QUARTERLY PLANNING GUIDE

Marketing Rocks for Advisory Firms

Six quarterly priorities that turn scattered marketing into a growth system — built specifically for RIAs, wealth managers, and financial advisors.

What a Marketing Rock Is

A **Rock** is a single, meaningful priority you commit to completing in one quarter — 90 days. The term comes from EOS, but you don't have to run on EOS to use it. Most advisory teams already think in quarterly goals; this simply applies that discipline to marketing.

Why marketing needs Rocks

Marketing is where advisory firms leak the most time and money, because the work tends to be reactive — a one-off webinar here, a website refresh there, a burst of LinkedIn posts that fizzles out. Rocks replace scattered activity with a short list of **finished, foundational projects**. At CMO Alpha, the principle is simple: strategy before execution. Every Rock in this guide builds a piece of the foundation that makes your campaigns, content, and outreach actually work.

80%

Aim to complete about 80% of your Rocks each quarter. Hit 100% every time and your Rocks aren't ambitious enough. Drop below half and you took on too many. Pick few, and finish them.

Everything ladders up to the client journey

Every prospect moves through stages before—and after—hiring an advisor. Each Rock that follows strengthens a specific stage:

Awareness › Exploration › Evaluation › Conversion › Onboarding › Servicing › Loyalty › Advocacy

Anatomy of a Strong Rock

Singular & owned
One priority, one owner. Even in a small firm, put a name on it — shared ownership is no ownership.

SMART
Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Time-bound to the 90-day quarter.

Tied to the journey
It strengthens a specific stage of your client journey, from Awareness through Advocacy.

Foundational, not busy
When it's done, it keeps paying off. You're building a system, not checking off a task.

THE FINISH-LINE TEST

If you can't describe exactly what "done" looks like before you start, it isn't a Rock yet. Define the finish line first.

Choose one or two — not all six

The six Rocks that follow are a menu, not a checklist for a single quarter. Pick the one or two that fix your weakest journey stage, finish them, then come back next quarter. Foundation Rocks (1 and 2) come first — you can't measure or promote what you haven't defined.

01

FOUNDATION · AWARENESS

Define Your Ideal Client & Priority Niche

WHY IT MATTERS

Firms that try to serve everyone end up speaking to no one. The fastest path to growth is knowing exactly who you serve best — by life stage, profession, or financial situation — and pointing the majority of your marketing at them.

YOUR ROCK

Document your ideal-client profile and rank your target niches in priority order, with a marketing allocation assigned to each.

SCOPE IT — MAKE IT SMART

S Write a one-page ideal-client profile — who they are, what keeps them up at night, why they choose you — and list your niches in priority order.

M Done when the profile exists, the team agrees on it, and each niche has a percentage of marketing effort assigned.

A Use what you already know. Your best existing clients are the template for your ideal one.

R Expect debate. There is always a hierarchy — resist the urge to split effort evenly across niches.

T 90 days, including time to pressure-test the profile against your actual book of business.

DONE LOOKS LIKE

A one-page profile and a ranked niche list (e.g., 60% pre-retirees, 30% business owners, 10% other) the whole team can recite from memory.

02

EVALUATION

Clarify How You Describe What You Do

WHY IT MATTERS

Prospects can't choose an advisor they can't understand. "Comprehensive wealth management" tells them nothing. When your services are described differently on your website, in your reviews, and in conversation, you create doubt at the exact moment you need to build confidence.

> **YOUR ROCK**
>
> **Write clear, consistent descriptions of your core services — what each is, who it's for, the problem it solves, and the outcome — then use them everywhere.**

SCOPE IT — MAKE IT SMART

- **S** Draft a short, plain-language description for each core service or offer.
- **M** Done when every core service has an approved description used across web, email, and prospect materials.
- **A** Keep it brief. Clarity beats completeness — a confused prospect never converts.
- **R** Get sign-off from everyone who talks to prospects so the whole firm uses the same language.
- **T** 90 days to write and adopt; review annually.

DONE LOOKS LIKE

A single source-of-truth document of service descriptions, in active use across all client-facing materials.

! Compliance: have your CCO review descriptions. Avoid performance promises or anything that reads as a guarantee under the SEC Marketing Rule.

03

AWARENESS → ADVOCACY

Map Your Content to the Client Journey

WHY IT MATTERS

Most advisors create content at random, and most of it speaks only to people already ready to buy. Real growth comes from supporting the whole journey — helping prospects discover you, learn from you, trust you, choose you, and refer you.

YOUR ROCK

Choose one to three content types you can publish consistently, and map each piece to a stage of the client journey.

SCOPE IT — MAKE IT SMART

- **S** Pick 1–3 formats (e.g., a monthly newsletter, short LinkedIn posts, one cornerstone guide) and assign each to a journey stage.
- **M** Done when you have a simple plan showing format, cadence, and the stage each format serves.
- **A** Start small. Consistency beats intensity — a steady newsletter outperforms a sporadic blitz.
- **R** Match cadence to capacity. Better to publish monthly forever than weekly for six weeks.
- **T** 90 days to define the plan and publish the first full cycle.

DONE LOOKS LIKE

A one-page content plan in use, with at least one full cycle published and every piece tied to a journey stage.

04

ALL STAGES · MEASUREMENT

Build Your Marketing Scorecard

WHY IT MATTERS

Most advisory firms can't answer a simple question: is our marketing working? Vanity metrics like followers and impressions feel productive but don't move the firm. A scorecard keeps you focused on the few numbers that actually signal growth.

> **YOUR ROCK**
>
> **Choose three to five marketing metrics that connect to firm growth, and set up a simple way to update them on a regular cadence.**

SCOPE IT — MAKE IT SMART

- **S** Define 3–5 metrics — e.g., qualified prospect meetings booked, new clients from marketing, referrals, email-list growth.
- **M** Done when the metrics are defined and updated on a set cadence (monthly or quarterly).
- **A** Start with what you can already measure. Add the harder metrics to a wish list.
- **R** Keep it high-level. If you can't measure something reliably, leave it off until you can.
- **T** 90 days to define, get agreement, and stand up the tracking.

DONE LOOKS LIKE

A one-page scorecard with 3–5 metrics, a named owner, and a recurring update date on the calendar.

05

CONVERSION · ATTRIBUTION

Track Where Your Prospects Come From

WHY IT MATTERS

If you don't know which efforts produce clients, you can't double down on what works or cut what's wasting money. Most firms guess. A simple lead-source habit turns guesses into decisions.

YOUR ROCK

Set up a reliable way to capture how every new prospect found you, and review it each quarter.

SCOPE IT — MAKE IT SMART

- **S** Add a "How did you hear about us?" step to your intake, and define your conversion events (form fills, calls, booked meetings).
- **M** Done when lead source is captured for new prospects and reviewed at least quarterly.
- **A** Start with the tools you already have — your CRM, your booking link, your website form.
- **R** Begin with what's trackable now. Add call tracking or deeper analytics later if needed.
- **T** 90 days, including testing that the data actually records.

DONE LOOKS LIKE

Every new prospect has a recorded source, and you can name your top two or three channels with confidence.

06

ADVOCACY

Systematize Referrals & Centers of Influence

WHY IT MATTERS

Referrals and centers of influence — CPAs, attorneys, and other trusted professionals — are the highest-trust, shortest-cycle source of new clients for advisory firms, and the most neglected. Most firms let referrals happen by accident. A light nurture system makes them happen on purpose.

> **YOUR ROCK**
>
> **Build a simple, repeatable process for staying in front of your referral sources and centers of influence.**

SCOPE IT — MAKE IT SMART

- **S** List your active referral sources and COIs, and define the touchpoints — calls, lunches, introductions, a useful resource — you'll make on a set rhythm.
- **M** Done when the list exists and touchpoints are scheduled and tracked.
- **A** A spreadsheet or your CRM is enough to start. The point is consistency, not software.
- **R** Keep the cadence realistic so the system survives a busy quarter.
- **T** Start immediately and build the rhythm across the quarter.

DONE LOOKS LIKE

A tracked list of referral sources and COIs with scheduled touchpoints — so the relationship outlasts any single contact.

Putting It to Work

Your quarterly rhythm

1. **Choose.** At the start of the quarter, pick the one or two Rocks that fix your weakest stage of the client journey.
2. **Check in weekly.** A five-minute look at progress keeps a Rock from quietly slipping to the last week of the quarter.
3. **Aim for 80%.** Done and imperfect beats perfect and unfinished. Capture what's left and roll it forward.
4. **Reset.** New quarter, new Rocks — building on the foundation the last ones created.

Marketing should move you from scattered to confident.

CMO Alpha is the strategic marketing leadership behind RIAs and advisory firms that want disciplined growth systems, not scattered tactics. If you'd like a partner to turn these foundations into a working growth engine — strategy first, then execution — let's talk.

cmoalpha.com

Listed on the Kitces Advisor Services Map — All-in-One Marketing.