

EPIISODE
05

**THE BRAND
BUILDER'S
PLAYBOOK**

BRAND VS. PERFORMANCE MARKETING:

**FINDING THE
BALANCE**

HOSTS



JIM
STENDEL

In October 2008, Jim Stengel shocked the marketing world by leaving his prestigious role as Global Marketing Officer at Procter & Gamble, one of the most admired brand building companies in the world. This bold move was Jim's first step on a new mission to share his passion for growing business through a focus on higher ideals.

To continue on his mission, Jim has embraced a variety of exciting roles: President/CEO of The Jim Stengel Company, LLC, host of The CMO Podcast, Author of *Grow: How Ideals Power Growth & Profit at the World's Greatest Companies* Unleashing the Innovators: How Mature Companies Find New Life with Startups, Adjunct Professor at Kellogg, Northwestern, speaker with the Washington Speakers Bureau® Advisor to several companies.

x **JIM STENDEL**
COMPANY



RYAN
BARKER

Ryan Barker is the founder of BERA.ai, and is known as “Alchemist of Brand Equity” for his ability to turn the emotional power of brands into measurable business performance. After 15 years in brand consultancy at WPP, Ryan grew frustrated by vanity metrics that won awards but failed to drive business outcomes. He saw marketers losing credibility, chasing short-term sales while neglecting long-term brand value.

Out of that conviction, he launched BERA.ai—the world's first real-time brand intelligence platform connecting brand equity to business results. Today, leading brands and private equity firms rely on BERA to predict performance, guide investment, and protect their most valuable intangible asset: their brand. Blending analytical rigor with creative empathy, Ryan's mission is simple: what gets measured, gets valued—and what gets valued, gets protected.

x **BERA.ai**



LINDSEY
WEH KING

Lindsey Wehking is the Chief Investigative Strategy Officer at Nonfiction Research. Nonfiction explores the hidden parts of American life through immersive research. Their researchers have sat beside patients in hospitals, inmates in prison, and have interviewed Atlanta rappers while rollerblading. Nonfiction's findings have been featured by ABC News, Axios, MSNBC, Fox News, and FastCompany. Their work has inspired public service campaigns, a division at Disney, new flavors of Doritos, and a Megan Thee Stallion song.

Lindsey is the author of *The Invisible Weight*, a report and podcast on the hidden emotional experiences of pregnancy and the lack of emotional care in the U.S Healthcare system. She has also authored *America's Secret Playlists*, a report on the secret lives hidden within Spotify playlists, and *Saving America from the News*, a study of what Americans really want from journalism. Her quest for more emotional realism in research has brought her into hip hop therapy groups, sex cults, ayahuasca retreats, illegal gas station casinos, Insane Clown Posse concerts and deep into the inner lives of everyday Americans.

x **NONFICTION**
RESEARCH

TODAY'S GUEST



ANDREA
BRIMMER

Andrea Brimmer is the Chief Marketing and PR Officer of Ally Financial and is responsible for leading all aspects of the company's integrated marketing and brand transformation, driving unprecedented growth and disruptive consumer engagement.

Brimmer joined the company in 2006 and spearheaded the creation and launch of the Ally brand in 2009. Since becoming CMO in 2015, she has unified the brand under the company's "Do It Right" mantra, and at her direction, Ally has established itself as a "different" kind of financial services company, dedicated to solving customer pain points that traditional institutions ignored. Brimmer is widely recognized as one of the country's most innovative and effective marketing leaders, known for being a dynamically disruptive and culturally astute trailblazer. The work of her team garnered recognition for Ally on many prominent industry lists and rankings, including the 2022 and 2023 Fast Company Brands that Matter lists. **Brimmer has appeared on the Forbes World's Most Influential CMO list five times, earning her a spot in the 2024 Forbes CMO Hall of Fame.** Her many other honors include 2024 She Runs It Women of the Year, 2023 Forbes Entrepreneurial CMO 50, 2023 Fast Company's Most Creative People in Business and the 2020 Adweek Brand Genius award.

05 FINDING THE BALANCE



Every CMO faces the same question—how do you balance long-term brand equity with short-term performance marketing? Andrea shares how they structure budgets and marketing efforts to drive both immediate ROI and sustained brand growth.

WHAT IS PERFORMANCE MARKETING?

This is defined by the Performance Marketing Association as paying for results from marketing campaigns—like sales, leads, or clicks—conducted through third-party channels such as direct mail providers, search engines, and social media sites.

WHY ARE PEOPLE FOCUSED ON PERFORMANCE MARKETING?

The intense focus on performance marketing stems from its compelling promise: to solve the century-old "Wanamaker problem" of not knowing which half of advertising spend is wasted. In a business climate that demands accountability, it offers what leaders crave: a direct link between spending and results.

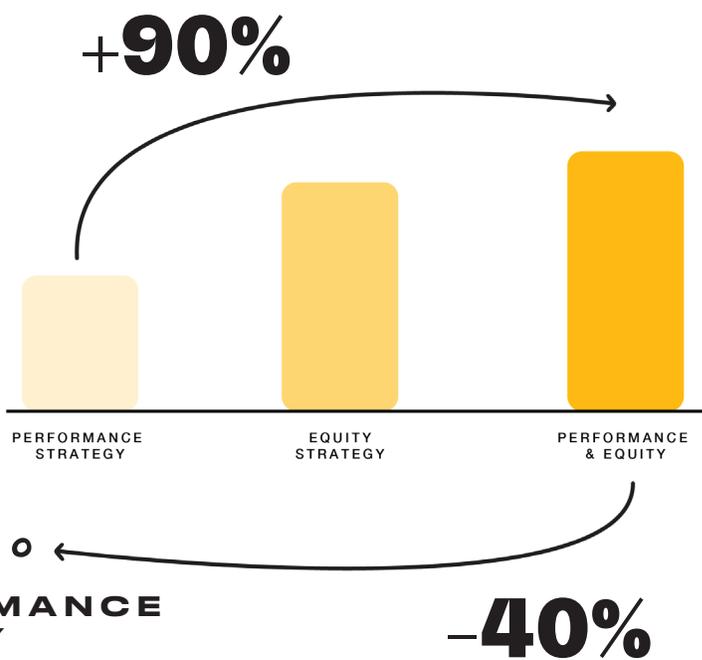
HOW DOES BERA.AI APPROACH THE BRAND VS PERFORMANCE TUG

BERA.ai within the WARC report on "The Multiplier Effect".

Brands that cut brand investment see a 40% ROI drop on performance marketing.

Performance-driven brands that add brand-led marketing see a +90% ROI gain.

The strongest growth comes from **brand X performance**, not brand versus performance.



THE BRAND ADVANTAGE

Median revenue ROI increase when moving from a performance strategy to a mixed approach

THE PERFORMANCE PENALTY

Median revenue ROI decreased when moving from a mixed to a performance strategy.



We don't think about brand versus performance. We think about demand generation & demand capture—you can't have one without the other.

ANDREA BRIMMER



The brand is not mine. Everybody owns the brand—it's just my honor to be able to talk about it.

**ANDREA
BRIMMER**

HOW DOES ALLY ALIGN THE ORGANIZATION AROUND BRAND & PERFORMANCE?

Shared KPIs: Brand health and awareness are included on the scorecards of the CEO, CFO, and senior leaders—not just marketing.

Integrated structure: The marketing team is organized into clear, connected groups (insights & innovation, media & KPIs, creative, measurement, and lifecycle marketing).

Ownership mindset: Employees are empowered through initiatives like stock grants and brand principles (“Do It Right”), creating a company-wide sense of responsibility for the brand.

HOW DOES ALLY STRUCTURE ITS MARKETING ORGANIZATION FOR INTEGRATION?

Ally redesigned its marketing function to break down silos and ensure collaboration across disciplines. The new structure includes:

01. Insights & Innovation – fueling strategy through research, future thinking, AI, and MarTech.

02. Media & KPIs – managing audience strategy, budget allocation, and performance measurement.

03. Creative Execution – overseeing brand storytelling across content, social, and campaigns.

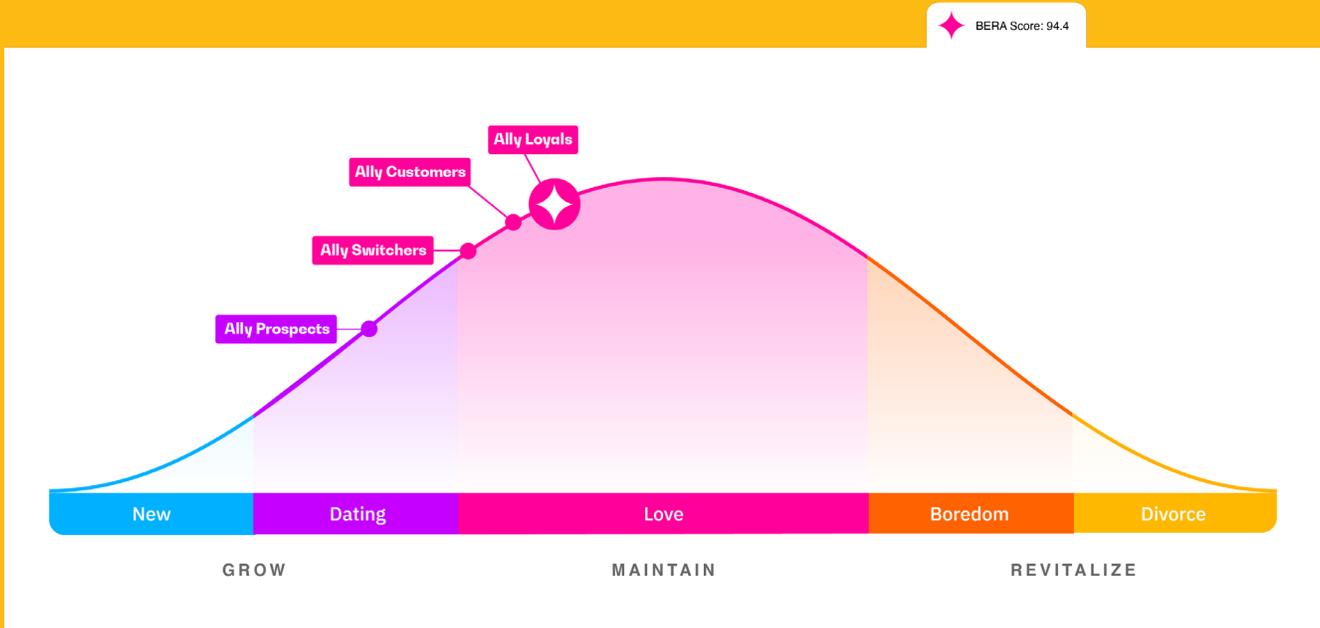
04. Measurement (“Switzerland”) – providing unbiased, centralized reporting directly to the CMO.

05. Lifecycle Marketing – ensuring customer engagement and retention are integrated into the broader strategy.

This design creates clear ownership and accountability while enabling each group to build on the others’ work, ensuring that brand and performance efforts are fully aligned.

Playbook Proof

This is where theory meets tangible results. In this section, we showcase a key visual directly from the BERA platform—the hard data and actionable insights that prove the value of the strategies discussed in this week's episode.



In the last 3 years, Ally has increased its brand equity score, and its customer base. Their core, loyal customers' LTV has strengthened significantly over the last 3 years as well as the number of people that would consider ally.

COMMON MISTAKES TO AVOID

Siloing Teams and Budgets.



When brand and performance teams operate independently, KPIs diverge, and marketing loses coherence.

Short-Termism.



Over-prioritizing clicks and immediate ROI often undermines long-term equity, forcing brands into a “doom loop” of rising acquisition costs.

Lack of Common Language.



Framing the debate as brand vs. performance entrenches conflict. Shared terms like demand generation and demand capture better unite stakeholders.

Neglecting Organizational Alignment.



Without shared scorecards and CEO/CFO buy-in across lines of business, brand is seen as ‘marketing’s job’ rather than a company-wide asset.

EPIISODE TAKEAWAYS

Get alignment with your CEO.

If you don't have the luxury of a company that supports brand, start with the facts. Brand is the engine, performance is the accelerator. Both are essential to sustainable growth.

Define what performance means in your own language and what works for you and your company. Put people on the same side of the table.



In redefining brand & performance, you put people on the same side of the table.

**LINDSEY
WEH KING**



CONTACT

**BERA.ai to activate
your playbook!**

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questions on our
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