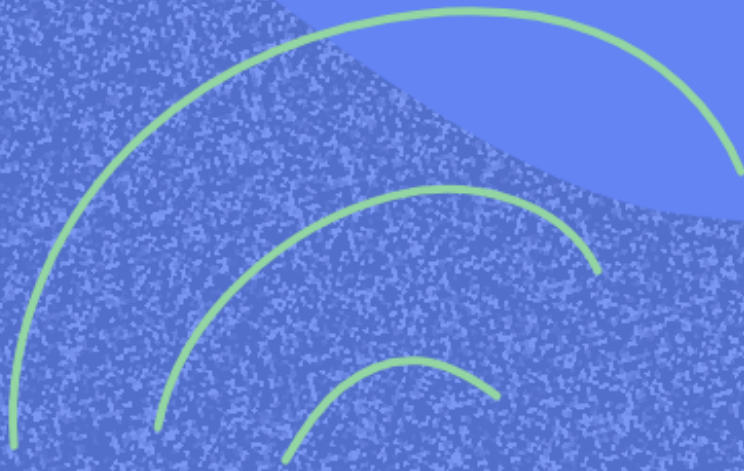




The Career Hacker's Guide To

Marketing Careers



We all have a friend who's hands-down the best storyteller in our group.

Is that you?

The thing that separates a great storyteller from an okay storyteller is the way they layer in specific, descriptive details, making the audience feel like they're actually part of the story.









“ There we were. Right in the middle of what used to be a giant hayfield. The scent of fresh cut grass was impossible to miss—must’ve been 70,000 people standing shoulder to shoulder.

And that’s when the lights went down, and the beat dropped.

Are you the storyteller in your group? Because if you are, well, a career in marketing just might be for you.

But it’s not just for storytellers. Great marketers come from all walks of life. In fact, another great trait of successful marketers is the need to discover the “why” behind everything—a natural curiosity makes for a great marketing soft skill. If this describes you, read on.

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So . . . what is marketing, anyway?



At its core, marketing means getting seen.

It covers everything from a website to printed flyers, from social media profiles to helpful emails like our newsletter.

Naturally, marketing looks a bit different for every business. An e-commerce company might focus a lot more on digital marketing than a local consulting company. But, when done well, marketing of any kind is the lifeblood of a successful, thriving organization. If you can do marketing well, your career upside is limitless.

Okay, so, what's the catch, right?

Well, marketing often gets put in a little box in the corner. People and businesses who've never witnessed the direct, tangible impact of legendary marketing often confuse marketing with the department that made the logo, chooses the company's color palette, and plans customer events. And while they're not wrong that marketing often does those things, they'd be completely off base to think that's all marketing does.

When done well, marketing campaigns don't just sell products—they start movements.

And if you're someone who gets hyped up by the thought of promoting an idea so effectively it sends an unmistakable ripple out into the world, well, marketing might just be a sweet spot for your career.

Career paths in digital marketing

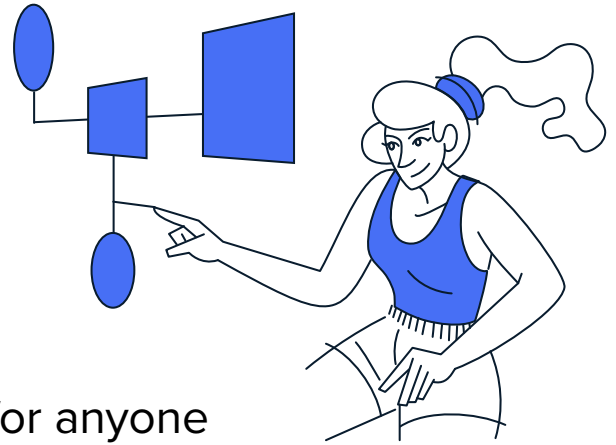
Let's get down to the nuts and bolts.

A career in marketing can span pretty broadly. From creative work—like copywriting, social media management, videography, or design—to highly analytical work—like data analysis, systems administration, ad targets—marketing offers a career path for pretty much anyone who gets excited by telling stories or chasing down the answer to “why.”

Marketing also offers a great window into the way people think, behave, and make decisions. It's a great case study in human psychology, how trends are started, and how information travels.

And it's a great career jumping-off point for anyone who likes working with people—even if, down the road, that means working with people in a different field. Still, the skills you'll develop in a marketing career can be useful in almost any other career path.

To help, here's an outline of common career paths and first jobs in the digital marketing field:



Positions

Entry-Level
Position

Marketing
Manager

Marketing
Director

Marketing
VP

Marketing
C-Suite

Common Roles

Social media
Content marketer
Direct-marketing
Email marketing
Product marketing
Marketing analytics
Marketing operations
Growth
Brand marketing
Account-based marketing
Influencer marketing
Field marketing
Print and media
Advertising
Digital marketing
Digital advertising
Marketing analyst
Lifecycle marketing
Public relations
Digital media
Communications
Partnerships



Marketing
Brand development
Digital marketing
Growth
Product marketing
Publicity/public relations
Communications

Marketing
Growth
Revenue
Strategy
Brand
Content

Title Variations

Marketer
Associate
Coordinator
Specialist

Specialist
Manager
Lead
Senior

Director
Head of
Lead

Head of
Lead
VP of



Average Years of Experience

0-3+

3-7+

5-10+

10+

10-20+

How much money do marketers make?

Earning potential in marketing varies as widely as its career paths. Several common drivers for earning potential often have to do with a combination of the type of marketing, technical ability, experience level, company stage, the marketing industry, total number of people on the team, or total budget managed.

Here's a breakdown on some of the most common income ranges by experience level, courtesy of Payscale:

Average Income

Entry	Manager	Director	VP	C-Suite
\$34k-\$66k Mean: \$46k	\$42k-\$99k Mean: \$65k	\$47k-\$149k Mean: \$87k	\$85k-\$202k Mean: \$145k	\$87k-\$257k Mean: \$171k

See more details on the Payscale reports for [entry-level](#), [manager](#), [director](#), [vice president](#), and [C-suite](#) marketing salaries.

How to get started in digital marketing

Maybe you're wondering, "Where would I even start?"

Great question.

Because the field of marketing is so broad, it can be easy to feel lost or intimidated by all the different options.

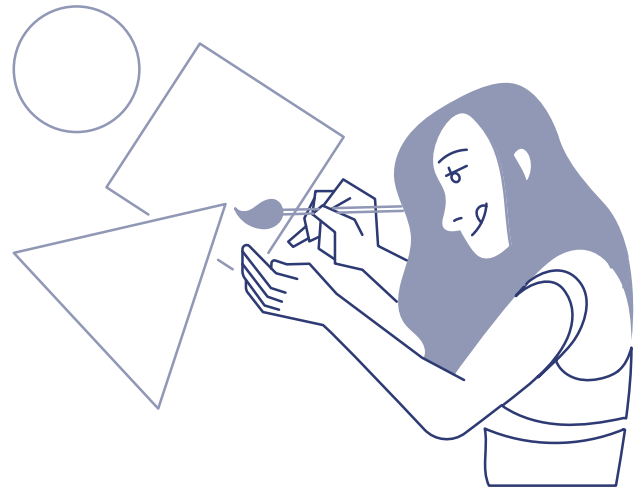
And also, because it's so broad, if you type "marketing" into almost any jobs board, you'll see just how many different titles and types of work exist.

But before you get overwhelmed, take a deep breath. And read on to learn about great opportunities to land entry-level marketing jobs without a marketing degree.

If you want to get into marketing, a good place to start is by studying the greats and running some experiments of your own. By "greats," we suggest you read books like Ogilvy on Advertising, Claude Hopkins's Scientific Advertising, Perry Marshall's 80/20 Rule, or Geoffrey Moore's Crossing the Chasm. By experiments, we suggest you start your own blog or social media accounts—write about stuff that interests you, and see how many other people you can get to read it.

Where you start matters less than just *getting started*.

And that getting-started process can be a lot like trying on a new



pair of shoes—sometimes you've gotta walk around in two to three different sizes before you know which one fits best.

Regardless of where you choose to start, just focus on picking a topic—or industry, or product, or business—that interests you. Come up with a story, and experiment with ways to get people to engage with that story.

At its core, marketing is about telling stories that get people's attention. That's it. The rest is in the details.

And if getting paid to tell stories interests you, we created this resource page just for you to highlight different tools, skills, and tips for launching a career in marketing.

“ Oh, to be sure, there are the get-rich dreams that float in and out of idle conversation.

But there are much headier rewards closer at hand—the freedom to be your own boss and chart your own course, the chance to explore the leading edge of some new technology, the career-opening opportunity to take on far more responsibility than any established organisation would ever grant.

These are what really drive early-market organisations to work such long hours for such modest rewards—the dream of getting rich on equity is only an excuse, something to hold on to your family and friends as a rationale for all this otherwise crazy behavior.

— Geoffrey A. Moore, [Crossing the Chasm](#)

The skillset for a career in marketing

Some soft skills make for great marketing basics: empathy, communication skills, or a natural curiosity. There are so many others, like compassion, the ability to solve problems, strong interpersonal skills, and a sound work ethic.

But hard skills will also take you miles in the marketing world. Keep in mind, each of these hard skills is more or less relevant to different types of marketing.

Some exceptional marketing skills include:

- Copywriting
- Public speaking
- Graphic design
- Digital ad skills
- Email marketing
- Social media marketing
- Data analysis and marketing analytics
- CRM software familiarity
- Search engine optimization
- Search engine marketing
- CMS familiarity
- Content marketing
- Public relations
- Blogging/writing skills
- Event planning

Common marketing software tools

Did you know there are over 5,000 companies that make up the landscape of marketing technology today? That's a whole lot of tools. But don't worry—you don't need to know them all.

Below, we've boiled down some of the most popular types of tools marketing professionals use and some of our favorite marketing software in each of those categories.

If you're considering a career in digital marketing, then we highly recommend you familiarize yourself with these different, popular tools that can be found in any company's marketing tech stack.

Email & chat



SEO



Social media & advertising



Design



Marketing automation



Analytics



Resources for learning more about a career in digital marketing

Looking for even more content to help you wet your feet in marketing? Look no further.

Below, we've compiled a number of different marketing resources—like our favorite marketing podcasts, books, and thought-leaders—in addition to several real-world success stories from marketers about how they got their start in marketing.

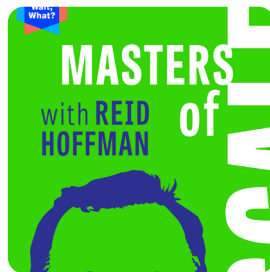
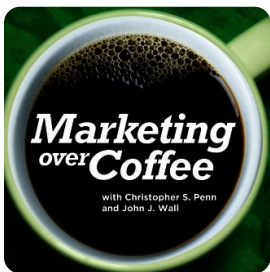
Enjoy!

[Podcasts](#) • [Books](#) • [Leaders](#)

The best marketing podcasts to start your career

Like to take your learning on the go? Us, too.

And if you're looking for some great places to get an extra-heaping dose of marketing insight, then we highly recommend you check out some of our favorite marketing podcasts:



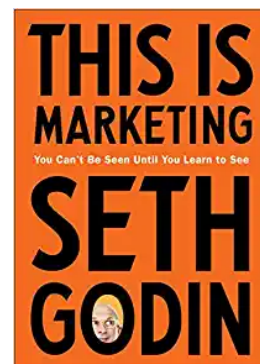
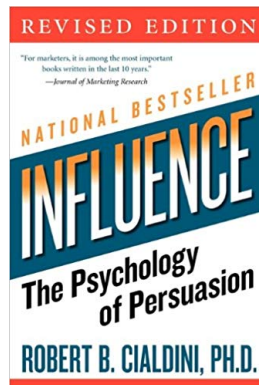
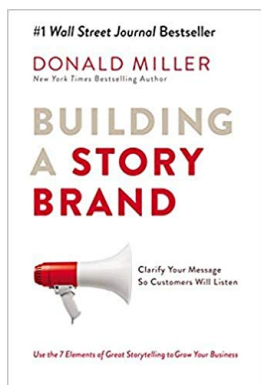
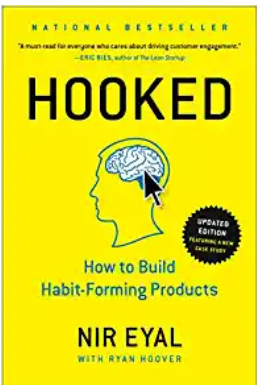
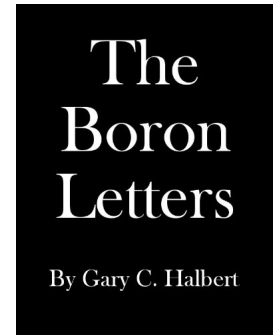
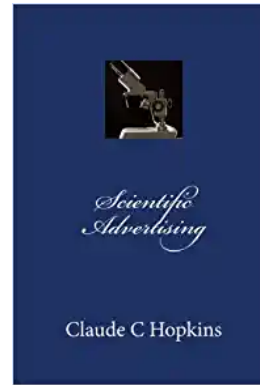
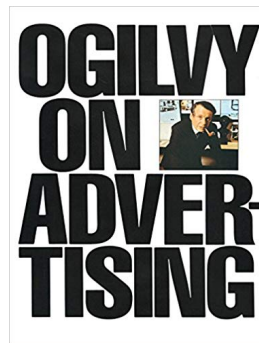
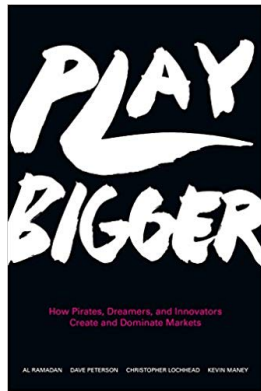
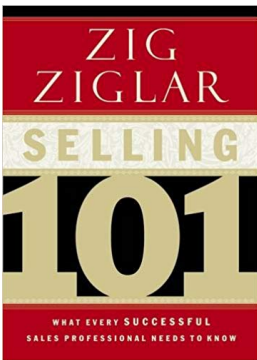
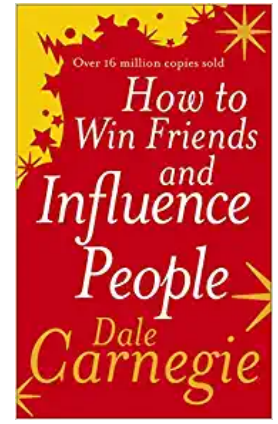
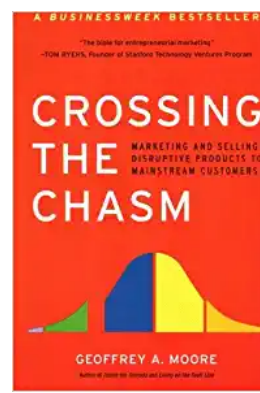
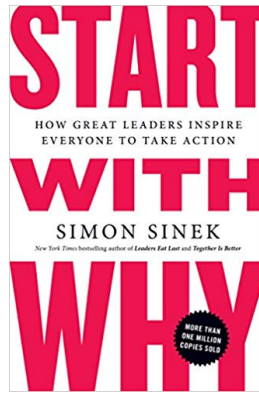
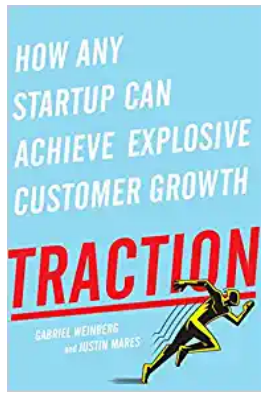
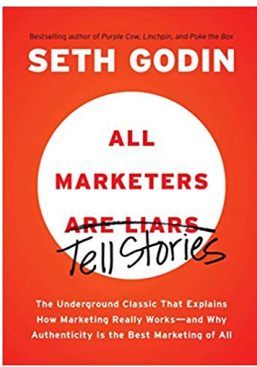
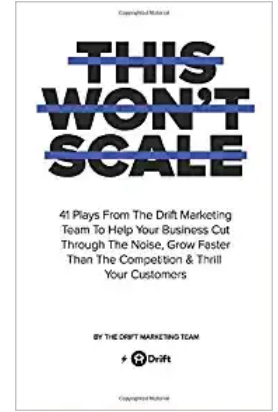
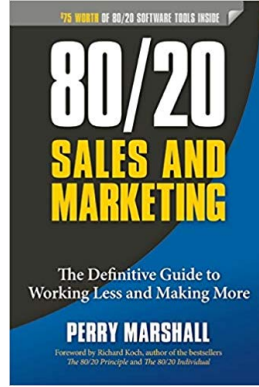
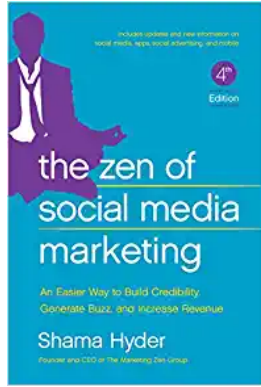
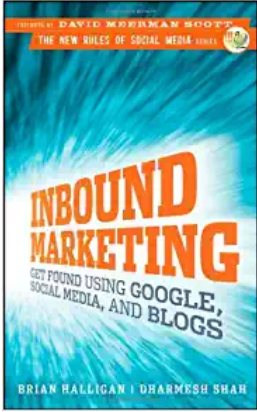
The best marketing books to start your career

As United States President Harry S. Truman once notably said, “Not all readers are leaders, but all leaders are readers.”

The same goes for anyone who wants to launch a legendary career in marketing. But before you slip and fall running as fast as you can to add every top Amazon book result for “marketing” to your cart, take a deep breath.

Then, check out our essential reading list for every aspiring young marketer This Year:

Click any book to open a preview online.



The best marketing leaders to follow as you start your career

Okay, okay, so this is a list that could easily go on forever.

Which is an awesome thing when you think about it—because it means there are so many phenomenal marketers out there you can start learning from right now.

So, while it's not a comprehensive list of every great marketing leader you should follow, we think it's a pretty good starting point.



Dave Gerhardt



David Cancel



Christopher Lochhead



Dharmesh Shah



Rand Fishkin



Ryan Deiss



Sarah Kennedy Ellis



Scott Brinker



John Rougeux



Marko Saric



Ryan Robinson



Lauren Holliday



Tyler Hakes



Corey Haines



Seth Godin



Ryan O'Hara



Steph Smith



Nat Eliason

Know someone who should be on this list? Tweet their name and why you like them to us @[HackingCareers](https://twitter.com/HackingCareers), and we just might add them.

The Best Companies to Work Full-Time in Marketing

Man, this is a tough one, because there are so many companies who do great marketing that we admire. So, to make it easier on you, we'll try to give you a brief picture of some of our very favorite marketing teams, and one reason why we like each of them.



Buffer — Radical, transparent policy



Drift — Conversational in all they do, invented conversational marketing



HubSpot — Created inbound marketing + their demand generation tools



Airbnb — For the aspirational traveler in us all



Intercom — Great design and awesome customer support



Zapier — Every remote worker's dream company



Autopilot — Visual and easy-to-use in a crowded technical space



Optimist — Absolutely fantastic content marketing and SEO resources



Baremetrics — Simple and beautiful data

Marketing success stories

To be honest, if you made it this far without asking that question, I was going to start worrying about you. Because, while all the resources in the world are great and all, does any of it really matter if there's no proof in the pudding?

Well, I don't think so. And that's exactly why I want to highlight a few of my favorite marketing success stories.

Some of these stories, our team has had the privilege of participating in or experiencing firsthand. Others are just stories we like—straight from the trenches of marketing—where someone broke into marketing with a particularly entertaining or useful fashion.

But don't just take my word for it. Read exactly how these marketers launched their careers when they were just getting started out.

Amanda Jones

“When she saw my video and that I was looking for a job, she said, ‘Ah, I’ve seen you before. I like how you’re doing this video thing and talking to people on LinkedIn and making connections.’

That signaled something to her: that I might be a good fit for this sales/prospecting/marketing job.”

[Read Amanda's full story here.](#)

Brad Matthews

“Using a combination of tailored pitches and Google Slides decks featuring these value-adds, I was able to land an awesome remote position at a digital marketing and advertising company.”

[Read how Brad landed a full-time, remote marketing job by being creative.](#)

Brian Nuckols

“In December of 2016, I decided I’d like to join the team of a high growth startup three years after dropping out of college to work on unconventional projects and boats in the Carribean.

In January of 2017, I started as an intern and by April was working full-time in the marketing department. Along the way, I documented the thought processes, email scripts, and videos I made to present myself and communicate the value I could bring.”

[Read Brian’s full story](#) about how he broke into the startup marketing scene.

Corey Haines

“I had prepared for days. Rehearsing answers over and over. Brushing up on terms and strategies.

Doing all the research I could on the industry and company. And then just minutes into the phone interview, sitting nervously in my car between classes, he hung up on me...

So how did I manage to not only get a marketing job but then also land my dream job two years later?”

[Read Corey's story](#) about how he went from college graduate to landing his marketing dream job.

Dave Gerhardt

“I thought the point of going to college was to get a job. But every entry-level position in the business world required two to three years of relevant experience. ‘So wait. You want me to uh, have experience for a job that requires no experience?’”

Now Dave is the VP of Marketing at Drift. [Read how he used a side project to jumpstart his career in marketing.](#)

Lauren Holliday

After dropping out of college, Lauren Holliday was waiting tables 40+ hours per week and had moved back in with her dad. But her story doesn't end there. Today, she is in the top 1% of millennials.

[Read how Lauren](#) went from underemployed waitress to the top 1% of millennials in under 6 months.

Mitchell “Yours Truly” Earl (Hey, that’s me!)

“Five years ago, I graduated college without a job—and what I learned next helped me 10x my income my first five years of jobs after college and go from unwitting, lowly college grad to the youngest member of multiple startup leadership teams—and this same advice can work for your career, too.”

[Read my story](#) and the tactics I used to launch my career.

Morgan Von Gunten

“I got an offer for an entry-level marketing position. A start-up was looking for someone to manage communities, run social media, and write blog posts. I was excited. I was ready. Actually, I was terrified. I had never done marketing. I had no idea how to do the things they wanted me to do effectively. But I took the job.”

[Read Morgan's story](#) on how she broke into marketing at a startup with no experience.

Ryan Holiday

When he was nineteen, he dropped out of college to apprentice under 48 Laws of Power author, Robert Greene. Today, he's authored ten books, including multiple bestsellers.

[Read Ryan's story here.](#)

Final resources

Congrats on making it this far!

Subscribe to the Daily Job Hunt newsletter. Join 200,000+ readers and get a kick in the inbox every morning.

Read the Career Hackers Manifesto: The core principles of discovering and doing what makes you come alive.

THE DAILY JOB HUNT

 careerhackers
manifesto

And check out the other career-hacking guides in this series:

