

VP Marketing Assessment

Martin Briggs · mbriggs619@gmail.com · (619) 884-2244 · linkedin.com/in/martybriggs

Strategic thinking

1. Strapi is an open-source headless CMS with 70K+ GitHub stars, trusted by developers. The next step is to make it the default choice for enterprise CMS buyers. How would you approach changing that?

Strapi has already won the developer vote; the gap is at the buying layer, where enterprise evaluators need trust and visibility. I wouldn't prioritize manufacturing new demand first. I would start with the demand you already have, but may be unaware of and have yet to target.

- **Signal-led pipeline.** Thousands of enterprises already run Strapi somewhere. Instrument the signals: GitHub activity, npm downloads, cloud projects, MCP usage, docs traffic; resolve them to accounts; run targeted outbound and ABM into ICP enterprises where Strapi is already in the building. Land where developers have already chosen you.
- **Enterprise proof layer.** Really lean into the customer stories (Apple-class logos exist; they are underused): make them bite-size and consumable, and place them in the mediums enterprise buyers actually use and visit, not locked in PDF case studies. Add the table-stakes security and compliance narrative, TCO comparisons against AEM and Sitecore, and an analyst strategy. Enterprise buyers need permission to choose the open-source option; proof is that permission.
- **Fix the evaluation perception.** The comparison and solution pages are where enterprise deals are silently won or lost; rewrite them around how buyers actually evaluate (risk, cost, migration, support), not just feature grids. That perception extends beyond our own pages: third-party review sites like G2, and the AEO/GEO surfaces where buyers and their AI assistants now do much of their evaluating.
- **Measure the shift.** Move the KPI set from signups and traffic to ICP pipeline, opportunity creation, velocity, and revenue. What gets measured is what the team optimizes.

2. We're debating whether to reposition from "headless CMS" to "open-source backend framework with content management." What's your framework for making that call, and what would you need to know before deciding?

Repositioning is a market motion decision, not a wording decision. My framework is four questions:

- **Where does budget exist?** Enterprises have a CMS budget line; very few have an "open-source backend framework" line. A category with budget beats a category without one.
- **What language do we win in?** Audit 12 months of win/loss notes and sales calls. What words do buyers use in deals we win? That is the positioning; everything else is theory.
- **What does the word carry?** Category language carries price expectations; "framework" associates with free tools and internal builds, while CMS keeps us in a budgeted software conversation.
- **What makes the community prouder?** Identity matters in open source; the community is the moat, and the right repositioning is one contributors brag about, not one that has to be explained to them.

Before deciding, I would audit win/loss data, pipeline source by search term, customer language, and SEO/AEO/GEO demand data. My instinct: keep headless CMS as the category anchor, because that is where the budget and the searches live, and hedge for where the market is headed with a holistic SEO/AEO/GEO strategy across the terms buyers are starting to use (Agentic CMS, DXP, Agentic Experience Platform, and whatever comes next). The backend framework story already lives on the site as a developer use case, which is exactly where it belongs. Open source and not being SaaS should be told as advantages, not caveats: no hostage pricing, self-hosting where compliance demands it, and a product that improves in public. Analysts matter more than most admit at this stage; categories move because vendors help move them, and founder-level analyst relationships are one of the highest-leverage positioning investments a company this size can make. Do not trade a category with budget for a category without one.

3. We're competing against AEM, Sitecore, Contentful, and Drupal for enterprise deals, while fighting Payload and Sanity for developer mindshare. How do you build a marketing strategy that works across both audiences without diluting the message?

One narrative, two altitudes. The truth is the same for both audiences: open, structured content infrastructure you control. Developers hear it as: build faster, own your stack, no lock-in. Enterprise buyers hear it as: lower TCO, no license hostage-taking, and the security and control of open source with commercial support.

The two audiences are not actually in tension; they are sequential. Developer buy-in is the hard part of most enterprise and midmarket deals, and large buying committees stall when technical evaluators push back. Strapi inverts that problem: the developers are often already advocates, and internal developer mindshare becomes the expansion engine inside large organizations and across their subsidiaries. That is a structural advantage none of the proprietary competitors have.

The discipline that prevents dilution is a single message architecture, with every asset mapped to one audience and one stage; the failure mode is averaging the two messages into mush. Comparison pages split by frame: against AEM and Sitecore, cost, agility, and time-to-value; against Contentful and Sanity, openness, control, and predictable cost at scale; against Contentstack, the community and open-source foundation that cannot be bought; against Drupal, the modern API-first successor on the open-source side; against Storyblok, developer-first depth beyond visual editing; against Webflow, real code and real content infrastructure for teams that outgrow a closed builder; against Payload, maturity, ecosystem, and enterprise readiness. Same product, same truth, different proof points.

Winning upmarket also means support and white-glove service; managed services and agency or SI partnerships matter twice here, as a lead and revenue channel and as implementation muscle for deals that need hands. The developer advocacy team keeps its own voice throughout; marketing never speaks to developers in buyer language.

Demand generation & pipeline

4. Walk us through a demand gen motion you built from scratch for a product with a developer ICP. What worked, what didn't, and what would you do differently at Strapi?

I have built this twice. At Contentstack, I was the first marketing hire; we scaled from roughly \$1M to \$60M+ ARR in four years, with demand gen driving about 80% of that growth. What worked: category creation (Contentstack was one of the founding members of the G2 and Gartner categories for Headless CMS), technical content that developers actually searched for,

presence where developers already were, and tight BDR and Sales alignment from day one. At Uniform, I rebuilt the motion via a reduced AI-native tech stack: a two-person team (and 2 very fractional consultants) produced \$8M+ in pipeline and \$2M+ in net new revenue in 2025 at nearly 10:1 ROAS, using signal-to-sequence workflows instead of headcount. The signal-to-sequence approach actually started at Contentstack; at Uniform I simply had better ABM/ABX technology and much better contact-level resolution and targeting, which is most of why a smaller team outproduced a bigger one.

What didn't work at first: our developer-focused campaigns. Developers don't want to be marketed to, and our early campaigns treated them like buyers. We learned to lead with value they actually cared about, like learning from peers in their field; Contentstack didn't have a true community, so this became our quasi-community motion. Marketing to developers is one of the larger nuances of this industry, and it takes real time to learn.

At Strapi I would do one thing differently from both: start from community signals rather than cold data. Strapi's funnel already begins inside GitHub, npm, Discord, and the docs; the first motion is resolving that energy into accounts, not buying lists. Strapi also starts with an advantage most companies in this space struggle to manufacture: anyone can try the product today. The job is not building a demo environment; it is converting the accounts already using Strapi into understanding why the paid tiers are worth it. Personalization is the next lever, and contact-level signal makes it possible without spamming anyone. Developers hate being marketed at; market with proof and product, never with gates.

5. We plan to ramp up the outbound motion (we only did inbound so far). Do you think it should sit in Marketing or Sales? What has been your experience with this?

I don't hold a dogmatic position here; I have seen outbound work and fail in both structures. What decides it is not the org chart. It is oversight, analysis, coaching, and the discipline to manage out underperformers and promote overachievers. Sales is hard and isn't for everyone; even the best burn out without proper coaching and management.

That said, my most recent experience was running it inside marketing, and at Strapi's stage that is where I would start. At Uniform I introduced and led the outbound SDR function within marketing; message iteration speed doubled because the people writing sequences sat next to the people reading intent signals, and cost per opportunity landed around \$1,700. The reasoning: the first six months of a new outbound motion is not a scaling problem, it is a message-market fit problem; signal selection, sequence iteration, and positioning tests are marketing-shaped work. Once conversion is repeatable and the playbook is written, the function can move to Sales (or dual-report) for scale; that is a milestone to plan for, not a turf line to defend.

Either way, three things are non-negotiable: all outbound communication carries the same messaging, driven by marketing; one shared pipeline number; and a written SLA in both directions. With a sales team of four, every outbound touch has to be precise; signal-led and automation is how a small team punches up.

6. How do you think about the role of the open-source community and developer ecosystem as a growth channel? How have you previously turned community into a commercial pipeline?

I will be straight about my experience here: I built demand engines alongside developer communities for eight years, at companies that would have paid dearly for the community Strapi already has. I have not run an open-source community program, and I would not pretend to; Developer Relations owns the health of the community, and the handbook is right that community-led growth means accepting less control over the narrative.

What I know how to do is turn community energy into commercial signal without taxing the community. Mechanically: instrument the ecosystem (GitHub orgs and contributors, npm downloads, Discord activity, cloud projects, MCP usage); resolve individual activity to accounts; route ICP-fit accounts into nurture and signal-led outbound. The rules that keep it safe: never gate community resources, never spam contributors, sponsor and amplify rather than extract. Community is the moat and the top of the funnel; marketing's job is to notice which buildings the developers are already inside, and go talk to the people upstairs. At Contentstack, developer content and advocacy helped feed the engine that drove 80% of ARR; Strapi's version starts several steps ahead, having done some of the hardest work in advance.

Product marketing

7. How do you work with Product on roadmap input and prioritization? When have you pushed back on a product decision for GTM reasons?

My model: marketing is the voice of the market in roadmap conversations, and that voice must arrive with evidence, not opinions. At Contentstack I worked directly with three successive product leaders, and we fed the roadmap continuously: search metrics, page engagement, content and outreach engagement, phone feedback from the field, competitive intelligence on product and positioning, and direct customer input, including a customer advisory board of our largest clients. We would even use content to chum the waters: publish a point of view, watch what the market engaged with, and feed that back into prioritization.

The clearest pushback was at Uniform, where the product roadmap was at times nearly non-existent. I pushed for us to also address marketers and the rest of the buying committee, since we had no developer community, no free sandbox, and no simple demo environment to carry a developer-only motion. I made the same data-backed case for the visual workspace positioning and later for entering the DXP category, both against real internal resistance. The outcome: the repositioning carried Uniform into the 2025 Gartner Magic Quadrant for Digital Experience Platforms as a Visionary. Not every argument ended in agreement, but the market data proved out.

I apparently can't turn this off, either: building a site on Strapi through the MCP recently, I hit the lack of a trial for the Growth tier and flagged it, because that gap sits exactly where an evaluating team decides whether to keep going.

8. After spending some time exploring our website, what do you think is great or could be better?

Great: the docs are genuinely excellent and clearly written for the person doing the work; the open handbook and public values are rare and disarming; the community surface (GitHub, Discord, contributors) is visible and alive; and anyone can try the product today, which most companies in this space struggle to manufacture. The foundation of trust is there.

Could be better:

- **Enterprise proof placement.** The customer stories with real metrics (like those on the contact-sales page) belong front and center on the homepage and other high-traffic conversion points, not tucked behind a sales form.
- **The agentic story is buried.** MCP is live, which is a category-defining capability right now, and a buyer would hardly know. Use the top-level sitewide banner to announce it alone, unmuddled; today that banner promotes a multi-item release roundup, which is exactly the muddle.

- **AEO/GEO.** Strapi is absent from many relevant searches and AI answers, even after visiting the site. The homepage title itself is framework SEO ("...for Next.js, Astro, Tanstack Start, and Nuxt.js") with nothing for the business buyer or the agentic story.
- **Site search performs poorly.** For a content infrastructure company, that is a visible credibility gap.
- **The style skews developer and techy.** Not bad, but the whole buying committee lands on these pages, and simplicity sells.
- **Personalization and testing.** "Contact Sales" as the primary CTA can likely be improved, and the conversion paths show little evidence of a testing culture yet.
- **Comparison pages.** Broad coverage, but they read auto-generated; worth rewriting around the arguments that win deals (TCO, control, migration risk, support), not just feature grids.
- **Onboarding.** Having built with Strapi via MCP recently, local-first onboarding plus the lack of a Growth-tier trial is a real funnel gap; the fastest path from curiosity to a running project should be measured in minutes and visible from the homepage.

Team & org

9. What does the ideal Marketing org look like at our stage (\$10M ARR) and what do you need to reach the next one (\$20–50M ARR, moving upmarket)? What do you build in-house vs. agency?

The first move is an honest evaluation of the existing team; this company clearly builds for longevity, and I would rather grow the people already in seats than assume gaps from the outside. That said, in similar situations, these are the roles I have hired when the gaps were real: a senior demand generation lead who owns the pipeline number; a GTM engineer (marketing ops rebuilt for the AI era) who turns every repetitive task into a workflow; and content brought in-house, as already planned, run on an editor-in-chief model where one person owns quality and AI handles volume. PMM stays central for positioning and enablement; Developer Relations remains its own pillar in partnership, not under marketing's thumb.

In-house versus agency: strategy, positioning, content, and anything touching the community stay in-house permanently; agencies for performance media buying, design overflow, and PR bursts, always as hands, never as brains. My operating principle is that every repetitive task becomes a workflow, every workflow becomes an asset, and headcount is spent only on judgment work; it is how a two-person team produced \$8M in pipeline, and it is how seven people can perform like twenty.

To reach \$20–50M moving upmarket: ABM and field marketing, partner and ecosystem marketing (agencies and SIs become a channel, not just an audience), and customer marketing for expansion, since AEs are currently both hunting and farming and expansion revenue will need air cover. ABM waits deliberately, not hesitantly; as in question 1, there is likely meaningful revenue to mine in existing accounts and the current database first, and ABM pays best once the outbound playbook is repeatable and the enterprise proof layer exists. Field marketing can come earlier where it serves community growth and customer advocacy rather than lead capture. I would rather promote pipeline owners from within the lean core than bolt on layers; flat and accountable beats big and diffuse.

10. How do you set up the marketing/sales interface? Where does the handoff happen, and how do you hold both sides accountable for pipeline quality?

One number, jointly owned: qualified pipeline. Everything else follows from that.

- **Definition first.** A written, shared definition of qualified: ICP fit plus demonstrated intent. Not form fills, not MQL theater. If sales would not thank us for it, it does not count.
- **SLA both directions.** Marketing commits to speed and quality of handoff; sales commits to touch-time and a disposition on every routed account. Every rejected opportunity comes back with a reason, and those reasons feed the targeting model weekly.
- **One room, one dashboard.** A weekly pipeline council with the heads of Sales and Customer Experience: source truth on creation, stage conversion, aging, and win/loss. Disagreements get settled with the data on the screen.
- **Comp alignment.** Marketing measured on pipeline and revenue influence, never on activity. I have carried a pipeline number my whole career; I would not take a role without one.

At Uniform I collapsed the interface entirely by running marketing and the SDRs as one motion; the handoff moved from "lead" to "opportunity created" and the friction disappeared. Strapi's structure is different, but the principle transfers: move the handoff as close to revenue as the org allows, and make both sides accountable to the same number. Shared accountability, with everyone looking at the same metrics tied to revenue.

Fit

11. What would make you join Strapi?

As I told Pierre, I have built a small but profitable agency with varied clientele that keeps me active across industries and current with rapidly evolving technology, so there are very few opportunities that would make me consider changing the status quo. This is one of them. Why:

1. **The open-source, community-first model.** It is the version of this market I have always wanted to work in; after eight years marketing proprietary platforms in this category, the moat Strapi has is the one everyone else tried to buy.
2. **The inflection point.** You have built the community and the adoption; the demand and outbound layer that turns that into profitable enterprise revenue is precisely the part I can come in and build, and I have done exactly that twice in this industry.
3. **The decision culture.** I reviewed the handbook, and the FAST model, disagree-and-commit, and "own outcomes, not just output" describe how I already work. I have operated with that culture and without it; the difference with it is everything.

12. What would make you say no to this role?

So far I haven't seen any red flags, which hopefully isn't a red flag. But these would give me pause:

1. **Activity over outcomes.** I have carried a pipeline and revenue number my entire career; a brand-stewardship version of this job would be the wrong hire on both sides.
2. **Enterprise versus community framed as either/or.** The whole opportunity is that they compound; I would not want to be the person hired to trade one for the other.
3. **Unclear ownership.** The handbook's RACI language says it best: I would want to be Accountable for marketing strategy and its number, with Sales, Customer Experience, and the broader team Consulted; ambiguity there serves no one.

None of these appear to be the case, which is why I am so excited about the opportunity.