lens and measurement skills to the marketing team, like a marketing sales operations role. They need to bring commercial acumen, Sales Ops, and Biz Ops knowledge, then bring them together. It’s currently a huge measurement challenge we have in marketing. We’re asking our marketers to crunch the numbers on campaigns, but we have no idea how good we are at that. Why are we asking our marketers to do that? We need a role dedicated to data and campaign analysis.”



**SARAH TUCKER**

Head of APAC Marketing, LinkedIn Marketing Solutions



# Roles Critical to Regional Teams' Success



## Top 5 Foundational Roles by Region

### Australia

- 1 Brand marketer
- 2 Field marketing manager
- 3 Product marketer
- 4 PR and communications expert/manager
- 5 Customer experience expert/manager

### Singapore

- 1 Field marketing manager
- 2 Product marketer
- 3 Data analyst
- 4 Community manager
- 5 Market researcher/analyst

## Top 5 'Game Changer' Roles by Region

### Australia

- 1 Data analyst
- 2 Content strategist
- 3 Social media expert/manager
- 4 CRM manager/marketing operations specialist
- 5 Performance marketing (paid) expert

### Singapore

- 1 Customer experience expert/manager
- 2 Brand marketer
- 3 Performance marketing (paid) expert
- 4 Product marketer
- 5 Social media expert/manager

## Hiring, Talent, and Workforce Needs

Regional teams aren't an extension of HQ, but their own separate entity and mini business with their own brand goals, challenges, resources, hiring pools, culture, and needs. Hiring, retention, and professional development are important business goals for leaders in APAC this year, particularly during a time where hiring is challenging and costly.

### What does a successful regional marketer look like?

“You need someone who is resourceful, resilient, has a lot of curiosity and is highly collaborative as well as they need to scale and work well with HQ.”



**SINDY GAO**

Marketing Team Manager APAC, Aircall

Other regional leaders say successful regional marketers on their teams were resourceful, innovative, curious, collaborative, flexible, had a positive attitude, and wanted to try new things.

“We look for people who are naturally curious and hungry to learn – investing in their long-term development pays dividends in building future teams and leaders across the company. Having an ownership mentality and a growth mindset are also two really important traits in a hyper-growth environment. We love to see candidates that are motivated, goal orientated and that display initiative. Being comfortable with change and ambiguity are ‘table stakes’ given the ever-evolving nature of Canva.”



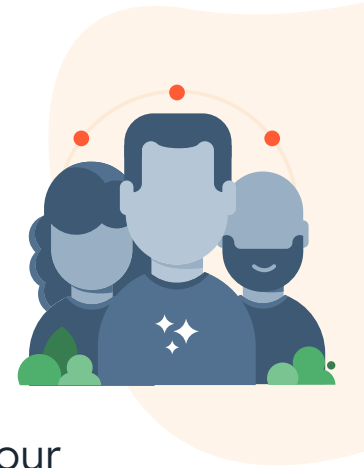
**ZACH KITSCHKE**

CMO, Canva

# Regional Organisational Charts + Global Team Structures

There is no single model for successful organisational or regional team structures. Instead, leaders should first and foremost [design their team](#) to align with and support their organisation's marketing strategy.

Here are a few examples of how leading companies have structured their regional teams and aligned with larger marketing departments.



## Canva

“As we continue to build out our global team, one of our big opportunities is to scale that model internationally. For example, our Product Marketing Group is split into smaller teams focused on different parts of the product; and our Communications Group is split between Brand, Corporate and Internal Communications teams. Both groups ladder up to our overall global marketing strategy and deliver on that with their own set of goals.”



**ZACH KITSCHKE**  
CMO, Canva

## LinkedIn

“Globally, we look at structuring our marketing teams to align with the customer journey. The beginning of the journey is managed and handled by one marketing team and the middle by another team. Then, you’ve got a loyal customer — so we approach them in a different way. All of those teams cascade into regional, then local teams. At a regional level, you see a representation of each different function, along with country managers who help to execute and operationalise campaigns.”



**SARAH TUCKER**  
Head of APAC Marketing, LinkedIn Marketing Solutions

## HubSpot

“When our regional marketing team went through a period of growth and change in 2022, we took the opportunity to assess if our structure was still the right one. Were we aligned with our global strategy and was this team set up for success?”

There were four core goals we had in mind as we evaluated our existing structure and looked at optimal changes: clear swimlanes to ensure both individual and team impact, alignment with HubSpot’s core central teams and 2023 strategy, clear paths for career growth, and breaking out of our silos with a functional model across the APAC team.”



**KAT WARBOYS**

APAC Marketing Director, HubSpot



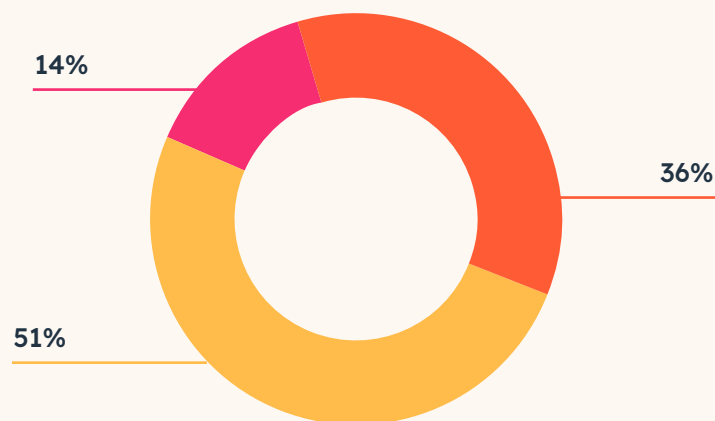
## Regional Marketing Team Structure

### Global organisational structures for regional teams

The most common regional marketing team structure for companies in Singapore and Australia with an HQ outside of their market is a market-based organisational structure, with dedicated local marketing managers and sales teams for a given local market.

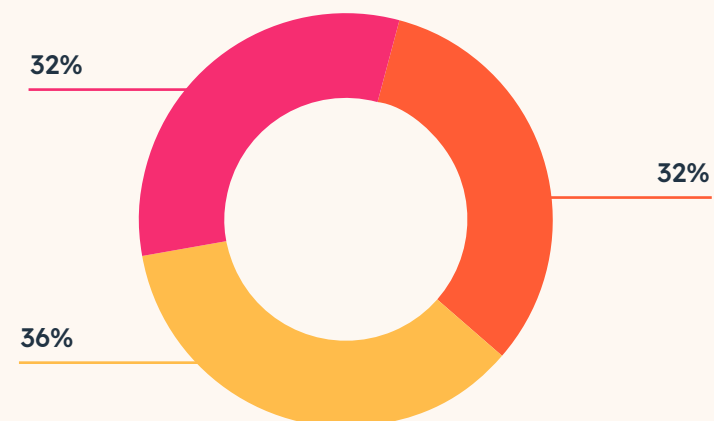
#### Organisational structure for marketing in Australia

- My organisation adopts a market-based organisational structure (i.e. dedicated local marketing managers and sales forces etc. operating independently based on local market needs/ audiences)
- My organisation adopts a regional-based organisational structure (i.e. a regional marketing leader/ team working and distributing strategies, business goals etc. down to/ across offices in APAC)
- My organisation adopts a global organisational structure (i.e. marketing leader/ team based in HQ offices that distributes strategies, business goals etc. across all markets/ regions)



#### Organisational structure for marketing in Singapore

- My organisation adopts a market-based organisational structure (i.e. dedicated local marketing managers and sales forces etc. operating independently based on local market needs/ audiences)
- My organisation adopts a regional-based organisational structure (i.e. a regional marketing leader/ team working and distributing strategies, business goals etc. down to/ across offices in APAC)
- My organisation adopts a global organisational structure (i.e. marketing leader/ team based in HQ offices that distributes strategies, business goals etc. across all markets/ regions)



## Regional department team structures

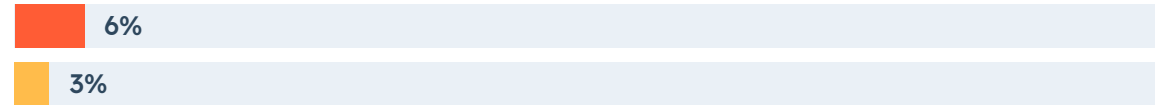
Over a third (34%) of regional marketing teams in Australia use a traditional marketing team structure – 22% have a dedicated marketing team for each product, and 12% divide teams by job roles. In Singapore, almost half of regional teams (46%) use a traditional marketing structure, split 29% product-centric, and 17% function-centric. The least common department structure is to have a small team overseeing all marketing outreach.



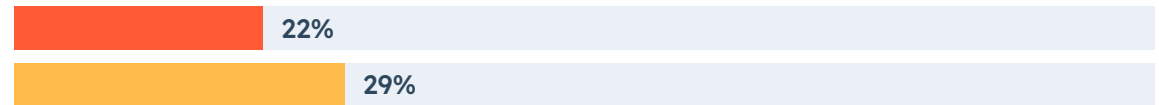
## Structure of the marketing team/department

● Australia ● Singapore

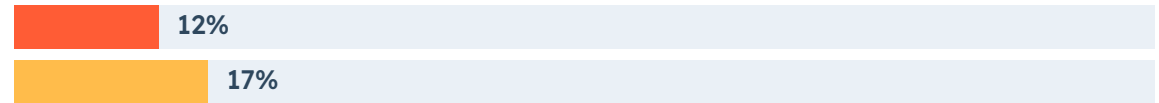
Small marketing team structure (i.e. 1-3 people overseeing all marketing outreach)



Traditional marketing team structure: Product-centric (i.e. each product has a marketing team)



Traditional marketing team structure: Function-centric (i.e. teams are divided based on job roles)

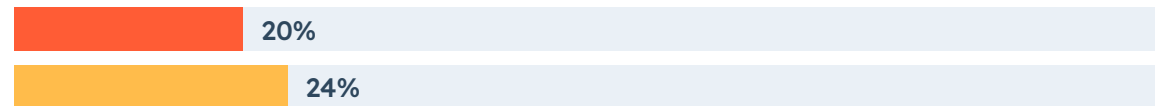


Digital marketing team structure (i.e. driven by customer insights and feedback)

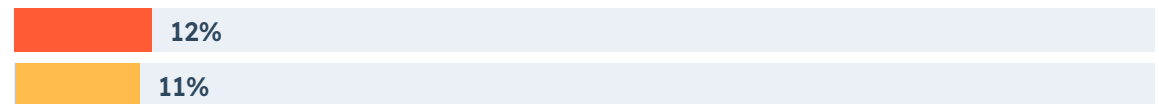


Integrated marketing team structure

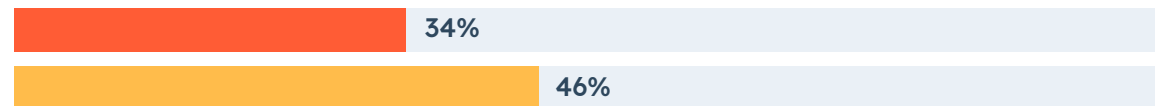
(i.e. involves using an interconnected approach to create positive relationships with customers)



Enterprise marketing team structure (i.e. several layers of management with team leads and specialists)/ Marketing team consists of multiple subsidiary teams



Net: Traditional Marketing Team Structure





## Leadership Insights

A deep understanding of the local audience is key for marketing, sales, and all customer-facing teams.

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A data or operations specialist to track campaign performance and analyse performance to mine insights, and who is separate from content marketers and campaign creators, has the potential to change the game for marketing teams.

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Brand, field, and product marketing are foundational roles for new marketing teams.

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Data analysts and performance (paid) marketing specialists are “game changer” roles for growing marketing teams.

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Marketing structure is heavily dependent on company type and goals — there is a lot of variation between market-based structures, those that follow the customer journey, and product-based team structures. There’s no “one size fits all” strategy or team model.

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# How to Develop Successful Regional Teams

Over eight in ten marketing leaders in Australia (86%) and Singapore (82%) say that they spend too much time educating global counterparts about regional nuances. Leaders from both regions feel that improved understanding from global teams about local needs and market nuances is a top priority in meeting business objectives, along with clear ‘swimlanes’ and responsibilities across departments and teams.

Include regional and local representatives in business decisions and provide professional development opportunities to learn from other global teams. Regional marketing is an investment, particularly in areas that require building brand awareness and content marketing materials from the ground-up. But, it’s an investment that can lead to exponential company growth in new markets.



## TOP 5 WAYS TO ADDRESS REGIONAL MARKETING CHALLENGES + DRIVE BUSINESS GROWTH

	Australia	Singapore
1	Clear ‘swimlanes’ and responsibilities across the organisation 41%	Identify areas within the business to cut costs 40%
2	Support to develop in-language content or to localise content 40%	Support to develop in-language content or to localise content 38%
3	Identify areas within the business to cut costs 37%	Better benefits to retain employees 38%
4	Better benefits to retain employees 37%	Clear ‘swimlanes’ and responsibilities across the organisation 34%
5	Improved understanding from global teams about local needs and market nuances 30%	Improved understanding from global teams about local needs and market nuances 34%



## Global Leadership Lessons

“Every region is on a different journey in terms of brand relevance and recall in the market. There are areas where you’ll have to invest more heavily. For example, in Australia, 20% of our budget goes to brand, but in the U.S., it’s closer to 40%. That’s because there’s a long-term vision of the brand strategy and it’s helping them build their pipeline.”



**SOPHIE PANK**

Former APAC Marketing Director, Deputy

“While an English-speaking halo effect can provide ongoing aircover throughout the year, we then need to supplement with region-specific marketing initiatives that support our sales teams in-market. Having roles in Sydney and Singapore will help us be more agile and produce more high-impact campaigns.”



**CARLA GLAVONJIC**

Head of APAC Marketing, Asana

“I’ve tried to avoid having my marketing team be siloed in their local function. One of the reasons was the professional development opportunities through working on global initiatives and with global teams. If you pigeonhole them to just being local marketers, they miss out on the exposure and opportunity to grow.”



**SARAH TUCKER**

Head of APAC Marketing,  
LinkedIn Marketing Solutions





## Leadership Insights

Regional marketing teams represent opportunities for agile campaign management and business growth.

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Global companies should look for ways to engage employees and share knowledge, for both efficiency and new perspectives, and professional development.

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For any company growing internationally, designate clear swimlanes and roles between HQ teams and regional teams — and regularly confirm that all teams have clarity on goals and expectations.

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## Closing

Brands have a huge opportunity to scale business growth in new markets, develop new talent hubs, and support local economies through their approach to regional marketing. Successful regional growth requires the right technology, a strong foundation of brand awareness in-region, talented leaders and marketers, and a deep understanding of local marketing channels and audiences. Localising content is more than translation, and regional campaigns rely on local industry professionals who are familiar with the market.

During a time of economic uncertainty and shifting global markets, regional marketing and expansion to emerging markets can provide opportunities to sell into engaged new audiences. Empowered with the right tools, autonomy and resources, regional marketing teams can build powerful brand affinity, communities of regional advocates, create efficient sales and marketing channels, and 10X how far your company can grow.



## HubSpot helps marketing teams align, adopt, and adapt with the latest tech.

HubSpot is a CRM and unified platform of tools for marketing, sales, service, content management, and operations. See why HubSpot is the #1 CRM platform for scaling businesses.

Why choose HubSpot?



## Build your brand with the world's largest professional network

LinkedIn Ads are a powerful way to create, manage, and track campaigns for any goal. Reach nearly 800M professionals, including decision makers and execs with first-party data at scale.

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