

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Association for Accounting Marketing and the Hinge Research Institute conducted a benchmarking study of marketing spending and organic growth among accounting firms.



## ABOUT THE STUDY

- A total of 84 accounting firms completed the survey.
- A standardized set of spending categories was used to ensure compatibility across firms.
- Budgeting and spending control practices were also collected.
- Detailed budget breakdowns are available by firm size and market location.
- A special section compares the spending of High-Growth firms vs. Low-Growth firms.
- This report includes a worksheet for comparing your firm to relevant benchmarks.





## How Does This Data Compare?

For perspective, we compared our survey findings with that of [\*The 2015 Budget Benchmark Study\*](#). See page 17 of the Full Report.

## OVERALL RESULTS

- Average marketing spending (including compensation for marketing departments) was 4.58% of firm revenues.
- Firms employed one FTE marketer for every 48 employees.
- Excluding marketing staff salaries, the top five spending categories were:
  - Sponsorships
  - Charitable giving
  - Networking events, tradeshow, and conferences
  - Entertainment events
  - Advertising

## HIGH-GROWTH VS. LOW-GROWTH FIRMS

- High-Growth firms (the fastest growing 20%) were contrasted with Low-Growth firms (the slowest growing 20%). High-Growth firms showed an average annual organic growth rate of 20.8% while Low-Growth firms shrunk by an average growth rate of -2.4%.
- High-Growth firms spent slightly more of their revenue on marketing (1.95%) vs. their Low-Growth counterparts (1.82%), and spent it very differently.
- Consistent with past Budget Benchmark Study findings, High-Growth firms placed a much greater emphasis on online and content marketing.
- High-Growth firms were more likely to outsource their marketing to consultants, agencies, or freelancers.
- The differences in current spending were largely reflected in future spending priorities as well.

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## TO RECEIVE THE RESEARCH REPORT

The FULL REPORT is available for \$300 to AAM members and \$600 for non-members. Contact [info@accountingmarketing.org](mailto:info@accountingmarketing.org).

Section 1 (Only): Overall Budgeting Benchmarks is available FREE to AAM members. Contact [info@accountingmarketing.org](mailto:info@accountingmarketing.org).

## TO PARTICIPATE IN NEXT YEAR'S STUDY

The FULL REPORT is available FREE to all research participants. If you would like to participate in the next study contact [info@hingemarketing.com](mailto:info@hingemarketing.com).



# ABOUT

## ABOUT HINGE

The Hinge Research Institute is dedicated to helping professional services firms grow and thrive. It publishes groundbreaking studies on all aspects of High-Growth firms and professional services buyers. Hinge Research Institute is a division of Hinge, the leader in branding and marketing for professional services firms. Hinge offers a comprehensive suite of services from research and strategy to award-winning design and implementation for firms that want to become more visible and grow. Learn more at [www.hingemarketing.com](http://www.hingemarketing.com) or call 703-390-8870.

## ABOUT AAM

The Association for Accounting Marketing (AAM) was formed specifically to enhance the accounting marketing and practice growth profession through education, networking, and thought leadership. Founded in 1989, the association has more than 750 members, comprised of marketing professionals, business developers, CPAs, consultants, service providers, educators, and students. AAM strives to help its members become more effective and valued practitioners and executive leaders. To learn more about AAM, please call 443-640-1061 or visit [www.accountingmarketing.org](http://www.accountingmarketing.org).

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