Winning brands have stopped thinking in silos

Smart systems close the gap between central control and local execution, says **Christopher Brown,** Marvia's Director of North America.

"Our current processes are starting to break down. Obviously, this can't support our expected growth."

I heard this from a franchise just last week, and it perfectly captures what I see across the industry: franchise brands hitting a wall where their homegrown marketing processes simply can't keep up with growth.

Nearly every franchise marketing leader I speak with faces the same challenge. The central team is drowning in localization requests, while franchisees are either waiting for relevant content or creating their own off-brand materials. This gap between central and local marketing represents one of the biggest untapped opportunities in franchising.

Most brands approach this by adding layers – more designers, more approval workflows, more review steps. But here's what I've learned from dozens of conversations with franchise marketers: this isn't a capacity problem, it's a systems problem.

One pizza franchise creative director told me his team was constantly fielding requests, but couldn't respond quickly because of a clunky vendor setup. "We spend too much time going back and forth with our current vendor on template setup," he told me. What should have taken minutes was taking days.

Here's the proof. One franchise I worked with was trying to find the budget to add two new designers to support an already overworked creative team. For a fraction of that cost, they discovered they could shorten delivery timelines, maintain brand consistency, and significantly increase local marketing output. They didn't need more people – they needed better systems.

The franchises getting it right share three key pillars. First, they make it easy. Franchisees aren't professional marketers – they're small business owners managing day-to-day operations. An e-bike franchise customer put it best: "Dealers use our platform constantly." When it's genuinely easy to use, adoption skyrockets.

Second, they make it scalable. Smart templating changes everything. A Portland franchisee should see their local address and offers automatically appear on their content. Phoenix should see something different, all without manual effort. One restaurant franchise saved hours using this kind of automation: "Instead of our designers customizing 60 different Facebook posts, the system does it automatically."

And third, they make it connected. Winning brands have stopped thinking in silos. Local promotions, social updates, print materials, and timing coordination all happen from one central platform, creating speed advantages while competitors shuffle materials between teams.

The results speak for themselves. One global pizza franchise we work with tracks performance between participating and non-participating stores. "Participating stores turn out to have better performance, not only in sales and order growth but also in profitability," their marketing director told me.

But here's the key insight: you can't just launch a platform and expect adoption. As one experienced franchise marketer said, "You have to think in advance. How am I going to use it? How am I going to integrate it into our marketing strategy?" The most successful implementations treat this as a strategic initiative – not just a tech rollout.

The central versus local marketing challenge isn't going away. The franchises winning today have turned it into a competitive advantage. It starts with recognizing this isn't about hiring more people or adding more approval steps – it's about building systems that scale, making both your central team and your franchisees more effective.

In other words, get the systems right, and everything else follows.