Gartner

2026 Priorities for Product Marketing Leaders

Introduction

As AI becomes the defining force in shaping team structure and skills and go-to-market (GTM) strategies, product marketing leaders face a pivotal moment. The hybrid workforce, now encompassing AI agents, is no longer a distant ambition, it's an immediate imperative for maximizing team performance and driving measurable business outcomes.

In 2026, product marketing must evolve into a strategic GTM orchestrator, breaking down silos and leading cross-functional alignment in an environment that demands real-time GTM adaptation. While AI continues to transform GTM and B2B buying, product marketing leaders must boost their team's relevance by designing adaptive teams and focusing relentlessly on data-driven ROI.

Key Questions

> What are the major **trends** affecting product marketing leaders?

> What are product marketing leaders' top **challenges** for the year ahead?

> What **actions** must product marketing leaders and their teams take to succeed?

3 Emerging Trends Defining the 2026 Product Marketing Landscape

AI fluency is the single most important investment in 2026

Recent Gartner insights indicates "lack of skills or technology knowledge of staff" is one of the top 3 obstacles preventing product marketers from rapidly adopting or leveraging AI. The emergence of hybrid teams — comprised of both humans and AI agents — is accelerating and driving a shift toward greater experimentation, innovation and process efficiency. Deep AI literacy and critical thinking are essential for developing high-performing product marketing talent that can fully maximize AI's potential.

Product marketing evolves into strategic GTM orchestration

As AI disrupts traditional GTM models, product marketing has an opportunity to move into a strategic GTM orchestration role.

The days of static and siloed GTM approaches are gone. Today's environment demands dynamic GTM strategies that continuously synthesize and adapt to market signals, deploying both human and digital resources to capture growth opportunities. This is not about being a coordinator of launches, but rather, an architect of dynamic growth grounded in real-time market signals.

Adaptability is the key to driving measurable impact

As product portfolios expand and GTM motions multiply, product marketing teams are stretched increasingly thin. In an environment of constrained resources and rising stakeholder demands, teams that quickly adapt are best positioned to deliver meaningful, data-driven results. Product marketing leaders who fail to evolve team structures and skill sets for broader, more fluid portfolios — and those who neglect to measure and communicate ROI — will see their strategic influence rapidly diminish.

3 Challenges and Actions for Product Marketing Leaders

Challenges

Actions

01

Developing a framework for scaling AI skills

With AI reshaping product marketing, leaders must upskill teams and redefine roles to realize the full value of emerging technologies. By fostering foundational AI fluency, promoting cross-functional collaboration and empowering teams to innovate, product marketers can overcome adoption barriers and unlock greater strategic value.

Establish an AI charter for product marketing.

02

Harnessing real-time market signals to orchestrate GTM

Today's GTM approach must be a living system powered by real-time data and AI. Integrate a wide range of data sources — including first-party customer data, competitive intelligence, real-time engagement signals, publicly available datasets, third-party enrichment and AI-generated synthetic data — into your AI-enabled GTM processes. Tap into these signals to inform, adapt and continuously optimize GTM strategies. Ensure decisions are grounded in timely, actionable market insights and drive unified cross-functional execution.

Build credibility as a strategic GTM orchestrator.

03

Building resilient teams for maximum impact

Product marketing leaders must structure teams for adaptability and broad coverage. This enables teams to respond to shifting business needs and navigate a portfolio spanning multiple technology categories in the age of AI. Leaders must embed measurability at the outset of every initiative, ensuring every action is tied to clear metrics and impact prior to execution. A proactive approach to measurement is essential for demonstrating value and elevating product marketing's strategic relevance.

Define clear metrics to enable adaptive, impact-driven teams.

01

Action
Establish an AI Charter for Product Marketing

Define a clear mandate and outline the current versus future state for where and how AI will add value. Develop capability assessments to identify gaps in skills, tools and data that could prevent reaching the future state. Include targeted training and upskilling provisions for AI fluency and analytical skills. Championing an AI-driven vision and fostering a culture of experimentation will position teams to lead.

AI charter for product marketing
Ensure responsible adoption, continuous improvement and clear ownership for AI-enabled processes.

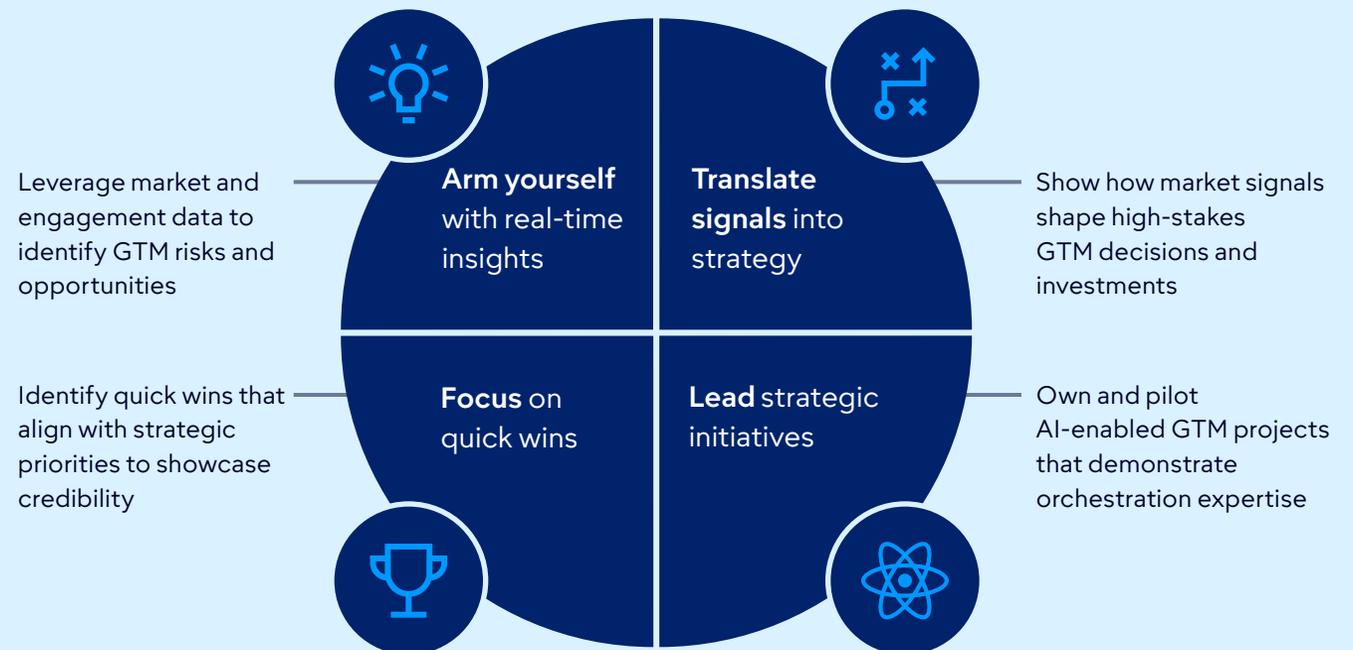| AI charter for product marketing	
Mandate and vision	Articulate the strategic intent for AI in product marketing, including desired business outcomes.
Current vs. future state	Assess the current state of AI (including enterprise-sanctioned tools), and define the target state for AI-empowered product marketing.
AI opportunity grid	Map product marketing activities by their suitability for AI (e.g., AI-led, human-AI hybrid, human-led) to prioritize use cases and investments.
Capability assessment	Identify gaps in skills, tools and data needed to reach the future state.
Training and development	Include provisions for training and upskilling product marketers on AI technologies, governance practices and ethical considerations to ensure informed decision making.
Workflows	Outline how product marketing processes will change with AI adoption, including new roles and responsibilities where human oversight is required.
Change management	Create detailed plans for managing organizational change, including strategies for overcoming resistance, fostering a culture of innovation and supporting teams through transitions.
Governance and ethics	Set guidelines for responsible AI use, data quality, transparency and risk management — ideally through a cross-functional AI council or governance team, typically led by the CIO or a chief AI officer, if one exists.
Measurement	Define success metrics and review intervals to track progress and drive continuous improvement.

Source: Gartner

02 Action
Build Credibility as a Strategic GTM Orchestrator

Leverage real-time insights to inform high-stakes business decisions, guide AI-enabled GTM initiatives and secure quick wins that align with strategic priorities. Drive consensus around GTM decisions by facilitating structured alignment sessions. Implement GTM operating models (e.g., GTM councils, GTM pods) that enable rapid go/no-go decisions, ongoing measurement and agile adjustments. This will position product marketing as an architect of growth, not just a tactical executor.

Strategic GTM Orchestrator:
Continuously monitors, synthesizes and interprets market signals to adapt GTM strategies in real-time. They identify which value propositions matter most to each buyer segment and sense when they drift from market reality.

Essential steps to gain influence and trust

Leverage market and engagement data to identify GTM risks and opportunities

Arm yourself with real-time insights

Translate signals into strategy

Show how market signals shape high-stakes GTM decisions and investments

Identify quick wins that align with strategic priorities to showcase credibility

Focus on quick wins

Lead strategic initiatives

Own and pilot AI-enabled GTM projects that demonstrate orchestration expertise

Source: Gartner

03 Action
Define Clear Metrics to Enable Adaptive, Impact-Driven Teams

Prioritize demands from executive leadership and GTM teams, while balancing needs based on evolving market dynamics. Automate routine tasks and shift talent to higher-value activities, such as human-in-the-loop decision making and strategic initiatives. Regularly reassess team structures and workflows to ensure optimal coverage, rapid response to market changes and ongoing alignment with evolving business priorities. Define standardized metrics, dashboards and attribution models to connect product marketing activities to business outcomes. Partner with marketing operations and analytics teams to improve data quality, align on value definitions and establish clear, data-driven communication of product marketing's impact.

Aligning teams for agility and business impact

Automate routine tasks with AI and shift talent to higher-value activities

Regularly reassess team structures and workflows for optimal coverage

Define metrics, dashboards and attribution models to connect activities to business outcomes

Prioritize demands from internal stakeholders and external environment changes

Adaptability = Measurable impact

Partner with marketing ops and analytics to improve data quality and align on value definitions

Source: Gartner

Actionable, objective insights

Explore these additional complimentary resources and tools
for product marketing leaders:

Webinar

Gartner 2026 Priorities for Product
Marketing Leaders

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Schedule a call with a Gartner expert to talk through how you can prepare your product marketing team to maximize growth potential in 2026 and beyond.

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