ℹ️ content kit key info

Content Kit Key Info

Content Kit name: content kit #10 | Jess Cook | strategic playbook

Notion kit content card

Content brief + quotes: Jess Cook | content brief + quotes

SME interview folder: Jess Cook | 6.2.2025 Interview

Revisions

Go live date: Oct 14, 2025

➡️ strategic playbook

Jess Cook | strategic playbook

Revisions

Recommended publish URL: how-to-build-your-quarterly-marketing-plan

Recommended Title: Build your quarterly marketing plan around these 3 types of strategic pillar

Alternative Titles:
- The 3 strategic pillars you need in every quarterly marketing plan
- How Vector's 2-person marketing team drives enterprise-level growth (without burning out)
- The anti-hustle marketing playbook
- Why doing less gets you more pipeline
- The 3-pillar approach to your quarterly planning

Description metadata (max. 150 characters): Learn how Vector's Head of Marketing drives pipeline growth by sticking to three strategic pillars in every quarter. Do less, achieve more.

Final word count: ~1200

Build your quarterly marketing plan around these 3 strategic pillars

Go from random acts of marketing to a focused approach that makes room for experimentation.

Thinly stretched marketers of the world:

Do less.

This is the anthem of Jess Cook, Head of Marketing at Vector, who in a past life scaled marketing at giants like McDonald's and Kellogg's. Today, her career is looking less Goliath, more David—she recently skyrocketed Vector's pipeline growth with just a two-person marketing team in her first 90 days on the job.

Like many of us, Jess has felt the pain of marketing organizations that mistake activity for strategy.

These teams spread their resources too thin across dozens of tactics (and *"could we just try…"* ad hoc requests), only to end up buried in busywork and divided attention.

As she's moved from Fortune 500s to a startup, Jess has faced new constraints—something she views as a blessing, not a curse. She believes that marketers achieve breakthrough results when they focus on fewer (as in, *three max*), high-impact initiatives, rather than trying to do it all.

[visual: a cartoon of a "marketer" juggling multiple different balls, their hands moving super quickly, while execs (CEO, VP Sales, Founder, Board) toss in even more balls]

Key takeaways: The 3 things you need to know about setting your marketing strategy

- Every quarter, you should set three types of strategic pillar:
    - One proven tactic
    - One calculated bet
    - One bold experiment

- Focus 80% of your budget on those 3 pillars to avoid spreading your marketing team too thin

- To prove marketing ROI, you can't half-run a dozen different initiatives; you need to give enough time and budget to a few distinct projects to see meaningful results

Stop saying yes

Many marketing teams get stuck in a reactive mode, responding to every opportunity they spot and falling into the "say yes to everything" trap.

If you half-heartedly (or half-assedly) execute dozens of initiatives, you end up with a pile of mediocre projects that didn't get the attention or resources they needed to really succeed. The team gets spread too thin, and you struggle to prove ROI—perhaps leading to budget cuts and reduced organizational influence that just digs you deeper into the reactive cycle.

When you're on that hamster wheel, setting a narrower focus can bring some much-needed control back to your function. As Jess explains,

> "When you're a marketer tied to pipeline numbers, you're very reliant on someone *else* being good at their job in order to hit those goals. When so much is out of your control, it's important to add as many things as you *can* control into your strategy."

Her way of doing this? Set three key pillars to focus on every quarter—and ruthlessly table everything else. "When I built the budget for H2, I decided I wanted to go all in on three things, and anything else in the budget was to keep the lights on," she explains.

The "three pillars" you need in every quarterly plan

Pillar 1: Something that already works

Your first pillar should be a successful marketing play that you've run before. Because if it ain't broke...

For Jess, this pillar is **content.** “We already know marketers are digging the content we’re putting out,” she explains. “They love playbooks with a strong point of view, and they want to continue to consume those.”

For Vector, a contact-based advertising solution, she plans to build out a library around topics like:

- How to see who looked at your ads/content (even if they didn’t convert)
- How (and why) to ungate your content
- How to set up ad targeting that converts

This type of pillar lets you squeeze the most out of a proven strategy—and stops you from neglecting what’s already working for you in favor of exclusively chasing the shiny new channel.

[gated download CTA: Build your marketing plan using this template. Fill out what pillars you’re going to focus on each quarter, and how it ladders up to your core marketing outcomes.]

Pillar 2: A new (but sure) bet

Next, pick a pillar you haven’t fully tested yet, but that you have strong conviction will work.

For Jess, that was **paid social.** “We already know what pieces of content are a powerful first touch, and we want to capitalize on that,” she says. “We haven’t done paid media yet, so we’ll try putting some money behind the content we’re creating and see if that brings in new opportunities.”

This is a more experimental pillar, and not all experiments succeed. But even if this pillar doesn’t pan out as expected, you’ll learn a lot by committing to it enough to gather the data you need to adjust course.

Pillar 3: A bold experiment

Marketing is always changing, and building experiments into your strategic planning will help you stay at the forefront of those changes.

Jess's next big swing is **events**. "Really intimate events are big right now," she explains. "How can we sponsor those? How can we put on something similar?"

She intends to focus on what she calls "sidecar" events, or smaller gatherings built around large events that Vector's ICP is likely to attend.

"Our startup budget isn't going to get us a booth at HubSpot's INBOUND conference right now," she explains. "But maybe we could curate a group and take them on a ghost tour of San Francisco as a cool, exclusive experience." This pillar is your chance to flex those creative muscles

[visual: graphic showing the 3 types of pillars and the myriad different options you could focus on for each one. the idea I want to convey is that there are a lot of great strategic pillars marketers could focus on, but they only have 3 slots available in any given quarter]

Title: **The Three-Pillar Approach**

The 3 "pillar slots" to fill:

- One proven tactic
- One calculated bet
- One bold experiment

Things you might fill those slots with:

- Content marketing
- Paid media
- Events
- PR + media relationships
- Video
- Podcast
- Community (in person)
- Community (online)
- Paid search
- SEO / AEO / organic
- Social media
- Email marketing
- Sales enablement
- Lifecycle marketing
- Branding + design
- Influencer marketing

Once your pillars are set, aim to spend 80% of your budget on pillar-related activities. Add a "pillar" field to your financial trackers to hold yourself accountable. Create clear criteria for evaluating whether new initiatives fit into your current pillars—and leave good but out-of-scope ideas in the "parking lot" to revisit at a later date.

Experiment to win

As marketing budgets face increased scrutiny and marketers need to clarify ROI, narrowing your focus will help you bring in results that speak for themselves.

You won't see meaningful success from dozens of half-run projects. What really moves the needle is giving enough time, attention, and budget to a small number of carefully selected experiments.

"We're going to experiment with our three pillars all through this quarter in hopes of getting the proof points we need to expand parts of our budget in Q4," Jess explains.

Her hope is that Vector will help marketers run more of these contained experiments, providing them with the data infrastructure to know which pieces of their marketing strategy are landing for which visitors. "Eventually, you should see the most traveled path from first touch to closed won," she says. "Imagine knowing exactly which content sequences accelerate deals."

Ideally, your three pillars connect to each other to form your own mini-marketing flywheel every quarter. For example: paid ads drive people to your content; content builds a reputation that makes people want to attend your events; and in-person connections at events can turn into digital connections on social and web.

When your pillars work together like this, you're not just running three experiments in isolation. You're building a machine whose whole is greater than the sum of its parts.

➡️ newsletter

content kit newsletter

Revisions

Send date: Oct 14, 2025

Subject line options: ✍️ the 3 things every marketer should focus on

- ✍️ the 3 things every marketer should focus on
- ✍️ the 3 pillars you need in your marketing plan
- ✍️ get off the content hamster wheel
- ✍️ anti-hustle marketing
- ✍️ begone, random acts of marketing
- ✍️ three pillars to rule them all
- ✍️ why whole assing beats half assing
- ✍️ one does not simply do 25 marketing projects
- ✍️ doric, ionic, corinthian

Preview line: How to get off the random acts of marketing hamster wheel.

Description metadata (max. 150 characters): You can do an okay job of a lot of things, or a stellar job of a few. Here's how to focus your quarterly marketing plan.

A lot of marketers mistake activity for strategy.

They get stuck in reactive mode, saying "yes" to every opportunity they spot (because things are changing fast, and there is a lot you can experiment with) and every ad hoc request they get (because who doesn't love to send their marketer a *what if we just try…* message?).

But where does that leave you?

Thin and sort of stretched—like butter scraped over too much bread.

When you're on the "random acts of marketing" hamster wheel, the only way off is to do less, not more. Setting a narrower focus can bring some much-needed control back to your function.

This week, we're sharing the 3 marketing pillars worth your attention (and budget).

In this issue:

- 3️⃣Three strategies for every quarter
- 🤖 OpenAI launches AgentKit
- 📝 Behind the scenes of a client project
- 🧙Fellowship of the funnel

–

Today's headline: Three pillars to rule them all

Jess Cook, Head of Marketing at [Vector](), believes that less is more.

In past lives she scaled marketing at giants like McDonald's and Kellogg's—and more recently, she skyrocketed Vector's pipeline growth with just a two-person marketing team in her first 90 days on the job.

How'd she do it?

"When I built the budget for H2, I decided I wanted to go all in on three things, and anything else in the budget was to keep the lights on," she explains.

Three priorities, and no more. Here's what they should be:

1. Something that already works. This is the tried-and-true marketing play that's currently bringing you success.

For Jess, this was content. The marketers Vector writes for already like their playbooks, so Jess is planning to build out the library.

2. A new (but sure) bet. This is something you haven't committed to yet—maybe you've just dabbled in it, maybe you haven't tried it at all—that you have strong conviction will work.

Jess is opting to experiment with paid social, as a way to drive more attention to the content she's putting out.

3. A bold experiment. Build innovation into your marketing function by explicitly making room for the big swings. Each quarter, choose to dedicate some time, attention, and budget to uncharted territory.

Jess plans to build out Vector's events strategy, specifically for what she calls "sidecar" events—those small in-person gatherings built around a larger conference.

Once your pillars are set, aim to spend 80% of your budget on pillar-related activities. Create clear criteria for evaluating whether new initiatives fit into your current pillars—and leave good but out-of-scope ideas in the "parking lot" to revisit at a later date.

[visual: tbd graphic from playbook]

—

Signal in the noise

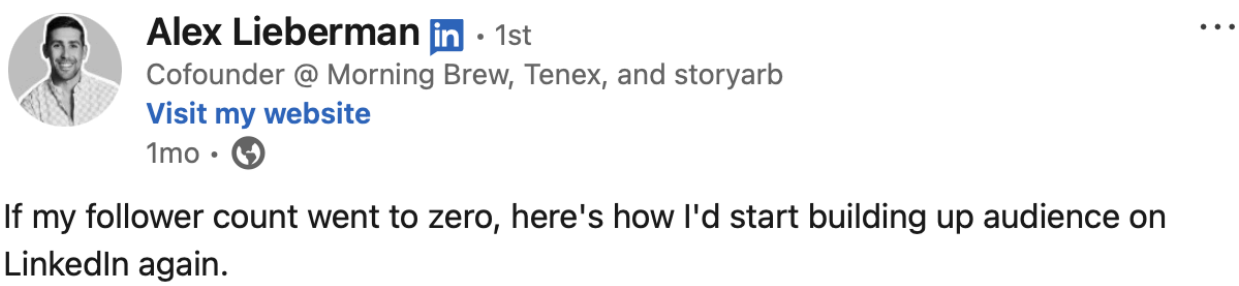
From our #marketing-inspo channel to yours.

Campaigns that got us talking: Dictionary publisher Merriam-Webster just released their latest large language model…their Twelfth Edition Collegiate Dictionary. "There's artificial intelligence…and then there's actual intelligence." Art.

AI spotlight: OpenAI launched AgentKit, which makes it easier to create multi-step, multi-agent workflows in one place. Our prediction: You're about to start seeing a lot more apps that *actually* go and do stuff on your behalf (update your project tracker based on your Slack messages, comparison shop, curate news stories, maybe even all that end-to-end travel planning stuff we've been talking about for years but haven't quite cracked).

Stuff that made us scroll back up: If you woke up tomorrow with a follower count of zero, where would you start to rebuild your audience from scratch? Our co-founder Alex shares [his 5-step approach].

[visual: screenshot of the top of Alex's post]



–

Goings on about the 'arb

House notes from our corner of the internet.

When we work with our clients, we like to start at the end.

Specifically, we like to work backwards from the question: What is the one idea we want the reader to walk away with?

(And then we lean on subject matter experts to flesh out thoughtful, memorable, data-backed answers to this question.)

For one client in the financial planning space, the takeaway they wanted to highlight was: **There are some financial decisions that can be undone and some that can't.** And even when you *can* walk back through a door, you might return to a different situation than the one you left.

Check out [the full piece we wrote with them here].

—

Strong opinions

Tell us what you really think.

Your Middle Earth marketing persona is most like… Vote here.

- Frodo: Small player, but carrying all of the burden
- Gandalf: Providing strategic wisdom (and occasionally resurrecting old ideas)
- Legolas: It's all about precision targeting
- Gimli: Digging deep in the data mines

Previously we asked you how you'd spend a $50K ad budget. Notably, more of you would opt for collaborations with emerging creators than double down on tried-and-true performance ads.

(This is the same logic that keeps people at the blackjack table…and that mints the biggest winners.)

[visual of responses]

—

You can do an okay job of twenty-five things, or a stellar job at three.

Guess which route is going to help you prove marketing ROI?

The projects that move the needle are the projects that get the time, attention, and budget they need to actually succeed. And when you narrow your focus to a few key projects—and table the rest—you start to move strategically, not at random.

Sometimes the most radical thing you can do as a marketer is simply finish what you started.

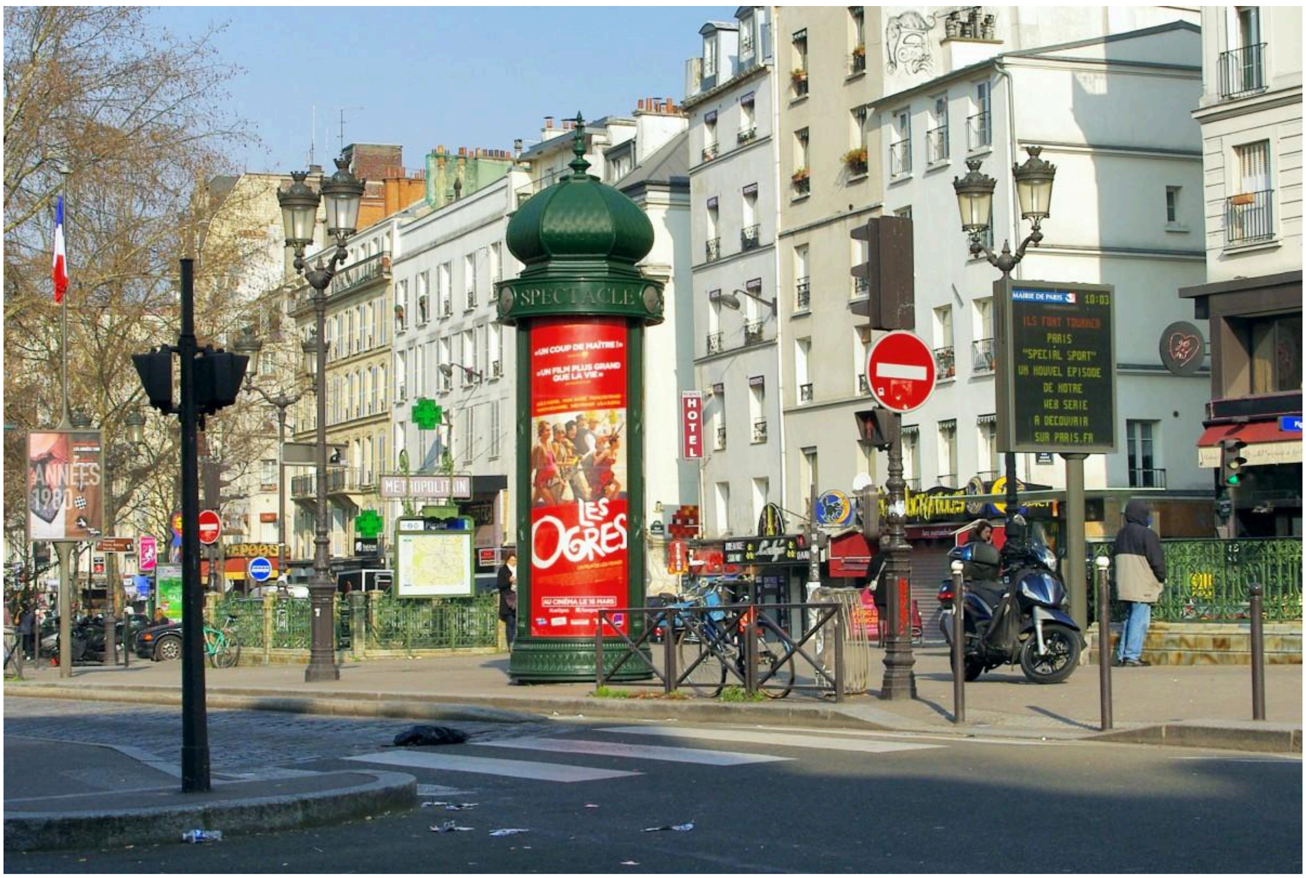
See y'all next time.

— the storyarb writers' room 🫡

Oh! And another thing… Those fancy, ad-covered, cast-iron columns you see on the streets of Paris? They're called Morris Columns. Circa the 1870s, they provided a practical solution to chaotic posting of ads across every surface of the city. Today there are over 500 across the city—iconic features of the Parisian landscape.

(And that's on literal marketing pillars.)

[visual: image of morris columns in Paris]



➡️ social posts

content kit #10 | exec/company social

storyarb|

Initial draft

Poll

✅ 10/10 (Stew) Poll from newsletter

Some traits are learned.
Others are forged in the fires of marketing.

You might be a real one if you've ever:

→ Launched a campaign during a platform outage
→ Hit MQL goals and still got asked "But what did it do?"
→ Rewrote subject lines on a Friday because "the vibe was off"
→ Been asked to "make it go viral" with $200 and hope

Hard to say if that makes you Frodo or Gimli. But we've got a poll for that.

Vote below (or in this week's 'The Standard'). And be sure to tag your fellowship.

[Poll] Your Middle Earth marketing persona is most like…

- Frodo: Small player, but carrying all of the burden
- Gandalf: Providing strategic wisdom (and occasionally resurrecting old ideas)
- Legolas: It's all about precision targeting
- Gimli: Digging deep in the data mines

POLL ALT (shortened for LinkedIn ruuuuules):

- Frodo: Carrying all the burden
- Gandalf: Strategy + resurrection

- Legolas: Precision targeting
- Gimli: Data miner at heart

(Abby) Second poll — choose your own adventure

If you've ever caught yourself judging success by how many tabs are open, you're not alone.

We've been there. And we built a framework to fix it. I'll link that in the comments for ya.

But for now– tell me what hurts 😮‍💨

[Poll] What's the hardest part of doing less as a marketing leader?

- Saying "no" to good ideas
- Proving ROI on fewer bets
- Breaking the reactive habit
- Feeling like you're not doing "enough"

Comment

Keep this tab open: [link to playbook]

ALT:

If your marketing team could only focus on three things next quarter, what would they be?

You have to choose a:

1. Proven tactic
2. Smart bet
3. Bold experiment

Curious what's making everyone's "top 3."

[Poll] What's your Q4 'proven tactic' Q4 in your marketing plan?

1️⃣Content + Thought Leadership
2️⃣Paid Media
3️⃣Events + Community
4️⃣Brand + Design

Company social

✅ 10/16 Company 1: Longform playbook promo

If your quarterly marketing plan feels like a buffet of half-baked ideas and scattered ad hoc requests…

This playbook is your permission slip to do less, better.

Jess Cook, Head of Marketing at Vector, has worked with giants like McDonald's and Kellogg's. But she's getting more pipeline now with a 2-person team.

We asked her 'how', too.
Every quarter, she commits to 3 strategic pillars:

4. One proven tactic
5. One smart bet
6. One bold experiment

And the results speak for themselves.
→ More focus
→ Cleaner budgets
→ Easier attribution
→ No more "why are we doing this again?" Slack threads

This week's playbook walks through how to build a quarterly plan around your real goals, say no (with receipts), and experiment without spinning out.

If your team is chasing too many threads and struggling to prove ROI, this one's for you👇

Comment:

Proven, smart, and bold. We see you: https://www.storyarb.com/blog/how-to-build-your-quarterly-marketing-plan?utm_source=linkedin&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=company_social

✅ 10/15 Company 2: Shortform playbook promo

Marketing can't be a race to do more. We're tired, man.

But it can be a race to do the right stuff, with the right purpose.

This week's playbook has the planning method that helped a 2-person team grow pipeline faster than most 10-person teams:

🏎️ 1 proven tactic
🏁 1 sure bet
🏆 1 big swing

Full framework in the comments for ya.

Comment:

Race you there: https://www.storyarb.com/blog/how-to-build-your-quarterly-marketing-plan?utm_source=linkedin&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=company_social

✅ 10/14: Company 3: Newsletter promo

If you just walked out of Q4 planning with something that looks like:

- A dusty Airtable full of ideas no one has time to execute

- A “revised” budget that’s just last quarter’s plan with half the dollars

- A vague OKR to “increase awareness” and zero tactical clarity on how

We’ve got your reset button in this week’s newsletter.

Jess Cook, Head of Marketing at Vector, built her H2 plan around 3 strategic pillars—and hit growth targets with a 2-person team.

📉 Say no to misaligned ideas (with data)
📈 Prove ROI with focused execution
🧠 Keep your team energized, not buried in busywork

This is the plan high-growth teams are using:
https://www.storyarb.com/newsletter?utm_source=linkedin&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=company_social

SME social

(Jess Cook) SME 1: Playbook post

Every quarter, I ask the same question:

“What are the 3 things we’re going all in on?”

Not 8.
Not 12.
Three.

One thing we know works.
One thing we think will work.
One thing that might not work, but is worth trying.

It’s how we plan and how we get results we can actually measure at Vector.

Just worked with storyarb to break it all down in a new playbook:
→ How to set strategic pillars

→ What to say no to
→ How we're using content, paid, and events right now

Full gist in the comments.

Comment:

[link to playbook]

(Jess Cook) SME 2: Newsletter post

Built my reputation on this marketing plan at Vector.

🎶*Life of a Marketer* 🎶 quarterly setlist:

🎯Keep the hits (we know they work)
💡Make the deep cut I know deserves airtime
🤞Create one wildcard I hope turns into a crowd favorite

That's the structure.

Three pillars and zero fluff.

If you're tired of trying to do 17 things with a team of 2 (same), the storyarb newsletter lays out how to do less, better.

Tune in with the link in the comments.

Comment:

Every note: [link to playbook]

Exec social

✅ 10/15 (Abby) Exec social 1: Playbook promo

We have a junk drawer in our kitchen. It's the one you hope guests don't open.

You know the one—half-dead batteries, birthday candles, cords for devices you haven't owned in five years.

Everything technically useful, but none of it is REALLY used.

I've been in one too many quarterly planning meetings that feel like that junk drawer.

They're filled with "quick ideas," old campaigns we might revive, and half-built projects that never got a proper burial.
They clutter focus and eat budget.
And they make it impossible to see what's really driving results.

Jess Cook, Head of Marketing at Vector, calls her solution to the junk drawer the *Three-Pillar Rule*:
1️⃣One proven tactic
2️⃣One calculated bet
3️⃣One bold experiment

That's it. Three slots per quarter.
Everything else goes in its proper place— or the trash.

If you're tired of the looking at the mess every 90 days, we've got you covered in this week's playbook ⬇️

Now someone come do my kitchen drawer.

Comment:

Clean house:
https://www.storyarb.com/blog/how-to-build-your-quarterly-marketing-plan?utm_source=linkedin&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=abby

✅ 10/16 (Abby) Exec social 2: Newsletter promo

If you're always checking whether someone's Slack light is green,
you're probably running your marketing strategy the wrong way.

Hustle culture trained us to equate motion with impact– fill calendars, chase tasks, and call it strategy.

But constant activity isn't proof of progress (or pipeline). It's usually a symptom of panic.

This week's newsletter has a beautiful, SIMPLE strategy that will shorten your quarterly planning meetings and help you off the hamster wheel.

It's the kind of structure that lets small teams punch above their weight and large teams stop drowning in their own complexity. Give it a good look. If nothing else you're Slack will remain green while you scroll 👀

Comment:

The new Standard: [link to newsletter]

✅ 10/15 (Alex) Exec social 3: Playbook promo

I'm not anti-ambition, but I am anti-chaos.

Most marketers confuse motion with progress.

They say yes to every "quick idea."
Run 12 half-baked projects.
Then wonder why nothing moves the needle.

Jess Cook does it differently.

She's running a two-person marketing team at Vector, and instead of trying to do everything, she picks 3 things per quarter:

1️⃣A proven tactic (repeat what already works)
2️⃣A calculated bet (test a new channel you believe in)
3️⃣A bold swing (go weird, go big)

It's not about doing less for the sake of it.
It's about doing fewer things better.

The result is:

• Faster proof of ROI
• Clearer alignment
• A repeatable flywheel, quarter after quarter

If your Q4 plan feels bloated, scattered, or reactive, read this playbook 👇

Comment:

Happy building: [link to playbook]

(Alex) Exec social 4: Choose your own adventure

500 rows of tasks.
Dozens of campaigns.
And no clear priorities.

Most marketing plans look like a Trello board that's been hit by a tornado.

But the highest-performing ones I've seen follow one simple rule:

3 pillars per quarter.

We're using this at Tenex right now.
Our Q4 pillars:

- [Insert proven tactic]
- [Insert new bet]
- [Insert big swing]

→ 80% of your resources go to those 3
→ Everything else? Parking lot.

The clarity is unreal.

Full playbook from the 'arb (with examples) here → [link to playbook]

💡 quarterly marketing plan

Your Quarterly Marketing Plan

The 3-Pillar Framework in Action

Based on: [Build your quarterly marketing plan around these 3 strategic pillars]

How to use this planner

Fill out **Q1 in hyper-detail** (that's your execution roadmap). Sketch **Q2 in rough themes** (you'll refine it later). Map **H2 in broad strokes** that connect to your company's big picture.

Remember: You're committing to **3 strategic pillars per quarter**. That's it. Anything else stays in the parking lot.

🎯 NEXT QUARTER [Q1] — Hyper-Detailed Planning

Quarter: __________________ (e.g., Q4 2025)

Your 3 Strategic Pillars

Pillar 1: Something That Already Works

The proven tactic you're doubling down on

What is it? (e.g., content marketing, email nurture, paid search, events)

```None
Your answer:
```

Why this pillar? What proof points do you have that this works?

```
None
Your answer:
```

Specific initiatives:

- Initiative 1: ____
    - Owner: ____
    - Timeline: ____
    - Budget: $____
    - Success metrics: ____
- Initiative 2: ____
    - Owner: ____
    - Timeline: ____
    - Budget: $____
    - Success metrics: ____
- Initiative 3: ____
    - Owner: ____
    - Timeline: ____
    - Budget: $____
    - Success metrics: ____

How does this connect to your other pillars?

```
None
Your answer:
```

Pillar 2: A New (But Sure) Bet

Something you haven't fully tested yet, but you have strong conviction will work

What is it?

```None
Your answer:
```

Why now? What signals give you confidence this will work?

```None
Your answer:
```

Specific initiatives:

- Initiative 1: _______________________________________
  - Owner: _______________________________________
  - Timeline: _______________________________________
  - Budget: $_______________________________________
  - Success metrics: _______________________________________
  - What you're testing: _______________________________________
- Initiative 2: _______________________________________
  - Owner: _______________________________________
  - Timeline: _______________________________________
  - Budget: $_______________________________________

- Success metrics: ____
- What you're testing: ____

What data will prove or disprove this bet?

```
None
Your answer:
```

How does this connect to your other pillars?

```
None
Your answer:
```

Pillar 3: A Bold Experiment

Your big creative swing to stay at the forefront

What is it?

```
None
Your answer:
```

Why this experiment? What's changing in your space that makes this worth exploring?

```
None
Your answer:
```

Specific initiatives:

- Initiative 1: ____
  - Owner: ____
  - Timeline: ____
  - Budget: $____
  - Success metrics: ____
  - What you'll learn (even if it fails): ____

What's your hypothesis? If this works, what impact will it have?

```
None
Your answer:
```

How does this connect to your other pillars?

```
None
Your answer:
```

Q1 Budget Allocation

Total quarterly budget: $_______________________________________

Pillar 1 allocation: $______________ **(%) Pillar 2 allocation: $**__________ **(%) Pillar 3 allocation: $**__________ **(%) Keeping the lights on: $**__________ (____%)

Aim for 80% of budget on your 3 pillars

Q1 Team Assignments

Team Member	Primary Pillar	Secondary Responsibilities	% Time on Pillars

---

Q1 Milestones + Check-ins

Month 1 goals:

- ______________________________
- ______________________________
- ______________________________

Month 2 goals:

- ______________________________
- ______________________________
- ______________________________

Month 3 goals:

- ______________________________
- ______________________________
- ______________________________

Monthly check-in questions:

- Are we still focused on our 3 pillars, or are we getting distracted?
- What's working better than expected?
- What needs to be adjusted?
- What requests have we said "no" to, and why?

Q1 Parking Lot

Good ideas that don't fit your current pillars — revisit in future quarters

Idea	Why it's parked	Potential future quarter

📍 FOLLOWING QUARTER [Q2] — Rough Themes

Quarter: __________________ (e.g., Q1 2026)

Pillar 1 Theme:

What proven tactic will you continue or evolve?

```None
Your answer:
```

Pillar 2 Theme:

Will you expand your Q1 bet, or try a different calculated risk?

```None
Your answer:
```

Pillar 3 Theme:

What's your next bold experiment?

```None
Your answer:
```

How Q2 builds on Q1:

What will you scale up? What will you sunset?

```None
Your answer:
```

Q2 considerations:

- Key company events/launches: ____
- Anticipated budget changes: ____
- Team capacity shifts: ____
- External factors (conferences, industry trends): ____

🗓️ SECOND HALF [H2] — Broad Strokes

Quarters: _________________ + _________________ (e.g., Q2 + Q3 2026)

H2 Strategic Priorities

High-level focus areas that align with company vision

Priority 1:

```
Your answer:
```

Priority 2:

```
Your answer:
```

Priority 3:

```
None
Your answer:
```

Key H2 Anchors

Major company milestones: (Product launches, funding rounds, company anniversaries, strategic shifts)

```
None
Your answer:
```

Industry events: (Conferences, busy seasons, competitive launches)

```
None
Your answer:
```

Anticipated team changes: (New hires, role shifts, capacity changes)

```
None
Your answer:
```

H2 Themes to Explore

Not commitments — just directions you're considering

Potential Pillar 1 focus areas:

- ____________________
- ____________________

Potential Pillar 2 focus areas:

- ____________________
- ____________________

Potential Pillar 3 focus areas:

- ____________________
- ____________________

🧠 Final Check: Does Your Plan Pass the Test?

Before you commit, ask yourself:

The Focus Test:

- [ ] Do my 3 pillars represent 80% of my budget and team time?
- [ ] Can I clearly explain why each pillar matters?
- [ ] Have I ruthlessly tabled everything that doesn't fit?

The Connection Test:

- [ ] Do my 3 pillars connect to form a mini-flywheel?
- [ ] Does each pillar feed into or amplify the others?

- [ ] Can I draw the path from first touch to closed won?

The Reality Test:

- [ ] Is this actually doable with my team + budget?
- [ ] Have I built in time to experiment + gather data?
- [ ] Do I have clear criteria for evaluating new opportunities that come up?

The "So What?" Test:

- [ ] Will this plan help me prove marketing ROI?
- [ ] Does this align with what leadership cares about?
- [ ] If I execute this perfectly, will it move the needle?

Remember: You can do an okay job at 25 things, or a stellar job at 3.

Choose wisely.