

# Marketing Watch

## C-Suite Outlook: What Marketers Need to Know

January 27, 2022



# Critical questions for today

- What is keeping CEOs up at night?
- What are the issues that CCOs, CMOs and their teams can tackle?
- What insights do we have that might guide those actions?
- What questions are on your minds?



# Today's Hosts



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Consumer Research  
**The Conference Board**



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Center Leader, Marketing &  
Communications  
**The Conference Board**

# C-SUITE OUTLOOK 2022 Reset and Reimagine

## Surviving and Thriving in a Uniquely Challenging Business Environment

Inflation, labor and supply upheavals, and a work culture transformation are top of mind for CEOs in 2022.

This is The Conference Board's 23rd annual survey of business leaders around the world.

Which trends are transient, and which will endure?



Download the full report:  
[www.conferenceboard.org/csuiteoutlook](http://www.conferenceboard.org/csuiteoutlook)



# External Factors: C-Suite Outlook 2022

## Pandemic disruptions, inflation, and labor shortages to shape 2022 business environment in major economies

Recession risk is higher for CEOs in Europe and China

Q: Select the external factors that you think will have the greatest impact on your business next year.

CEOs GLOBALLY		US CEOs		Europe CEOs		China CEOs		Japan CEOs	
COVID-19 related disruptions	1	Labor shortages	1	Rising inflation	1	COVID-19 related disruptions	1	COVID-19 related disruptions	1
Rising inflation	2	Rising inflation	2	Recession risk	2	Recession risk	2	Impact of climate change	2
Labor shortages	3	Supply chain disruptions	3	Supply chain disruptions	3	Changes in consumer behavior	3	Labor shortages	3
Supply chain disruptions	4	COVID-19-related disruptions	4	Labor shortages	4	Rising inflation	4	Changes in consumer behavior	3
Changes in consumer behavior	5	Cybersecurity	5	Global political instability	5	Global political instability	4	Recession risk	5
Recession risk	6	Recession risk	6	Volatility in commodity prices	6	Margin compression	6	Volatility in energy prices	6
Global political instability	7	Regulation	6	Volatility in energy prices	7	Global trade disruptions	6	Global political instability	7
Margin compression	8	Changes in consumer behavior	8	Cybersecurity	8	Supply chain disruptions	8	Cybersecurity	7
Cybersecurity	9	Global rise in authoritarianism	9	Regulation	9	Labor shortages	9	Supply chain disruptions	9
Global trade disruptions	10	Corporate tax rates	9	COVID-19-related disruptions	10	More agile competitors	10	Global trade disruptions	9

Note: 917 CEOs responded globally.

Source: The Conference Board® C-Suite Outlook 2022



# Internal issues: C-Suite Outlook 2022

## Talent is the top priority for CEOs globally in 2022

Cost cutting as a priority drops to 9th place in 2022 among CEOs globally from 4th place in 2021.

Q: Select the internal issues your company will focus on in the coming year.

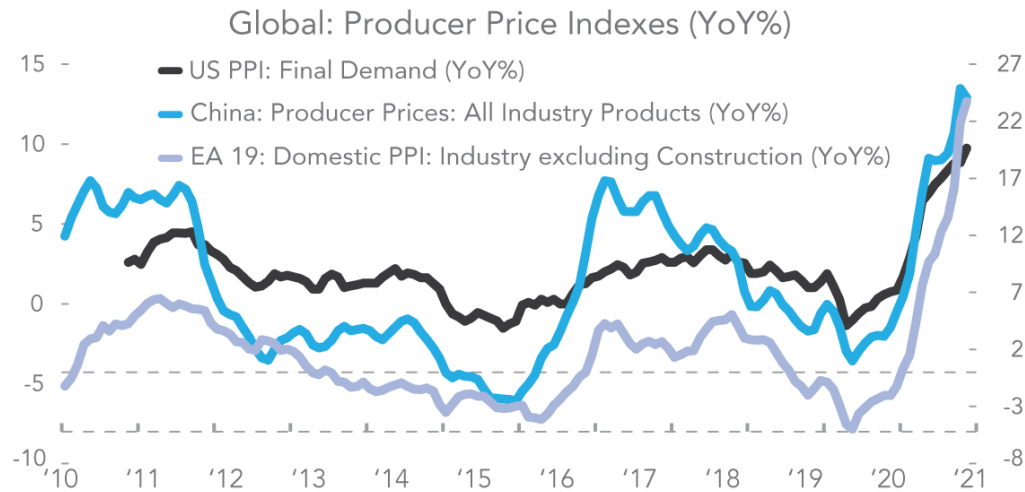
CEOs GLOBALLY	US CEOs	Europe CEOs	China CEOs	Japan CEOs
Attract and retain talent <b>1</b>	Attract and retain talent <b>1</b>	Attract and retain talent <b>1</b>	Attract and retain talent <b>1</b>	Attract and retain talent <b>1</b>
Accelerate pace of digital transformation <b>2</b>	Modify business model <b>2</b>	Accelerate pace of digital transformation <b>2</b>	Improve cash flow <b>2</b>	Develop "Next Gen" leaders <b>2</b>
Improve cash flow <b>3</b>	Develop "Next Gen" leaders <b>3</b>	Focus more on sustainability <b>3</b>	Focus more on sustainability <b>3</b>	Accelerate pace of digital transformation <b>3</b>
Develop "Next Gen" leaders <b>4</b>	Improve cash flow <b>4</b>	Become more customer-centric <b>4</b>	Develop "Next Gen" leaders <b>4</b>	Streamline processes <b>4</b>
Modify business model <b>5</b>	Prepare for financial instability <b>5</b>	Improve cash flow <b>5</b>	Lower costs <b>4</b>	Focus more on sustainability <b>5</b>
Streamline processes <b>6</b>	Employ mergers, acquisitions, divestitures <b>5</b>	Streamline processes <b>6</b>	Modify business model <b>6</b>	Modify business model <b>6</b>
Focus more on sustainability <b>7</b>	Streamline processes <b>7</b>	Develop "Next Gen" leaders <b>7</b>	Become more customer-centric <b>7</b>	Become more customer-centric <b>6</b>
Become more customer-centric <b>8</b>	Accelerate pace of digital transformation <b>8</b>	Employ mergers, acquisitions, divestitures <b>8</b>	Accelerate pace of digital transformation <b>8</b>	Increase automation <b>8</b>
Lower costs <b>9</b>	Mitigate cyber risk <b>9</b>	Prepare for financial instability <b>9</b>	Streamline processes <b>9</b>	Employ mergers, acquisitions, divestitures <b>8</b>
Prepare for financial instability <b>10</b>	Become more customer-centric <b>10</b>	Lower costs <b>10</b>	Create more resilient supply chains <b>9</b>	Lower costs <b>10</b>

Note: 917 CEOs responded globally.

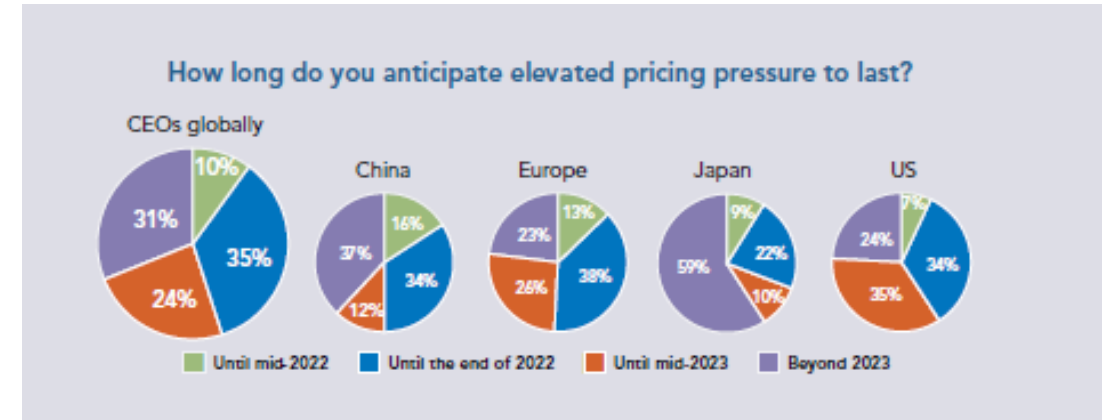
Source: The Conference Board® C-Suite Outlook 2022



# 1: Inflation



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, China National Bureau of Statistics/Haver Analytics, Statistical Office of the European Communities/Haver Analytics, and The Conference Board.



Over half of CEOs globally expect elevated pricing pressures to last at least until mid-2023 or beyond.

Globally 82% of CEOs say they currently face upward pricing pressures for inputs



## 2: Customer-Centricity

**CEOs indicate the interests of a broader group of stakeholders are prominent in strategy deliberations—a sign that the move to a stakeholder focus is gaining traction**

Q: Which groups are most important when your board and C-suite are making decisions? (Rank)

CEOs globally	
Customers	1
Employees	2
Shareholders	3
Business partners	4
Regulators	5
Communities	6
NGOs, Social and Env. activists, etc.	7
Media	8

Rank your organization's ESG-Environmental priorities.

Energy	1
Climate	2
Waste	3

The data reiterates the fact that CEOs know that if the customer is not happy, the other stakeholders will be harder to engage.

Environment, society and governance remains the long-term issue that must be addressed.





### 3: The rise of the CCO

#### CEOs less likely to say their organizations are prepared to meet challenges posed by future crisis related to inflation and cybersecurity

Q: How well prepared is your organization to deal with a major crisis related to...

	CEOs globally	Other C-suite leaders
Pandemic	49%	60%
Financial instability	46%	51%
Economic downturn	41%	44%
Inflation	38%	45%
Cybersecurity	37%	51%
Natural disaster	30%	34%
Supply chain disruptions	28%	34%
Climate change	26%	28%

Note: 1614 C-suite executives in total and 917 CEOs responded globally.  
Source: The Conference Board® C-Suite Outlook 2022

#### CEOs: Communications and people management skills have to improve for the hybrid model to succeed

Q: I believe hybrid workforce will...

	CEOs globally	US CEOs	Europe CEOs	China CEOs	Japan CEOs
Require more effective internal communication	88%	88%	90%	84%	86%
Require managers/team leaders to develop new skills	86%	90%	84%	86%	84%
Require significant change in our corporate culture	61%	44%	66%	78%	51%
Require a new Total Rewards structure	54%	40%	42%	76%	62%
Dilute existing corporate culture	47%	43%	57%	42%	38%
Create an uneven playing field between on-site and remote workers	45%	45%	38%	51%	30%
Be a temporary fix; it is not sustainable in the long term	30%	27%	30%	41%	20%
Create taxation issues	24%	31%	20%	27%	11%

Note: 917 CEOs globally; "agree" and "strongly agree" responses only.  
Source: The Conference Board® C-Suite Outlook 2022

Overall lack of preparedness for future shocks and crises indicate elevated CCO workflow

Managing the elevated narrative makes the role of the CCO is more important - and more challenging - than ever before



# 4: Changing Consumer Behavior

Pandemic disruptions, inflation, and labor shortages to shape 2022 business environment in major economies

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Understanding customers in depth and monitoring— ideally predicting—attitudes, preferences, and behaviors is ever more important. begins to bite.



# 5: Accelerating Digital

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## 6: Hybrid Workforce

### CEO views on the impact of the hybrid work model

Q: In the next 12 months, how would a hybrid model impact...

#### % CEOs expect an increase in ...

Competition for talent .....	57%
Talent retention .....	42%
Worker productivity .....	41%
Innovation .....	41%

#### % CEOs who expect a decrease in...

Quality of internal relationships ...	52%
Strength of the culture .....	46%
Internal collaboration .....	43%
Pace of skill building .....	39%

Source: The Conference Board

Findings indicate that one third of CEOs globally expect at least 40 percent of employees will work remotely after the pandemic subsides

The trade-off between flexibility and creative productivity will have to be most assiduously managed in the Marketing and Communications teams.



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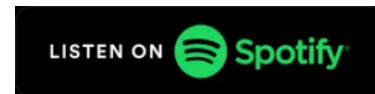


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