



# Modern Retail DTC Briefing

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*Welcome to the DTC Briefing. I'm Anna Hensel, Modern Retail's startups editor. In this weekly briefing, I'll explore changing marketing tactics, the future of physical retail, e-commerce infrastructure and much more.*

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## The new growth marketer

For direct-to-consumer brands, one of the most important roles has long been the role of growth marketer.

The role might live under a variety of names -- head of acquisition, head of growth -- but essentially, this person is responsible for using a variety of marketing tactics to get people to buy more from a particular brand, while still keeping efficient customer acquisition costs. For a venture-backed direct-to-consumer brand that might be expected to driver 20%-30% of revenue growth month-over-month, it's vitally important to have a professional who knows what levers to pull to increase sales.

But as the digital marketing landscape has changed, what brands are looking for in growth marketers has also changed. They are expected to

know how to test out a greater variety of marketing channels -- like TikTok or podcasts -- as DTC brands can no longer rely purely on Facebook and Google to drive revenue growth for years. They also have to be mindful of how the company is performing on a greater variety of metrics, including customer retention or return on ad spend.

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As such, when Michael Wieder, co-founder of baby brand Lalo, said that when he was recently hiring for a new head of growth at his company, he was looking for "someone that is willing to write a playbook, not follow a playbook."

DTC investor and strategist Nik Sharma, when asked how the growth marketing role has changed, said that "five years ago, if you knew how to buy Facebook ads, you were hired for growth." Today, he said a growth marketers might be expected to work on a variety of marketing tasks -- like media buying and developing different creative. They might also be expected to assist with other parts of the customer journey that DTC brands have realized have can greatly affect conversion, like testing different landing pages.

"It's the new 'social media manager' in the sense that this one title equals eight to nine different jobs," he said.

Mark Chou, founder of consultancy Bradhurst Ventures, said that when he is helping brands hire for a growth marketing role, he advises companies to look for someone who is multi-disciplinary.

"I personally don't gravitate towards candidates, particularly for leadership roles, who were just an SEM analyst, and then they were a search manager, and then they were a VP of search," said Chou, who formerly held the title of VP of growth marketing and e-commerce at luggage startup Away, in addition to other roles.

What different marketing-related roles a candidate has had is not as important; just simply that they don't only specialize in one channel or one tactic. "It demonstrates to me whether or not people are able to translate a certain type of knowledge, and baseline of experience, and learn new channels," said Chou.

Chou added that what's also changed about the growth marketing role at DTC startups is that this person is increasingly expected to work with multiple departments, like public relations or merchandising. Startups have increasingly come to realize just how much say, a big profile of the company's founder, can increase conversion rates, when paired with the right media tactics.

It's easier said than done though to look for a candidate who is multi-disciplinary. What's also tricky about hiring for growth marketing related roles is that tactics and channels fluctuate wildly. After all, one of the most important new marketing channels today, TikTok, didn't exist a few years ago.

"The very nature of marketing these days is that the change is constant," Chou said. As a result, he said that growth marketers need to be prepared to "regardless of how the future evolve -- and we know it will -- they need to be capable of picking [new channels] and learning, and they won't feel like their hands are tied to one tactic."