

10 Marketing Predictions for a New Decade

TRENDS AND CHANGES IN 2020
AND BEYOND

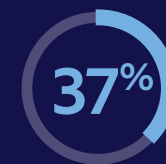
Over the past five years, marketing has undergone an extreme transformation. The buyer's journey has become less linear and predictable as opportunities to interact with brands have multiplied. Brands now have a presence on social media, search engines, product review sites, and their own websites as well as in physical locations. They are also reaching customers and prospects through a growing array of channels, including email, text, chat, and micro-targeted ads.

What do the next five years have in store? Will buyers continue to crave more choice and personalization? Will technologies like AI and machine learning present new ways to market? Or will forward-looking businesses reinvent marketing in ways we haven't even thought of yet?

To get the answers, we spoke with 10 marketing experts from different industries, regions, and backgrounds. We hope you enjoy their predictions and learn something new.

The Rise of AI

A few of our predictions mention the rapid adoption of artificial intelligence in marketing. While we don't know exactly how it will change the marketing landscape, experts agree — it's going to be everywhere, and soon.



37 percent of organizations have implemented AI in some form. That's a 270 percent increase over the last four years.¹



By 2021, 80 percent of emerging technologies will have AI foundations.²



40 percent of marketing and sales prioritize AI and machine learning — higher than any other department in enterprises today.³

¹ Gartner, January 2019.

² Gartner, May 2018.

³ Forbes, September 2019.

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Marketers Will Pair Personalization with Privacy Protections.

Successful marketers will deliver greater personalization alongside stronger privacy protections.



JESSIE BERRY
Director of Demand
Generation, Taplytics

Data privacy has dominated industry headlines over the last few years, and it's not going away anytime soon. In fact, even more consumer privacy rights legislation will roll out in the footsteps of GDPR, the California Privacy Act of 2018, ePrivacy, and others.

At the same time, consumers expect a level of personalization unlike anything we've seen before. More than **90 percent** of consumers are more likely to shop with brands that provide personalized offers and recommendations.¹ They're also willing to share their behavioral data to get them.²

How can marketers meet the demands of today's (and tomorrow's) consumer who wants extreme personalization and extreme privacy protections? With data, of course.

The personalization paradox

It seems like a paradox. Marketers need to deliver a greater degree of personalization while building and securing customer trust. Today, targeting customers with the right message at the right time and place means also knowing who they are and where they are at any given moment — all while guaranteeing a level of privacy that marketers have not been held accountable for in the past.

Moving into 2020 and beyond, marketers will need to adopt a new approach to the “data-driven” strategies that might have served them in years past.

MORE THAN 90% of consumers are more likely to shop with brands that provide personalized offers and recommendations.¹ They're also willing to share their behavioral data to get them.²

¹https://www.accenture.com/_acnmedia/PDF-77/Accenture-Pulse-Survey.pdf

²<https://smarterhq.com/privacy-report>

Providing a relevant and engaging customer experience is now considered table stakes, so marketing professionals will also need to leverage new tools and technologies that allow them to become more proactive when it comes to understanding user behavior and maintaining data integrity.

For example, customer experience automation will help marketers create personalized digital experiences without the risk of privacy breaches. Taplytics, a customer experience automation platform, offers single-tenant and private cloud hosting options that allow marketing teams to own and protect their customer data, avoid privacy risks, and still provide personalized customer journeys.

Marketing must embrace privacy protections.

As we head into the next decade and consider emerging trends and opportunities around AI, personalization, automation, etc, the one thing that should remain the same is the marketer's focus on the customer. What do they want, and how do you keep their trust? Privacy can no longer remain a focus just for IT. Instead, it needs to be owned and managed by the team that knows their customers best: marketing.

JESSIE BERRY | Jessie Berry is the Director of Demand Generation at Taplytics where she owns the strategy and execution of marketing programs and operations. Prior to Taplytics, Jessie held demand gen leadership roles at three other SaaS organizations and has a cumulative ten years of experience in marketing and demand gen.

What do [customers] want, and how do you keep their trust? Privacy can no longer remain a focus just for IT. Instead, it needs to be owned and managed by the team that knows their customers best: marketing.

Empathy Will Be a Key Marketing Differentiator.

The paradox of marketing automation is that we need to be more human.



MICHAEL BRENNER
CEO,
Marketing Insider Group

Marketers and businesses are increasingly using AI and personalization technologies to automate marketing processes as well as customer interactions. AI has been shown to help brands understand their audiences better, reach their buyers at the right times, improve the accuracy of their marketing campaigns, and enrich customer experiences, ultimately leading to cost savings and better ROI.

Marketers fail to ask one question, however:
"Are consumers satisfied with the buying experience?"

Too much technology can alienate your buyers.

The paradox of today's data-driven, AI-driven marketing is that despite a large number of channels that provide information and customer service, consumers are craving more human experiences.

The truth is that **three out of four buyers** are more loyal to businesses that give them the option to interact with a human than to those with fully automated digital experiences. That's not all — a full **37 percent** question the legitimacy of the company itself if not given the option!¹

Connect with a culture of empathy.

So how does a brand reap the benefits of marketing automation and become more "human" at the same time? The answer lies in culture. Culture is not, despite what one CMO growled at me, "HR's job." Leading brands put customer experience at the center of everything they do.

Despite a large number of channels that provide information and customer service, consumers are craving more human experiences.

¹"Are You Listening? The Truth About What Customers Want in a Digital World," Calabrio. <https://info.calabrio.com/customer-loyalty-report>

CMOs need to partner with HR and the rest of the corporate silos to build a culture of empathy for customers.

“Empathetic marketing” connects companies, brands, employees, and customers in a harmonious, productive, win-win way. You might be forgiven for thinking that ROI and the bottom line is all that matters to companies. While authoring my first book, I stumbled on the counterintuitive secret to ROI: Don’t talk about the stuff you sell. Building customer value drives company value.

But there is a missing link in that chain: your employees! When we truly focus on customer value, it changes the way we think about marketing. It forces us to think about the engagement levels of our employees. And grounding our actions in empathy leads to bigger profits for our company and a better life for our employees and customers.

“Empathetic marketing” connects companies, brands, employees, and customers in a harmonious, productive, win-win way. Building customer value drives company value.

3 ways to add empathy to your marketing

So what’s a modern marketer to do in a world that places little value in empathy, emotions, and considering customer and employee “feelings”?

- 1. Replace “always do more” with more mindful strategies.** Push back on tactics focused on doing more campaigns, creating more content, pushing more promotion.
- 2. Ask “What’s in it for the customer?” about everything your team does.** This changes the entire context of marketing and starts to build a customer-centric culture.
- 3. Harness the passion and expertise inside your company.** What are you doing to share that with your audience?

MICHAEL BRENNER | Michael Brenner is the best-selling author of *Mean People Suck* and *The Content Formula*. He is also a top CMO influencer, motivational speaker, and the CEO of **Marketing Insider Group**, where his team builds effective thought leadership, marketing strategies, and employee activation programs for leading brands and startups.

Marketers Will Say “Hello” to Empathy, and “Goodbye” to Integrated Campaigns.

Marketing that fills the most buckets will drive the most growth.



GURDEEP DHILLON

Global Head of
Commercial Marketing,
Adobe Experience Cloud

Did you know everyone carries around an invisible bucket with them? It's true, and it's a concept being taught to kids these days in programs like Project Cornerstone, which I volunteer for at my children's elementary school. If their bucket is full, that means they feel great. If their bucket is empty, they feel sad or anxious.

Here's the thing: Your prospects and customers have buckets, too. I predict that empathy — the ability to put yourself in someone else's shoes — will be the #1 driver of growth in the next five years.

Are you bucket filling or bucket dipping?

The only way to fill your own bucket is by filling someone else's. Successful marketing is simply getting to know your prospects and customers and filling their buckets. We can do that with helpful, relevant content. Content that builds an affinity between them and your brand because it makes them better employees and better leaders. Content that engages with them the way they want to be engaged.

Bullies tend to have empty buckets, and they try to fill them by dipping into someone else's bucket. But that doesn't work, no matter how hard they try.

What are the things we do that would be considered bucket dipping? When we push our product or our message to our audience, when we take an “if we build it, they will come” mentality, we think we're going to fill our own bucket. But, because we're dipping into theirs, it's not going to work.

Successful marketing is simply getting to know your prospects and customers and filling their buckets. We can do that with helpful, relevant content.

Marketing cannot bully its way to growth. That is a fundamental truth for all of us over the next five years. The next time you build a piece of content, write an email, or send a tweet, ask yourself, "Am I bucket filling, or am I bucket dipping?"

Say goodbye to the integrated campaign.

Here's an unpopular opinion. The integrated campaign will be dead in five years. Why? Well, no one ever reads one of our content offers and then shows up the next day at the office to tell their co-workers, "Wow, that eBook from Adobe on Digital Marketing was amazing. I can't wait for the blog, webinar, and five days of display ads following me around on the internet!"

People don't binge watch marketing campaigns like they do Netflix shows. It's more like YouTube than Netflix. It's about micro-moments that matter, with content that matters. This is where the concept of an integrated campaign had good intentions ... resulting in documented strategies that map content to the different stages of each persona's journey. This kind of content mapping can be a good thing — but not when you overwhelm your audience with too much content at once!

The most successful marketers over the next five years will be the ones that build for the micro-moments that matter the most to their audience. The ones that fill their buckets, and in turn, fill our own (with growth!).

The most successful marketers over the next five years will be the ones that build for the micro-moments that matter the most to their audience.

GURDEEP DHILLON | Gurdeep is an enterprise software veteran who has held a variety of roles during his career at SAP, Marketo, and more. He is currently Head of Global Commercial Marketing at Adobe, responsible for the Marketo and Magento businesses within the Adobe Experience Cloud. In 2017, he was named one of DMN's 40 Under 40 marketers in America. He loves sports, Star Wars, food, dogs, Spartan Races, and his family.

Marketing Will Slow Down to Have More Impact.

Marketing will craft memorable customer experiences, build deeper relationships, and stop delivering so much ... stuff.



ANN HANDLEY
Chief Content Officer,
MarketingProfs

So I've been asked to deliver a visionary prediction to you, my marketing friends. But what good is visionary without a full-face splash of cold-water practical?

Vision is one thing.
But let's also make it real.

First the vision. Ready?

**Slow ...
Down.**

Not all the time. Our world moves too fast for that. But slowing down at critical times will allow us to deliver faster later on.

***It's time to do less, but obsess (about what we do).
It's time to slow down to speed up.***

Why do I believe that?

Most business-to-business marketers today use content marketing successfully to achieve top-of-the-funnel goals, such as brand awareness and audience education. There's been a notable increase in the proportion of us who are successfully using content assets to nurture subscribers, audiences, and leads (**68 percent** today vs. **58 percent** one year ago), according to research from MarketingProfs¹ and the Content Marketing Institute.²

But here's the solid splash of cold-water practical full in the face: We aren't delving deeper into the so-called funnel to build relationships with potential customers. We still have work to do on deepening relationships with prospects, customers, and especially internally — with sales, execs, and internal influencers who champion and amplify our contributions to growth.

We still have work to do on deepening relationships with prospects, customers, and internal sales, execs, and influencers who champion and amplify our contributions to growth.

¹<https://www.marketingprofs.com/charts/2019/41998/2020-b2b-content-marketing-benchmarks-budgets-and-trends-a-first-look-at-new-research>

² B2B Content Marketing 2020: Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends — North America.

Why is that important? For two reasons:

1. Relationships are crucial to long-term marketing success — as well as business success generally. (And success in life, too. But that's a truth for a different ebook.)
2. If marketing is to be the leader in this age of the empowered consumer (and I believe it must), then we need to evolve from order-taking to order-making. It's our job to throw up the T-shaped time-out signal and call our organizations to a higher place.

It's our job, as leaders, to ask the hard questions:

- What are we trying to do here?
- Are we playing a long game or looking for short-term wins?
- How can we make for a saner and more sustainable business?

Focus on crafting optimal customer experiences. Deepen loyalty with existing clients and customers. Build trust internally. Focus on the next 10 years, not the next 10 months.

In marketing in the next five years, we desperately need #RelationshipGoals.

Yet you can't rush a relationship—personal or business. There's no 50-yard dash to trust. You can't cannonball into customer confidence.

Moving faster isn't the same as actually going somewhere, to paraphrase writer Steve Goodier.

Listen, I only have 500 words here, and I'm already running long. So I can't get too prescriptive. Let's leave you with my prediction ... as well as a challenge to you.

In the next five years, marketing will slow down to lead in these five areas:

1. Do less but obsess. Focus on crafting optimal customer experiences — not just delivering more stuff.
2. Deepen loyalty with existing clients and customers. Feed our fans.
3. Amplify affinity and build trust internally (with sales, C-suite, influencer-employees).

4. Show up, warts and all. Turn the camera around: show our audience who we are, not simply who we want them to think we are. "Authentic" is a fancy way of saying "imperfect."

5. Focus on the next 10 years, not the next 10 months. Long-term relationships are more satisfying in every sense.

And a sixth prediction:

6. CELEBRATE MASSIVE SUCCESS.

Your challenge: Where will you slow down to speed up?

ANN HANDLEY | Ann Handley is the Chief Content Officer of MarketingProfs, a training company that empowers marketers internationally with the skills they need to drive success.

She is the author of the Wall Street Journal best-seller on business writing, "**Everybody Writes**," and the co-author of the best-selling book on content marketing, "**Content Rules: How to Create Killer Blogs, Podcasts, Videos, Ebooks, Webinars (and More) That Engage Customers and Ignite Your Business**."

<https://annhandley.com/>

AI Will Make Marketing Smarter and Better for Customers.

As AI evolves, marketing will be less time-consuming and more valuable for both businesses and their customers.



NIRANJANA KUMBI

Senior Manager,
Product Management,
Adobe (Marketo)

Marketers spend enormous amounts of their time doing repetitive tasks such as picking the right audience for every campaign, personalizing content for every segment, and timing email sends to optimize opens and clicks. Meanwhile, despite marketers' best efforts, their customers may still be bombarded with irrelevant marketing material.

I predict AI will help more marketers in more industries deliver campaigns that connect customers with better, more relevant information through meaningful contextual interactions. And that's only the beginning.

Transformation to customer-centric experience delivery

Marketing has come a long way evolving from the "spray and pray" model to today's "targeted engagement," in which marketers narrowly target prospects according to demographic and behavioral traits. The notion of delivering campaigns based on an individual's or a company's traits will be history in a few years — replaced by the "intent- and value-based experience delivery" that's made possible by AI.

With machine learning and the right data, you can predict an individual's or a buying group's intent to buy your products and services at each interaction. When done correctly, AI makes marketers more accurate and more successful in engaging the customers at their doorstep. That's why Marketo is embedding AI-powered intelligence as a core part of marketing workflows, bringing intelligent decision-making to every level.

AI embedded marketing software will free up more than one-third of data analysts in marketing organizations by 2022, enabling them to focus their time on business priorities instead of spending time on manual processes like personalization, lead scoring, anomaly detection, marketing performance management, and reporting. — Gartner

Personalization without compromising privacy

To deliver on the promise of hyperpersonalization, AI needs vast amounts of good-quality historical data. However, emerging privacy laws such as GDPR, CCPA, etc. will make it more difficult for companies to store and process personal data. New AI and statistical techniques such as “differential privacy” and “federated learning” will allow companies to collect and process data for personalization and intelligent decision-making, while also enabling compliance with regulations and guaranteeing maximum privacy for individuals.

Why people won't talk about AI in five years

The operating cost of AI/ML workloads is still very high, and hiring data scientists is both expensive and extremely competitive. As a result, intelligent apps aren't widely available. And when they are available, they are usually positioned as premium add-ons.

In the next five years, the cost of operating AI at scale will become significantly cheaper due to competition among vendors and faster purpose-built processors for AI. At the same time, low-code developer tools and automated AI technologies will allow non-data scientists to apply AI solutions to vast range of routine problems. Intelligence will become an essential element of every digital business process. Companies and products that don't evolve to take advantage of AI will wither away into oblivion.

Marketo's mission is to democratize AI for marketing organizations in businesses of every size. “Our vision,” says Marketo's head of product, Ajay Awatramani, “is to apply intelligence to every aspect of work marketers carry out within Marketo, enabling marketers to engage at scale and shift focus from creating campaigns to crafting right marketing stories around their brand.”

A glimpse into the future

Today, given enough labeled data available to train the model, AI/ML technologies can surpass human performance at cognitive tasks. But AI is still only good at identifying patterns and decision-making/acting on repetitive tasks at scale. AI models fail severely when they encounter a completely new situation that they haven't seen before.

We humans are very different. We have the unique ability to apply learning from one situation to another related situation. For example, as children we easily learned that dropping a juice glass on the floor would break it. We didn't need to be trained on the various shapes of glasses to understand how the concept applied to them.

Emerging AI technologies such as transfer learning, reinforcement learning, and causal inferencing will enable AI to think and operate more like humans. This means that marketing automation (MA) will not only become efficient but also be able to deliver memorable and delightful experiences at scale for every individual who engages with your brand.

NIRANJAN KUMBI | Niranjan actively oversees and drives product strategy, technology investments, and team execution for Adobe/Marketo's AI/ML Sensei products.

“Our vision is to apply intelligence to every aspect of work marketers carry out within Marketo, enabling marketers to engage at scale and shift focus from creating campaigns to crafting right marketing stories around their brand.” — Ajay Awatramani, Head of Product, Marketo

Poorly Executed “Values-Based” Marketing Will Fuel Consumer Distrust.

Pandering to consumer values when your company doesn’t “walk the walk” is a dangerous strategy.



KATIE MARTELL

Unapologetic Marketing
Truth Teller

Today, **70 percent** of consumers don’t trust advertising and **42 percent** distrust brands, calling them “remote, unreachable, abstract, and self-serving.”¹

This is the deficit from which many organizations will work over the next five years, as the fight for attention and trust only becomes more difficult. In response, I predict a continual rise in the recent trend around purpose- and social movement-driven campaigns as marketing teams seek to align with consumers over shared values.

I also predict dangerous subsequent missteps as many organizations simply pander to these movements.

Why values-based marketing is so tempting for brands

We are living in an era of value-based marketing, one in which companies use marketing to make it clear what they stand for and what they believe as they engage buyers. Many brands now seek to connect with consumers on a deeper level, one based on conviction and principles. It’s like a good marriage founded on shared values.

Whether it’s feminism, environmental concerns, LGBTQ+ rights, a stance on gun legislation, industry-specific laws, or other social issues, topics historically considered outside the realm of traditional business are now on the radar for many organizations and are built into their marketing and advertising plans. For example, on International Women’s Day, many brands will launch “femvertising” campaigns (advertising or other marketing that incorporates the use of feminist ideals). In June, Pride month, you’ll see many logos on social media flipped to a rainbow version (some call this “rainbow-washing”).

¹Trinity Mirror, <https://www.marketingweek.com/arrogance-brand-purpose-distrust-ads/>

Trend Alert: Millennials Care Deeply about Shared Values.

A growing number of younger consumers seek to make purchase decisions based on shared values. **Fifty percent** of millennials (18–34) want brands to take a public stance on social issues, compared to only about 25 percent of baby boomers (55+). Across all generations, **6 in 10** will not make a purchase if they don't believe in what the company stands for.² This is not limited to B2C organizations. **Two in five** business buyers don't agree that B2B brands stand for something they believe in, but believe this is an important part of their purchasing criteria.³

50%

of millennials want brands to take a public stance on social issues.

60%

will not make a purchase if they don't believe in what the company stands for.

Organizations seek to align to where the future is going, where the groundswell is, and — more importantly — where the conversations are happening. It's a battle for continual relevance.

Pandering to values your organization doesn't actually practice is risky business.

As marketing teams seek to meet these new expectations and create meaning for buyers, it's critical that they do more than merely *express support for values in campaigns*. Unfortunately, many companies that use feminist messaging in their marketing are poor examples of these ideals internally: some pay out millions in lawsuits due to internal pay inequality and discrimination against women, and others help perpetuate the gender gap by promoting unrealistic beauty standards.

The next five years will see more rainbow-pandering, faux-feminism, femvertising, woke-washing, and other virtue-hustling by marketers. Even if these efforts are well-intentioned, they mask the real work that needs to be done. They hide the reality of being a woman or LGBTQ at work and create an illusion of progress. McKinsey found that men are more likely to think the workplace is equitable. Women see a workplace that is less fair and offers less support.⁴

We cannot solve problems that we cannot see or understand clearly. Insincere values-based marketing campaigns do nothing for the movements they are pandering to, while introducing untenable risk for the business.

KATIE MARTELL | Named “one of the most interesting people in B2B marketing,” a “marketing expert to follow,” an “unapologetic marketing truth-teller,” and a top marketing writer on LinkedIn, Katie Martell is an entrepreneur, CMO, and advisor to high-growth brands. She is the author and producer of the forthcoming documentary and book, *Pandermonium*.

² <https://www.marketingcharts.com/industries/government-and-politics-75693>

³ <http://www.iris-worldwide.com/media/5018/iris-the-5-new-dynamics-of-b2b-marketing.pdf>

⁴ <https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/gender-equality/women-in-the-workplace-2017>

Successful Marketers Will Harness AI, Video, and Digital ABM.

Marketing strategies once considered “nice to have eventually” will become essentials for growth.



**PAULO CÉSAR
FREITAS MARTINS**

Global Head of Commercial
Digital Marketing,
Adobe Experience Cloud

Marketers always have long to-do lists. And some of those to-do lists include tasks like “research AI,” “look into video production rates,” and “use digital strategies for ABM.” But many of us haven’t taken action, because we’re too busy meeting quarterly goals and prepping for the next product launch. For anyone who wants to succeed over the next five years, that has to change.

I predict that artificial intelligence (AI), video, and digital ABM campaigns will allow marketers to drive unprecedented growth — if we embrace them.

Artificial Intelligence will deliver digital marketing superpowers.

Whenever marketers talk about the future, the discussion inevitably turns to AI. We aren’t worried about cognitively advanced machines that just might replace humans. Instead, we want to know how AI could transform digital marketing — and when. After all, advertising platforms like Google and Facebook are already investing heavily on AI.

For 2020–25, I expect to see the rise of AI tools that can optimize marketing campaigns across multiple channels. A couple of examples are Adobe Sensei and Metadata.io. Both use AI to dynamically

manage marketing budgets. As they become increasingly popular, digital marketers will trust them to automatically allocate their funds to the campaigns and channels that drive the best return.

Over time, I can see marketers coming to resemble RoboCop — humans with AI superpowers who achieve better results with the same budget.

Marketers have heard of AI — but they don’t understand it yet.

Only **13%** of B2B marketers are very confident with their knowledge of AI, while **55%** are somewhat confident, and **33%** are not at all confident.

Video marketing will deliver more (and better) engagement data.

In my view, video marketing will be the next big thing to evolve in 2020–25. The percentage of businesses using video as a marketing tool increased from **63 percent** in early 2017 to **87 percent** in early 2019.¹ Plus, **88 percent** of businesses plan to increase their video spending¹ while video production costs have gone down.

Moreover, I believe the engagement data generated from videos will offer game-changing new insights, especially for B2B businesses. As video platforms become more advanced, they will offer new metrics that reveal buyer intent.

I believe the engagement data generated from videos will offer game-changing new insights, especially for B2B businesses. As video platforms become more advanced, they will offer new metrics that reveal buyer intent.

Marketers will apply digital marketing to ABM challenges.

Digital marketing is most often used at the very top of the funnel and purely lead generation. In 2020–25, marketers will use digital strategies to build more effective account-based marketing (ABM) campaigns that take hyper-targeting to a new level. What will this look like? Some examples include using digital to:

- Target Open Opps to close deals faster
- Push MQLs down the funnel
- Fill up the “white spaces” on accounts that are stuck in the funnel

I predict digital marketing techniques will make ABM more effective and reduce time-to-close.

87%

of businesses used video as a marketing tool in 2019.¹

88%

of businesses plan to increase their video spending¹ while video production costs have gone down.

PAULO CÉSAR FREITAS MARTINS | Paulo Martins is the Head of Commercial Global Digital Marketing at Adobe. With 15+ years of experience in the Digital space (and an even lengthier fandom for Brazilian soccer), Paulo has worked in Latin America, Australia (APAC) and North America, where he is currently running global digital campaigns for Adobe DX.

¹<https://www.wyzowl.com/video-marketing-statistics-2019/>

Brand Awareness Will Make a Comeback.

Marketers will balance highly data-driven, short-term tactics with a greater emphasis on brand awareness activities that drive long-term demand.



JAQI SALEEM
President,
Qualified Digital

We are about to experience a correction to our overcorrection. In the next five years, I predict a return to some tried-and-true marketing programs that will lead us back to a comprehensive and long-term strategy focused on the market (sans the *ing*).

Marketing has evolved from “art” to “science.”

What we have experienced over the past five+ years was a reinvention of the way we approach and perceive marketing. Marketing was seen as a “shiny” — yet essential — cost of doing business. We had playbooks, methodologies, and ways to associate growth *trends* with our activities, but we had no real tactical data to support the effectiveness of each element.

That has changed.

Marketing has evolved into a curated motion of practical and effective tactics, measured and calibrated with the help of the superior data access and new technologies now at our fingertips. We have become data-driven, moneymaking machines (while, of course, maintaining our shine). I am a total believer in this shift to technology and measurement. I have literally staked my future on it by founding an agency that prides itself on using technology, data, strategy, and creative to advance the business agenda.

Many organizations have opted to invest in activities that are *easily measured*, as opposed to those that serve to drive long-term growth for the business.

Businesses are over-emphasizing short-term, data-driven tactics.

However, I think we may have gone too far. A recent study from LinkedIn and B2B Institute found that only **four percent** of B2B marketing teams measure impact beyond six months.¹

With the new power of these tools to track and measure individual and omnichannel engagement in real time (or the moment we hit “statistical significance”), many organizations have overcorrected in response to the pressure to be data-driven, reporting on the success of individual channels and campaigns in weekly, monthly, and quarterly cadences.

It’s understandable! In a well-intentioned move to operate smarter, teams have moved away from activities that are hard to quantify in an easy report or that require a year (or more) to have impact.

Instead, many have opted to invest in activities that are *easily measured* — as opposed to, for example, broader-brand campaigns that serve to drive long-term growth for the business. We have tapered down or abandoned some really effective go-to-market motions by staying narrow, and in many of these cases we have lost sight of building the broader market.

Brand awareness is a long-term strategy. You can measure it, too.

Let’s face it. We don’t seek out Nike because of its personalized marketplace or because its purchase flow is optimized off the chart. Consumers want Nike because of its lifestyle brand that’s been built over time. Hell yes, they transact more and bounce less because Nike has created a personalized and frictionless experience online. However, don’t imagine that customer experience and brand identity are mutually exclusive. We need both.

Brand awareness and market-building campaigns *are* measurable. If you do them well, you will see a notable year-over-year increase on branded search terms. That is massive: Google has found that branded keywords have over **2X higher** conversion rates than non-branded terms.²

Simultaneously, we will invest much more deeply in our data-driven efforts, and we will find technologies that allow us to better quantify these long-term tactics. With this renewed focus on long-term business growth, we will see the CMO’s tenure increase and profile deepen. We will get shinier, we’ll get smarter, and we’ll be the fluffiest revenue-generating practice that marketing has seen yet.

JAQI SALEEM | Jacqueline (Jaqi) Saleem is the Founder and President of Qualified Digital with 15+ years of digital agency experience delivering to the enterprise. She leads a collective of curious, outcome-driven practitioners who push boundaries and create growth through all things digital, including brand, UX & design, CMS, interactive, and analytics. @JaqiSaleem

Google has found that branded keywords have over **2X higher** conversion rates than non-branded terms.

² <https://searchengineland.com/importance-targeting-branded-searches-287377>

Marketing Automation Will Transform the Service Client Experience.

Services organizations that don't adopt marketing automation — and integrate it with CRM — will be left behind.



BEN SCOTT

Senior Digital Marketing
Manager, Grant Thornton
Australia

Professional services firms are not generally on the cutting edge of marketing. Getting stakeholders to agree on a marketing strategy — and to fund the investments needed to make it happen — can be a big challenge. But that needs to change fast.

In a survey of professional services executives by Mavenlink, **70 percent** of respondents said they experienced increased competition in the past 12 months.¹ And **85 percent** said client expectations are increasing.¹ To win in this environment, you need to continually improve your client experience and always add more value.

That's where marketing automation comes in. It can help professional services firms support clients with resources tailored to their interests, like new content, in-person events, relevant news alerts, and Webinars. When combined with CRM, it can also help firms understand what clients care about and synchronize marketing and sales, so clients are never overwhelmed.

That's certainly been my experience, which is why I predict more professional services firms will adopt marketing automation to build better and more profitable client relationships.

Competition is everywhere.

Professional services firms are under siege from competition, both big and small. Big competitors are adding capacity and reducing costs through offshoring. And small competitors are using technology to reach new markets and offer personalized solutions. It's no surprise, then, that **40 percent** of professional services executives say increasing revenues is their biggest challenge.¹

When combined with CRM, marketing automation can help firms understand what clients care about and synchronize marketing and sales.

¹2019 State of the Services Economy, Mavenlink.

To keep growing in this environment, professional services firms must invest in marketing and a superior client experience.

From one-on-one to one-to-many

One-on-one consulting is a critical part of a great client experience. But these relationships can be hard to scale. Plus, your consultants may not have time to spend on marketing. A marketing automation platform can help you add a “one-to-many” component to your client relationships. It can instantly connect your clients with value-added resources that match their interests, and make follow up quick and easy.

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The importance of unified customer data

But marketing automation doesn't work in isolation. For a complete view of your client relationships, you must adopt a unified approach to customer data, and link your marketing automation platform to your CRM. This way, you can see all aspects of each client relationship and identify trends, such as which services clients use most and how marketing activities impact sales.

Sure, if you're a busy professional services leader, this might sound like a lot of work. But, if you want to stay competitive, now is the time.

BEN SCOTT | Ben Scott leads the digital marketing team at Grant Thornton Australia and loves the challenge of being a marketer in service industries. For the past 12 years, Ben has worked across accounting, law, insurance and engineering on a wide range of digital marketing projects. Ben takes great pleasure in helping companies with more complex marketing funnels use digital channels to achieve their business strategies.

AI Will Power Marketing That Feels Virtually Human.

AI represents the foundation for future marketing that will deliver a hyper-personalized and, eventually, a nearly humanized experience.



BRIAN SOLIS
Digital Analyst/
Anthropologist/Futurist

Any smart marketing strategist will tell you that AI and machine learning are going to power the future of marketing. And they're right. AI-powered marketing is finally going to make hyper-personalization a reality. For business buyers, it can't happen fast enough. In a survey of 1,000 business procurement leaders, **70 percent** said that personalized recommendations help them to obtain more value from their vendors — and **53 percent** say that they would pay as much as 5 percent more for those recommendations.¹

But there is disconnect between what business buyers want and what B2B marketers are actually doing today. Just **18 percent** of B2B marketers have adopted AI-driven personalization.²

Marketing that anticipates customer needs

Unlike traditional marketing automation, AI doesn't just meet customers' immediate needs — it can also predict what they'll need in the future. In other words, it's not just about "right place, right time, right device, right message" or the next best action. Tomorrow's AI-powered marketing will allow marketers to augment reactive programs (even

those that are already intelligent) with predictive engagement. Examples of predictive engagement are providing highly individualized product recommendations and identifying customers at risk of problems long before they happen.

Unlike traditional marketing automation, AI doesn't just meet customers' immediate needs — it can also predict what they'll need in the future.

¹"What B2B Buyers Want in 2019: Speed, Personalization and Intelligence," survey of 1,000 procurement and purchasing leaders, Hanover Group (sponsored by PROS).

²"The State of Artificial Intelligence in B2B Marketing," Demand Metric, 2019.

For progressive marketers, the very concept of “marketing” is now open to reinterpretation and more so, reinvention. This means starting to think about the marketing function as part of customer experience (CX) strategies. Marketing then becomes a cross-functional service. It's powered by data, real-time and predictive analytics, customer-centered strategy beyond traditional marketing touchpoints, proactive service, useful content that addresses micro and macro needs — and so much more.

Integrating AI into the buyer's journey

To introduce new AI-powered touchpoints across the customer journey and lifecycle that facilitate proactive engagement even before there's an official want or need, marketing must partner with customer service organizations and other stakeholders. As AI technology comes online, the role of marketing will also become predictive,

proactive, and able to deliver personalized experiences wherever customers are in their journey. When it comes to predictive engagement, marketers will have to create strategies, programs, and content (as well as metrics) that don't yet exist.

As we move further into the future, marketing will evolve from delivering personalization to setting the stage for humanization — AI-driven services that are virtually indistinguishable from those provided by humans. AI will, in suitable irony, make technology, marketing, and customer experiences more human and relatable at every step.

Marketing will evolve from delivering personalization to setting the stage for humanization — AI-driven services that are virtually indistinguishable from those provided by humans.

BRIAN SOLIS | Brian Solis is a world-renowned digital analyst, anthropologist, and futurist who has been called “one of the greatest digital analysts of our time.” Brian is also a world-class keynote speaker and an 8x best-selling author. His latest books include *Lifescape: How to Live a More Creative, Productive and Happy Life*, *X: The Experience When Business Meets Design*, and *What's the Future of Business* (aka *WTF*).

With a loyal online audience of over 700,000 people online, his work makes him a sought-after thought leader to leading brands, celebrities such as Oprah, Shaq, and Ashton Kutcher, and over 1,000 startups around the world.

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Marketo, an Adobe company, offers the solution of choice for lead management and B2B marketing professionals seeking to transform customer experiences by engaging across every stage of complex buying journeys. Natively supporting both lead and account-based marketing strategies, Marketo Engage, as part of Adobe Experience Cloud, brings together marketing and sales in a comprehensive solution designed to orchestrate personalized experiences, optimize content, and measure business impact across every channel, from consideration to conversion and beyond.

To learn more about Marketo Engage, the vast community of passionate marketers in the Marketing Nation, and Marketo's robust partner ecosystem, visit www.marketo.com.



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