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FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

Drew Sartain
 Marketing Coordinator
 +1-512-681-8800, Ext. 13
drews@visionedgemarketing.com

Marketers are Operationally Proficient but Strategically Stalled

Findings from the 2013 Joint Forrester, ITSMA, and VisionEdge Marketing Survey

AUSTIN, Texas—May 21, 2013—Few members of the C-Suite rely on marketing data to make strategic decisions, according to the joint VisionEdge Marketing (VEM), ITSMA, and Forrester Research, Inc. (Nasdaq: FORR), 2013 Marketing Performance Management (MPM) Survey. Just nine percent of CEOs and six percent of CFOs leverage marketing data in this manner. The reason? Marketing dashboards report marketing activity rather than business outcomes, as marketers cling to performance metrics to continuously justify budgets and resource allocations—when instead they should show how marketing moves the needle on topline growth or profitability.

The 2013 MPM Survey captured input from more than 400 respondents, enabling ITSMA, Forrester, and VEM to expose valuable insights on the performance measurement and management challenges marketers face. The study, begun by VEM initially, is now in its 12th year.

“The data demonstrates how marketers rely too much on their CRM and marketing automation systems to produce dashboards or report on marketing results. These systems are fine for providing a view into marketing program activity and pipeline, but the research shows that most fail to produce the level of information and metrics that business executives want to see,” said Laura Ramos, Vice President, Principal Analyst serving CMOs at Forrester.

OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY, NOT EFFECTIVENESS

Measures of operational efficiency such as on time delivery, budget, productivity, campaign performance, and lead data are the most common metrics marketing tracks and reports. On average, 54 percent of marketers use data analytics to fine-tune the marketing mix. However, few marketers are using data to predict customer behavior, make strategic recommendations, drive innovation, or impact customer acquisition, retention, or growth—measures that make a stronger connection between marketing activity and business outcomes. For instance, just 35 percent of marketers on average use data analytics to predict customer buying behavior.

“The metrics marketers say they use suggest an almost myopic focus on efficiency instead of effectiveness. Marketers need to add metrics that measure the effectiveness of their programs as well as measures that will help them make strategic recommendations,” said Julie Schwartz, Senior Vice President, Research and Thought Leadership for ITSMA.

PAST PERFORMANCE, NOT PREDICTIVE INSIGHT

A key component of the annual study is the number of marketers earning an A grade from the C-Suite for their ability to impact the business and measure their value. The grades remain relatively stable compared to last year, with 27 percent earning an A, 38 percent earning a B, 29 percent earning a C, and the remainder failing. The A marketers are better at using data and analytics in general, but all the groups primarily use data and



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analytics to report on past performance rather than to support future decisions. “Marketers are at various stages of their journey, some further along than others. One step all marketers need to address is to have the building blocks and repeatable processes needed to support alignment, analytics, and accountability,” said Laura Patterson, President, VisionEdge Marketing, Inc.

The final reports from ITSMA/VEM and Forrester respectively will include select survey results, along with recommended action steps to help marketers improve marketing effectiveness, efficiency, and value for their organization. The results will be previewed at the ITSMA Marketing Leadership Forum in Napa (<http://www.itsma.com/events/2013-marketing-leadership-forum/>) and presented in the June 4 webinar, Measuring and Communicating Marketing Performance (<http://www.itsma.com/events/measuring-and-communicating-marketing-performance/>).

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About VisionEdge Marketing: VisionEdge Marketing provides proven expertise to help companies improve marketing accountability, measurement and analytics; create outcome-based marketing metrics; develop dashboards; leverage processes, data, systems, and use data and analytics to make strategic market, customer and product decisions.

About ITSMA: ITSMA is a research-based membership organization that helps B2B companies market and sell services and solutions more effectively. They work with the world’s leading professional services, technology, and communications providers to generate increased demand, strengthen customer relationships, and improve brand differentiation.

About Forrester: A global research and advisory firm, Forrester serves professionals in 13 key roles across three distinct client segments. Forrester provides proprietary research, consumer and business data, custom consulting, events and online communities, and peer-to-peer executive programs.