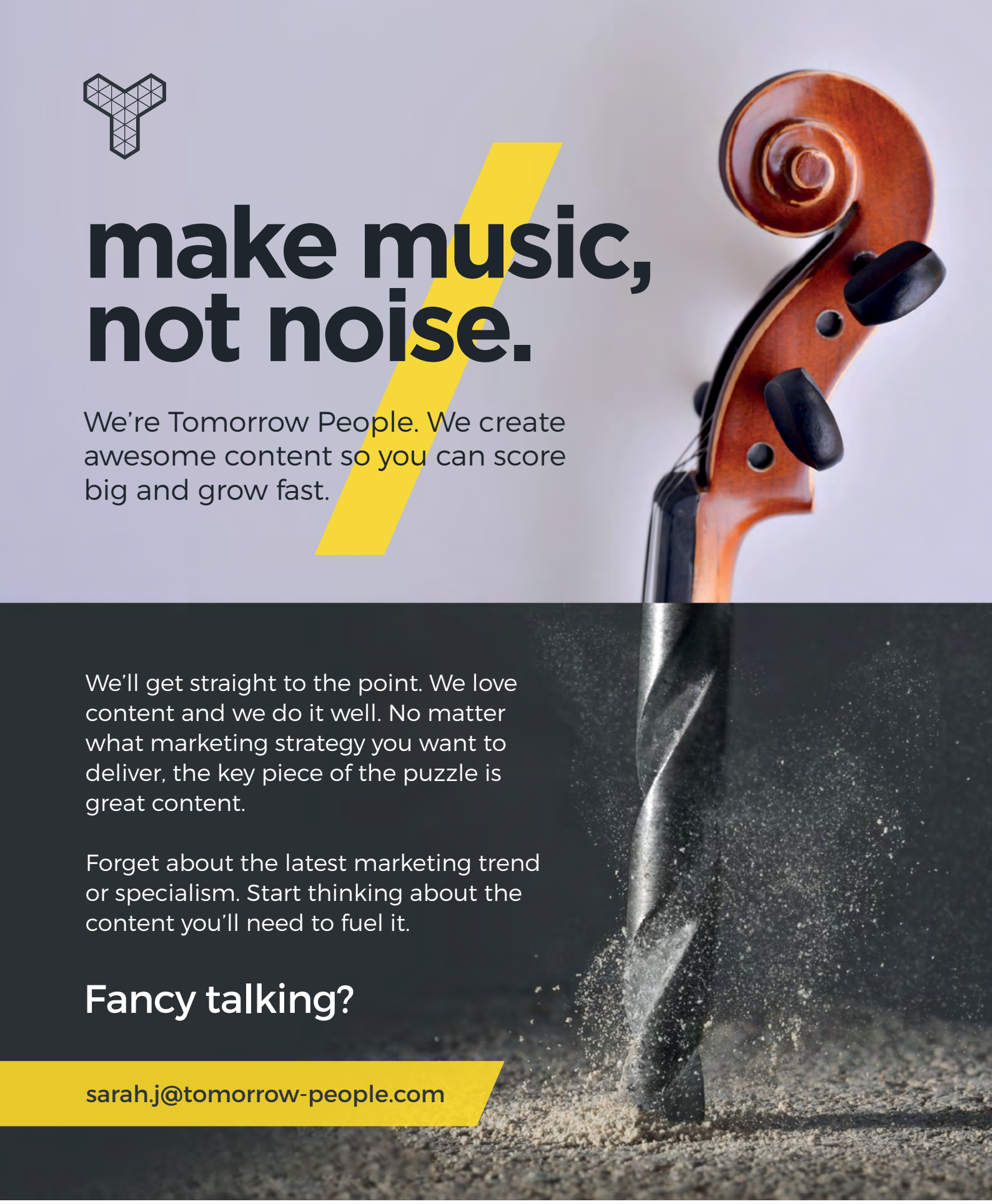
The B2B Marketing Agencies Benchmarking Report 2018

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Introduction



Mary-Anne Baldwin
Head of content,
B2B Marketing

The message from the industry this year was loud and clear. Clients want specialist skills from the agencies they employ; they want a targeted approach to meet their specific needs.

But while clients are resolute in their expectations, they're far less so in their willingness to take risks. National uncertainty in business and finance appears to have bled into clients' decision-making process, leaving them more cautious and guarded. Almost every agency we spoke to this year called out to us with the same declaration: 'We want our clients to be bolder!'

The argument that agencies do their best work when backed by a daring, undaunted client is clear, both in the agency interviews on pages 62 to 97 and from the 2017 B2B Marketing Awards in November. But to get that buy-in from the client, agencies must work increasingly hard to instil – rather than demand – confidence.

Excellent campaigns and a strong record speak volumes, but agencies must also meet rising client expectations, which we discuss at length in this guide. Today's bill-payers expect greater collaboration, not just with them but with other agencies. They want the best technology (hence the growing trend for agencies to build bespoke in-house offerings) and they'll be deterred by the generalist approaches that got agencies this far.

To help you tackle all that, this year's Agencies Benchmarking Report offers more insight and analysis than ever before. We won't promise it's easy reading, but we hope you'll find it both informative and inspiring.

We've added an analysis of our recent annual survey, which was carried out at the end of 2017, interviews with the top performers and fastest growers, plus predictions for the year ahead. We've also introduced changes to the rankings itself. Now filtered by gross income in 2017, we've highlighted whether each agency has moved up or down the ranking in comparison with last year, so that each one tells a clearer story.

We hope these changes improve the value of this already indispensible resource. And, as ever, I'm eager to hear your thoughts on both this guide and the industry messages relayed within it.

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You need a Post-Modern Marketing agency.



So why write a pre-modern long copy ad to say so?

◄ BY TOM STEIN ►

GOOD GRIEF, you're thinking, long copy ads went out with the Mad Men! They may have done the trick for David Ogilvy and The Hathaway Man, but certainly not today when seemingly, no one has the fortitude to read more than 140 characters (let alone 280). So a print ad with 389 words? Are you mad, man? Well, yes, we are. Because though we are tech-powered Modern Marketing mavens, Stein IAS believes that, more than ever, B2B marketers need to be mad women and men as well. You see, we've arrived at a time when B2B marketing is poised to ascend to entirely new heights. But this will only happen if we are madly focused on making B2B marketing more magical.

Modern Marketing investment has reached a peak.

Keep in mind, it wasn't that long ago when B2B marketers were the balloon and brochure people. Much has changed. No, everything has changed. B2B brands and marketers have become massively more customer-focused and thus marketing-focused. We have wrapped our collective arms around digital transformation and thus marketing transformation. We had to. And Modern Marketing has been our path forward. Automated. Buyer journey aligned. Content-led. Measureable as never before.

Now, though, the stakes higher. On average, enterprise marketers are spending up to 25% of their budgets* on marketing technology. That's an awful lot of budget. Have impact and effectiveness risen at pace? The answer is pretty obvious. It's why we've written this pre-modern ad.

*Gartner (October 2017)

And it's why you need a Post-Modern Marketing agency.

Said plainly, B2B marketing needs mojo and it needs magic. It needs braver and it needs bolder. It needs the from-the-gut genius of pre-modern marketing, in the form of post-modern experiences fusing creativity and technology that take customers' breath away. And it needs these experiences to be more intelligent and relevant, by making our modern marketing investments work much harder.

No ifs, ands or bots, it's time to talk.

So, sure, it may seem a bit odd to offer up a pre-modern ad to suggest you need a Post-Modern agency. But if you've read this far – and if that set-and-forget nurture campaign you launched two years ago is still running – chances are you do. Given there's only one of us, please visit SteinIAS.com to learn more. Our bot "Alan" will make sure you're welcome. (How's that for Post-Modern?)

STEIN IAS

The Post-Modern B2B Marketing Agency

SteinIAS.com #PostModernB2B

Section 1

League tables

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Top 70 UK B2B marcomms agencies

Rank	Agency	GI in £m (UK) in latest financial year	Rank in 2016-17	Change	YoY GI % change	% of GI from UK operations in latest financial year	% GI from B2B operations in latest financial year	Headcount
1	Oliver	71	2	↑	65	74	56	1258
2	OgilvyOne Business	23.3	4	↑	38	95	95	165
3	Expandi Group	20.4	6	↑	80	51	100	440
4	Bray Leino	20.1	3	↓	0	89	75	400
5	Realise	11.1	New entry	*	-1	85	85	143
6	Radley Yeldar	10.5	New entry	*	-20	70	70	172
7	Reading Room	10.3	8	↑	18	100	100	108
8	The Marketing Practice	9.4	9	↑	9	88	100	132
9	gyro	9.3	5	↓	-21	100	90	115
10	Kingpin	9.2	15	↑	56	91	100	28
11	Gravity London	8.3	10	↓	0	50	100	80
12	4Ps Marketing	8.2	22	↑	28	100	100	125
13	Omobono	8	44	↑	34	100	100	75
14	Nelson Bostock Unlimited	7.3	New entry	*	-3	100	55	81
15	Technical Associates Group	7	37	↑	13	100	100	43
16	Octopus Group	6.9	20	↑	42	100	97	55
17	Tangent	6	12	↓	9	100	91	75
18	twogether	5.7	New entry	*	35	90	90	101
19	April Six	5.6	16	↓	-8	62	65	70
20	Pulse	5.6	28	↑	52	100	100	48

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Rank	Agency	GI in £m (UK) in latest financial year	Rank in 2016-17	Change	YoY GI % change	% of GI from UK operations in latest financial year	% GI from B2B operations in latest financial year	Headcount
21	Stein IAS	5.4	17	↓	6	42	90	165
22	Quantum Marketing	5.4	38	↑	17	100	100	100
23	Velocity Partners	5.2	18	↓	21	100	99	46
24	DirectionGroup	5	50	↑	8	71	71	55
25	Wyatt International	4.6	24	↓	20	100	85	37
26	Eulogy.	4.5	New entry	*	9	100	50	53
27	Purple Agency	4.4	30	↑	24	80	52	174
28	Ledger Bennett	4.4	39	↑	35	100	100	70
29	Torpedo	4.2	53	↑	16	100	100	69
30	Really B2B	4.2	31	↑	31	95	100	64
31	MOI	4.1	33	↑	28	70	100	53
32	ClearPeople	4	25	↓	5	100	100	52
33	MomentumABM	3.9	42	↑	29	92	100	71
34	DWA	3.9	Re-entry	↗	27	100	100	33
35	Brandformula	3.7	23	↓	11	100	100	32
36	JJ Marketing	3.6	29	↓	0	100	70	50
37	Earnest	3.5	Re-entry	↗	119	100	100	38
38	Oakwood Agency	3.4	49	↑	-6	72	37	37
39	BDB	3.3	35	↓	6	100	100	33
40	CleverTouch Marketing	3.1	32	↓	5	100	100	48
41	Brilliant Noise	3	New entry	*	31	86	100	40
42	Six	3	27	↓	-21	100	100	40
43	CIB	2.8	41	↓	4	98	98	31
44	Miramar	2.6	51	↑	30	100	100	26
45	The Crocodile	2.2	47	↑	-7	75	92	30

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Rank	Agency	GI in £m (UK) in latest financial year	Rank in 2016-17	Change	YoY GI % change	% of GI from UK operations in latest financial year	% GI from B2B operations in latest financial year	Headcount
46	Tomorrow People	2.2	Re-entry	↗	27	100	100	35
47	Cyber-Duck	2.2	55	↑	29	100	95	37
48	Return	1.8	New entry	*	29	100	55	37
49	The Hub	1.8	54	↑	-1	93	100	18
50	Silver Agency	1.5	New entry	*	9	90	90	24
51	Napier Partnership	1.3	Re-entry	↗	13	100	100	17
52	Upp B2B	1.1	Newagency	·	N/A	75	100	24
53	Workbrands	1	62	↑	20	100	65	15
54	Lesniak Swann	1	New entry	*	47	100	70	18
55	OST Marketing	1	66	↑	-0	100	50	22
56	Fox Agency	0.9	61	↑	41	90	100	17
57	White Clarke Creative	0.7	New entry	*	13	58	58	19
58	Sherpa	0.7	New entry	*	100	100	100	12
59	Considered Content	0.6	70	↑	13	100	100	4
60	Junction Agency	0.6	New entry	*	96	100	100	8
61	The Marketing Pod	0.6	New entry	*	6	90	95	8
62	Bright	0.6	New entry	*	47	80	100	12
63	Don't be Shy	0.6	Newagency	·	N/A	100	100	11
64	Affari	0.5	New entry	*	6	81	100	20
65	Modern	0.5	New entry	*	127	87	100	9
66	Digital Radish	0.5	72	↑	34	100	100	12
67	Realia Marketing	0.5	69	↑	63	68	100	10
68	Novacom	0.4	71	↑	20	100	100	7
69	The Product Marketing Company	0.3	New entry	*	-1	100	100	4
70	Brew'd Marketing	0.2	74	↑	267	100	100	4

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Top 20 fastest-growing UK B2B marcomms agencies

Rank	Agency	GI YoY change in £m	GI YoY change as %	GI from UK operations in latest financial year	Overall UK league table position this year	Headcount	Headcount % YoY change
1	Oliver	27.9	65	71	1	1258	40
2	OgilvyOne Business	6.4	38	23.3	2	165	0
3	Kingpin	3.3	56	9.2	10	28	56
4	Octopus Group	2	42	6.9	16	55	-8
5	Omobono	2	34	8	13	75	-1
6	Earnest	1.9	119	3.5	37	38	19
7	Pulse	1.9	52	5.6	20	48	100
8	4Ps Marketing	1.8	28	8.2	12	125	9
9	Reading Room	1.6	18	10.3	7	108	-36
10	twogether	1.5	35	5.7	18	101	44
11	Ledger Bennett	1.1	35	4.4	28	70	40
12	Really B2B	1	31	4.2	30	64	28
13	Velocity Partners	0.9	21	5.2	23	46	15
14	MomentumABM	0.9	29	3.9	33	71	27
15	MOI	0.9	28	4.1	31	53	13
16	Purple Agency	0.9	24	4.4	27	174	27
17	DWA	0.8	27	3.9	34	33	27
18	Technical Associates Group	0.8	13	7	15	43	0
19	The Marketing Practice	0.8	9	9.4	8	132	15
20	Quantum Marketing	0.8	17	5.4	22	100	0

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Top 13 international B2B marcomms agencies

Rank	Agency	Global GI in £m in latest financial year	Global GI in £m in previous financial year	YoY global GI change as £m	YoY global GI change as %	International GI as % 2016-17
1	Oliver	96	51.3	44.7	87	26
2	gyro	61.6	67.7	-6.1	-10	n/a
3	Expandi Group	39.9	37.8	2.2	6	49
4	Radley Yeldar	15	17.5	-2.5	-14	30
5	Gravity London	16.5	15	1.5	10	50
6	April Six	9	7.6	1.4	18	38
7	Stein IAS	13	10.2	2.8	27	58
8	DirectionGroup	7.1	5.1	1.9	38	29
9	MOI	5.8	4.6	1.2	27	30
10	Oakwood Agency	4.8	4.4	0.4	9	28
11	The Crocodile	3	2.6	0.3	13	25
12	Upp B2B	1.4	N/A	N/A	N/A	25
13	White Clarke Creative	1.2	1.1	0.1	7	42

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Top 24 UK B2B PR agencies

Rank	Agency	GI in £m in latest financial year	GI in £m from previous financial year	% YoY GI change	PR league table rank in 2016-17	Change	Headcount	Headcount % YoY change
1	Lansons	11	11.4	-4	1	-	108	-8
2	Kingpin	10	6.2	62	New entry	*	28	56
3	Nelson Bostock Unlimited	7.3	7.5	-3	2	↓	81	3
4	Octopus Group	6.9	6	14	New entry	*	55	-8
5	Harvard	5.4	4	33	New entry	*	54	29
6	Speed Communications	4.8	4.8	1	4	↓	51	-26
7	Wyatt International	4.6	4.5	2	New entry	*	37	0
8	Eulogy	4.5	4.1	9	5	↑	53	4
9	CCgroup	3.9	2.8	37	8	↓	32	78
10	Brandformula	3.7	3.4	11	New entry	*	32	19
11	Red Lorry Yellow Lorry	2.5	2.3	8	10	↓	29	16
12	Chameleon	1.9	1.7	10	New entry	*	16	7

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Rank	Agency	GI in £m in latest financial year	GI in £m from previous financial year	% YoY GI change	PR league table rank in 2016-17	Change	Headcount	Headcount % YoY change
13	Wildfire	1.9	2.1	-10	New entry	*	23	-8
14	Babel	1.7	1.6	5	11	↓	13	-19
15	Napier Partnership	1.3	1.1	13	9	↓	17	6
16	Neo PR	1.1	0.9	26	New entry	*	13	44
17	Sherpa	0.7	0.3	100	New entry	*	12	140
18	Realia Marketing	0.7	0.5	34	New entry	*	10	67
19	The Marketing Pod	0.7	0.6	17	New entry	*	8	14
20	Fourth Day	0.7	0.5	18	15	↓	12	20
21	4CM	0.6	0.5	26	New entry	*	14	56
22	CommsCo	0.6	0.4	64	16	↓	10	43
23	Skout	0.4	0.3	6	18	↓	6	20
24	The Product Marketing Company	0.3	0.1	-1	New entry	*	4	-20

Key:

New entry:
Included in the survey for the first time
Re-entry:
Returning to the survey after a year's absence
New agency:
Newly formed agency

Gross income is calculated by deducting external media and production costs from the invoiced total. It includes income from all above-the-line and below-the-line activity. If the agency has been subject to a takeover or merger during the financial year in question, gross income includes the combined figure.

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The B2B Marketing Awards proved that Gravity Global sets the benchmark for all other agencies.

We were thrilled to be the most nominated agency at the B2B Marketing Awards. Ending up with 10 nominations – a new industry record!

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- Best Product Launch Campaign
- B2B Bravery Award
- **Grand Prix Campaign of the Year**

Gravity Global is an integrated B2B communications agency covering five continents, and is a key driver of industry best practice. Gravity is proving the power of a global footprint by successfully introducing our clients' brands to the world. To engage the force of Gravity for your business call Chris Omotosho on **+44 (0)20 7330 8810** or find out more at gravityglobal.com

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Section 2

League table analysis

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The high flyers

The UK's most successful B2B agencies have forged very different paths, and have been prosperous for very different reasons. While the environment is uncertain, all remain positive about the opportunities for the future, and their prospects for success. By **Joel Harrison**

There are some subtle yet profound differences in this year's B2B Marketing agencies league table, compared to last year's. These differences are both across the board and in the top five.

Looking at the league table (p8) as a whole, the most obvious thing to note is that the number of participating agencies has dropped from 75 to 70, with a significant proportion of those included providing data for the first time this year. Correspondingly, this means a significant number of those who have previously featured have declined to be included – and in most cases this is likely to be due to their figures showing a lack of growth, or even a decline in revenues over the previous financial year. It will be interesting to see if they reappear the following year, as is often the case.

Of the top five agencies, the list is largely unchanged, albeit with the significant absence of last year's highest-placed agency Amaze, presumably for the reasons outlined above. Conveniently, or perhaps ironically, Amaze have been replaced in the top five by St Ives Group stable mate Realise, which appears in this league table for the first time. This demonstrates that even 14 years after we started reporting this data to the market, we still find previously unknown agencies popping out of the woodwork. There are, as yet uncharted depths and breadths to B2B marketing.

New ways of working

So, how did the top five agencies perform this year, and what were the keys to their success? For runaway table topper Oliver, the success it has achieved over the past 12 months is due to a combination of international expansion plus the maturation of their model, which builds and manages in-client marketing teams.

"Our ethos and model has really taken off," says Sharon Whale, CEO of Oliver. "It's always been successful, but increasingly so over the past two or three years. Knowledge of this model is significant – understanding of the market has fuelled our growth. Competition is increasing, but we're still the only people set up from

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"Everyone is under pressure to do more with less. There's lots of downsizing inside clients, but at the same time, they're being asked to do more with digital and social."

Raffaele Apostoliti, president and CEO, Expandi Group



"Excellent B2B marketing is rooted in great insight, it's customer-obsessed, it's measurable and measured, it's a blend of paid, owned and earned, and it's built on great creative."

Kate Cox, CEO, Bray Leino

scratch to enable this. The speed of our expansion has increased recently."

So why are B2B brands switching on to the benefits of in-client agency teams? Whale believes CMOs are focusing on flexible and pragmatic working models and processes. "It's an increasingly agile world, and marketers need to respond in real time. This is what can make them more effective."

She adds that the age-old pressure on client budgets has also contributed to Oliver's success. "Clients are looking to reclaim more value from budgets, and they're coming to us to achieve this," she says.

Budget pressure has also been a significant factor in the success experienced by third-placed Expandi Group in the last 12 months, says Raffaele Apostoliti, president and CEO. "Everyone is under pressure to do more with less. There's lots of downsizing inside clients, but at the same time they're being asked to do more with digital and social. We're finding clients are buying into an omni-channel agency approach that can manage all solutions and touchpoints. And they're looking for better data and analytics capabilities."

Internal opportunities and existing relationships

Meanwhile, the factors that drove success for second-placed agency OgilvyOne Business are quite different, according to its CEO Sam Williams-Thomas. He says: "We're focusing on existing clients and getting more deeply involved with them. This has really paid off. There are huge opportunities in the wider client portfolio in the Ogilvy group. What was once the 'dirty secret' of doing B2B has become a highly valued specialism, and much appreciated. Other parts of the group are coming to us for advice and support. Their clients are looking for people who understand B2B, and speak their language."

This approach to collaboration is also highlighted by Neil Clayton, commercial director at Realise, no better underlined by the fact that his agency shares an MD with sister agency Amaze (which, as previously mentioned, does not appear in this year's league table). "There are five agencies in the group that are operating in the digital space," says Clayton. "They're all separately branded and commercially independent, but increasingly collaborative. This means we don't need to build teams for each specialism in each agency – we can leverage expertise from within the group."

Realise, OgilvyOne Business, and fourth-placed agency Bray Leino each highlight the decision to be more selective in pitching as the key to their success over the past 12 months. Kate Cox, CEO of Devon-based Bray Leino, says: "There are lots of opportunities around, but we need to be careful that we're not spreading ourselves too thinly. We've changed how we qualify what we should and shouldn't go for.

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"Six months ago, I would have said [the market] was quiet. Other agencies in the group said it was the same. But it has bounced back in the past two months."

Neil Clayton,
chief commercial officer, Realise



"What was once the 'dirty secret' of doing B2B has become a highly valued specialism, and much appreciated."

Sam Williams-Thomas,
CEO, OgilvyOne Business

Our starting position is now 'no' and then we try to persuade ourselves to change our mind. The key questions that we ask ourselves are: can we deliver real value and can they become a long-term client? If the answer is no, we will probably decline."

Sam Williams-Thomas of OgvilyOne Business, adds: "There's a fierce market for net-new business, and this will only get worse. There are more agencies on pitch lists, and chemistry meetings have often gone. It will continue to be tough, but we believe the B2B marketing space is as buoyant as ever."

Unpredictability on the rise

So what are these leading agencies assessments of the current market, and what are their prospects for growth in 2018? All of the agency principles I spoke with steadfastly presented a bullish face, as you would expect, only hinting at challenges or concerns.

Hinting that factors such as Brexit seemed to have dented confidence, Neil Clayton of Realise, says stability is starting to return. "Six months ago, I would have said [the market] was quiet. Other agencies in the group said it was the same. But it has bounced back in the past two months. Not really sure why. We're working on lots of opportunities over Christmas," he shares.

Kate Cox of Bray Leino says the market isn't necessary depressed, but suggests it is more uncertain. "Unpredictability has risen. Decision-making has slowed down, and projects are slower to hit the bottom-line. There's lots of restructuring going on, and clients are changing their mind about what they want to spend on. This isn't necessarily a bad thing. You just need to hold your nerve and be adaptable."

Expandi Group is particularly optimistic about the year ahead. Recently, the company pulled back from its strategy of expanding into emerging markets, which were simply not ready for its fairly advanced technologically-enabled services. In that context, Expandi are now 'doubling-down' on mature Western European and North American markets, and actively looking to acquire a best-in-class content specialist in the UK, to bolster its offering. "We believe it's a very good time to do this," says Apostoliti.

The fundamentals of B2B are unchanged

Looking ahead, the agency principles interviewed were united on one point – that the fundamentals of great B2B marketing will not change in 2018. Kate Cox says: "Excellent B2B marketing is rooted in great insight, it's customer-obsessed, it's measurable and measured, it's a blend of paid, owned and earned, and it's built on great creative. This is the same as it's always been. Different elements of this mix have been more in focus at different times over recent years, but today we need to be more balanced and to do all of them well."

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About the top five agencies

Rank:	Agency:	HQ:	International locations:	Headcount:	Gross income (million):
1	OLIVER	London	Amsterdam, Dubai, Dublin, Frankfurt, Hong Kong, Istanbul, Johannesburg, Kuala Lumpur, New York, Paris, Prague, San Fransisco, Singapore	1258	£71
2	OgilvyOne Business	London	Part of Ogilvy & Mather, with offices in 126 countries	165	£23.3
3	expandi group	Reading	Amsterdam, Boise, Copenhagen, Dubai, Helsinki, Johnnesburg, Madrid, Milan, Moscow, Mountain View, Munich, Nice, Oslo, Paris, Singapore, Stockholm, Tel Aviv, Vienna, Warsaw	440	£20.4
4	bray leino	Filleigh, Devon	Chicago, Kuala Lumpur, Shanghai, Singapore	400	£20
5	realise	Edinburgh	Part of the St Ives Group, with offices in the US, China and Singapore	143	£11.1

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The ones to watch

This year's Fastest Growing Agencies League Table highlights the evolving nature of the B2B agencies sector as never before, with both programmatic and PR agencies becoming more prominent than ever, writes **Joel Harrison**

Due to the significant increase in gross income they reported for the financial year, two of the largest B2B agencies also feature prominently in this year's astest growing agencies league table (p11).

Oliver and OgilvyOne Business saw gross income grow by 65% and 38% respectively – phenomenal performances for agencies that are already of significant size and stature, albeit with extremely different business models.

Oliver's figures equate to an almost £28 million increase to their gross income. OgilvyOne Business grew by an impressive £6.5 million. This was against a backdrop of more disappointing figures for the wider WPP Group, as widely reported, which must make their performance all the more satisfying internally.

OgilvyOne Business' figures still include the results for the former DNX operation, which it acquired in 2014, and retains in order to manage client conflict. However, far from running down this operation, DNX has now opened a low-key satellite office in the Bay Area to deal with one of its larger clients. This suggests there may be life in the DNX brand yet. For further insights into what has made these two very different agencies successful, see the feature on page 18, where senior figures from both operations are interviewed.

Programmatic performers

In third place on the fastest growing agencies league table (p11), not at quite the same level as the two above but beating others by a clear margin, is Kingpin Group.

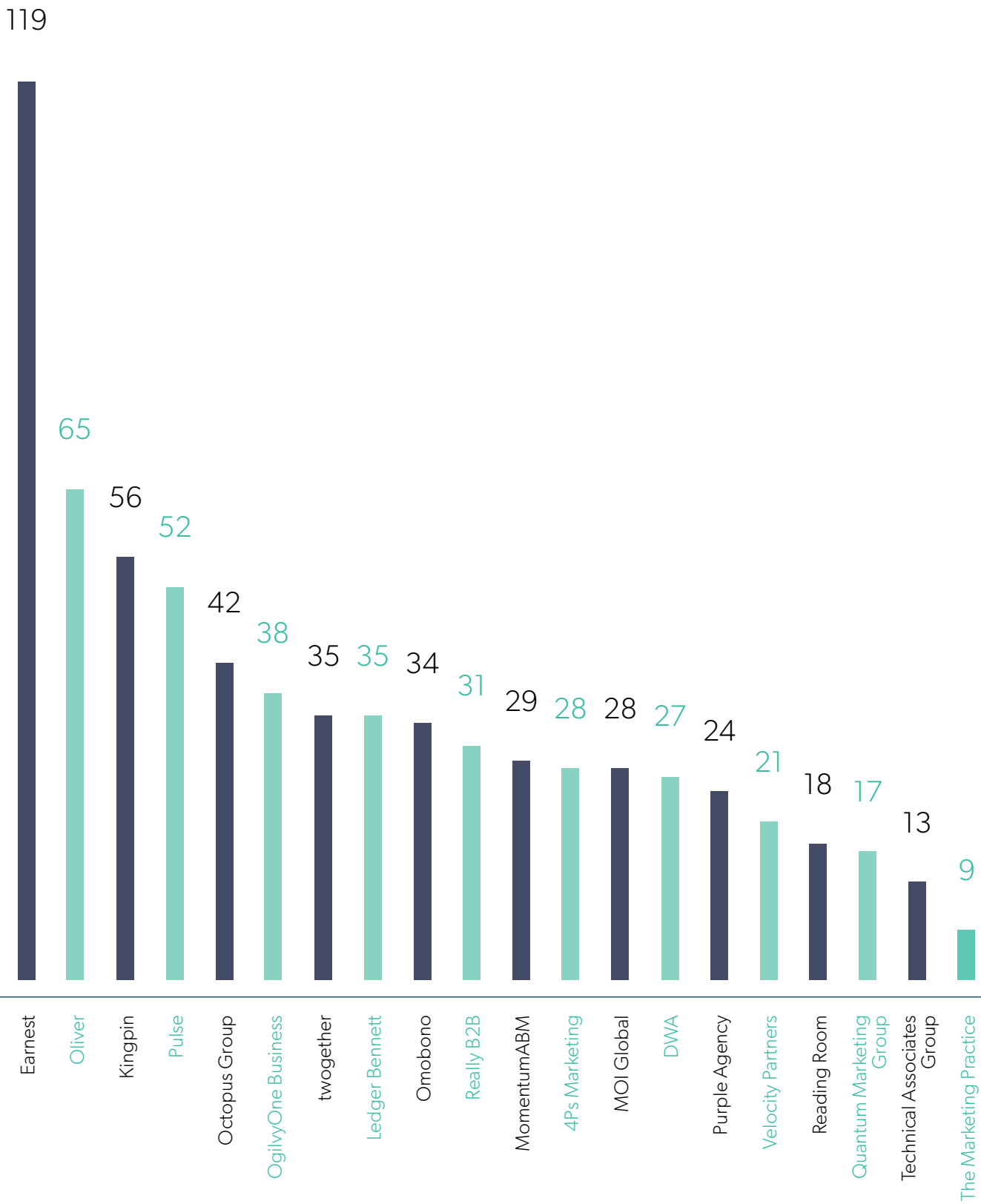
Their latest figures represent a continuation of excellent performance over recent years, which see them rise to 10th place on the main agencies league table. It also represents the agency's further evolution from its origins as a demand generation or media buying outfit, to a far more rounded and sophisticated operation with an emphasis on data and technology.

There's a similar story behind Pulse, which is at seventh place despite having only been in operation for four and a half years, following MD Chris Bagnall's unceremonious departure from DWA (which sits at 17th on this list). Pulse reported a 52% increase in gross income, placing it third among this group of top performers in terms of percentage improvement. This is a significant achievement for an agency that's still in its infancy.

Perhaps more significantly, is the inclusion of Kingpin, Pulse and DWA in the fastest growing league table, all of which hail from a less traditional 'creative' space, suggesting a shift in the overall profile of the B2B agencies landscape. In particular, it reflects

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Fastest growing agencies ranked by year-on-year gross income percentage change



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Ones to watch

While the spotlight should rightly be shone on those established agencies that have shown strong performances in the past 12 months, it's also worth highlighting the companies at the bottom of the main league table, where some of the smaller outfits have put in phenomenal performances. In particular, the likes of Brew'd Marketing, Realia, Modern B2B, Sherpa, Digital Radish and Lesniak Swann, have fared well in this period. They represent the agencies to watch, especially if you're a client looking for smaller and potentially hungrier and more nimble operations to work with.

the increasing prevalence of programmatic (not strictly in the sense of retargeting), technology and insight skills.

PR agencies in the mix

Fourth place on this list is Octopus Group, whose prominence highlights another trend in the B2B agency community – the blurring of boundaries between PR and marcomms agencies. While a number of agencies still define themselves as 'PR' at least in part, the transformation of the media sector in recent years has muddied the once clear water between these two formerly distinct types of activities.

For this reason, the likes of Octopus, Nelson Bostock and Eulogy feature on both the PR and the main league table. April Six has gone so far as to acquire the former Proof PR operation to bolster its offering in this area.

Octopus' performance over the past 12 months, which shows an increase in gross income by 42% (or over £2 million), suggests that it's at the vanguard of this new hybrid form of agency – and is very successful at offering clients the best of both worlds.

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Cambridge-based Omobono has also reported strong performance in the financial year to 2017. With gross income increasing by over a third, it's the fifth fastest growing company on the table. Omobono has long since outgrown its Cambridge HQ, and now has offices in London, Bristol and Chicago. This places it foremost among a growing cluster of UK agencies with a firm foothold in the US – which also includes The Marketing Practice, at 19th place, and Ledger Bennett, in 12th place.

The agency showing the biggest increase in gross income in percentage terms over the past 12 months is Earnest (in at sixth place). It posted a significant year-on-year growth of 118%, equal to £1.9 million. These figures can be seen as a return to form for Oxford Circus-based Earnest, which did not feature in last year's league table. It also confirms its status as one of the rising stars in B2B, having won 'Agency of the year' at the B2B Marketing Awards on a number of occasions.

In 10th place in the fastest growing agencies league table is twogether, which emerged from an extremely turbulent period in its recent history and now appears to be thriving as part of the transatlantic Next 15 Group (which also recently acquired Velocity Partners, at 13th place). Twogether's success was recently capped by pipping Earnest to the post and being crowned B2B Marketing Awards communications agency of the year 2017, in November last year.

Stars of the future

Another notable inclusion in the fastest growing agencies league table is Really B2B, which together with sister telemarketing agency MarketMakers, was acquired by Centaur Publishing (owner of the *Marketing Week* and Econsultancy brands) in 2017. While Really B2B only moved up one place in the league table, its inclusion is just reward for the swift and steady progress it made from being a mere offshoot of the highly successful MarketMakers operation, to a real B2B powerhouse in its own right. With a string of B2B Marketing Awards to back it up and a sharp trajectory projected, we can expect Really B2B to become an increasing source of competition to its bigger and more established contemporaries.

The list of rapidly growing agencies also underlines the progress made by account-based marketing specialist MomentumABM, which continues steady progress up the hierarchy of B2B agencies. This mirrors the increasing awareness and interest regarding all things account-based. The chief protagonists and leaders in this field (agency side, at least) are MomentumABM and Pulse, but we can expect more agencies to add it to their list of competencies as the ABM bandwagon rolls onward.

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Section 3

Survey analysis

Agencies flourish despite market uncertainty	28
4 predictions: What agencies can expect in 2018	34
The trends your competitors and clients are investing in	38

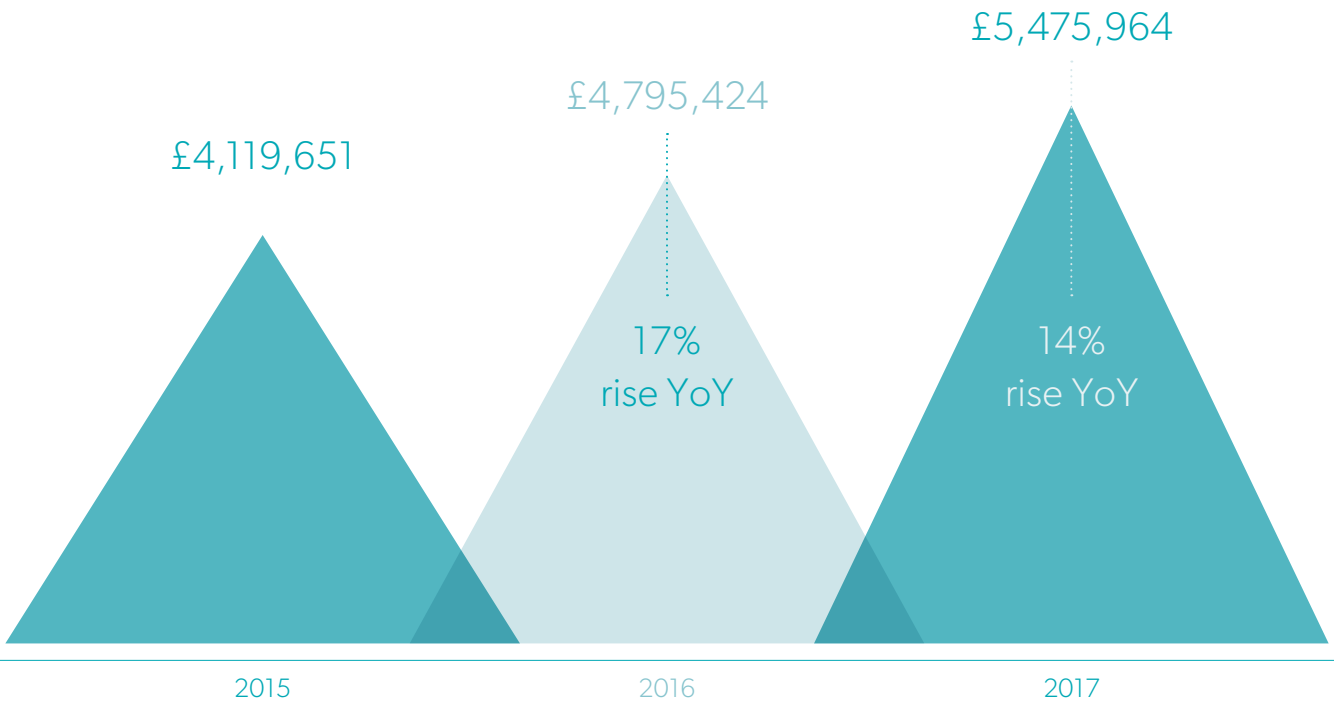
Agencies flourish despite market uncertainty

Paul Snell reveals the stand-out findings from this year's annual B2B Agencies Benchmarking Report, which quizzes industry players for their views on the market.

The overarching finding from this year's Agencies Benchmarking Report is that B2B agencies have had another year of strong performance, despite darkening clouds on the horizon.

The average UK gross income of B2B agencies saw consecutive double-digit growth, rising by 14% to £5,475,964. In addition, the average UK gross income per agency rose by 27%, which will have been boosted by a healthy rise in the number of new entrants to this year's league table. The average headcount was also up slightly from 75 in 2016 to 80 this year.

Average UK gross income



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An antidote to the challenging conditions could be to diversify the client base; the research found just under a third of agencies (31%) generated all their revenue from just five sectors (or fewer)

However, for the first time in four years, the number of agencies that deem the current market as challenging has hit double figures, rising to 13%. While still a comparatively low number this is a significant increase on the previous three years, during which it has hovered around 3–4%.

It's also worth noting that a sizeable number of previous contributors decided not to take part in this year's survey, anecdotally citing a poorer annual performance as one contributing reason. This is likely to have buoyed the overall recorded average UK gross income for 2017 and its year-on-year increase. It also reflects a relatively widespread concern regarding individual financial performance and the strength of the market as a whole.

Agencies find themselves buffeted by twin winds. As we explain in this report, client expectations have changed significantly over the past few years, and this could be the first indication of their impact on agencies. In addition, we know many clients are using the continued economic uncertainty to fundamentally review their relationship with agencies and ensure they are future-proofed. As a result, many are terminating long-standing relationships, or at least forcing agencies to compete for business.

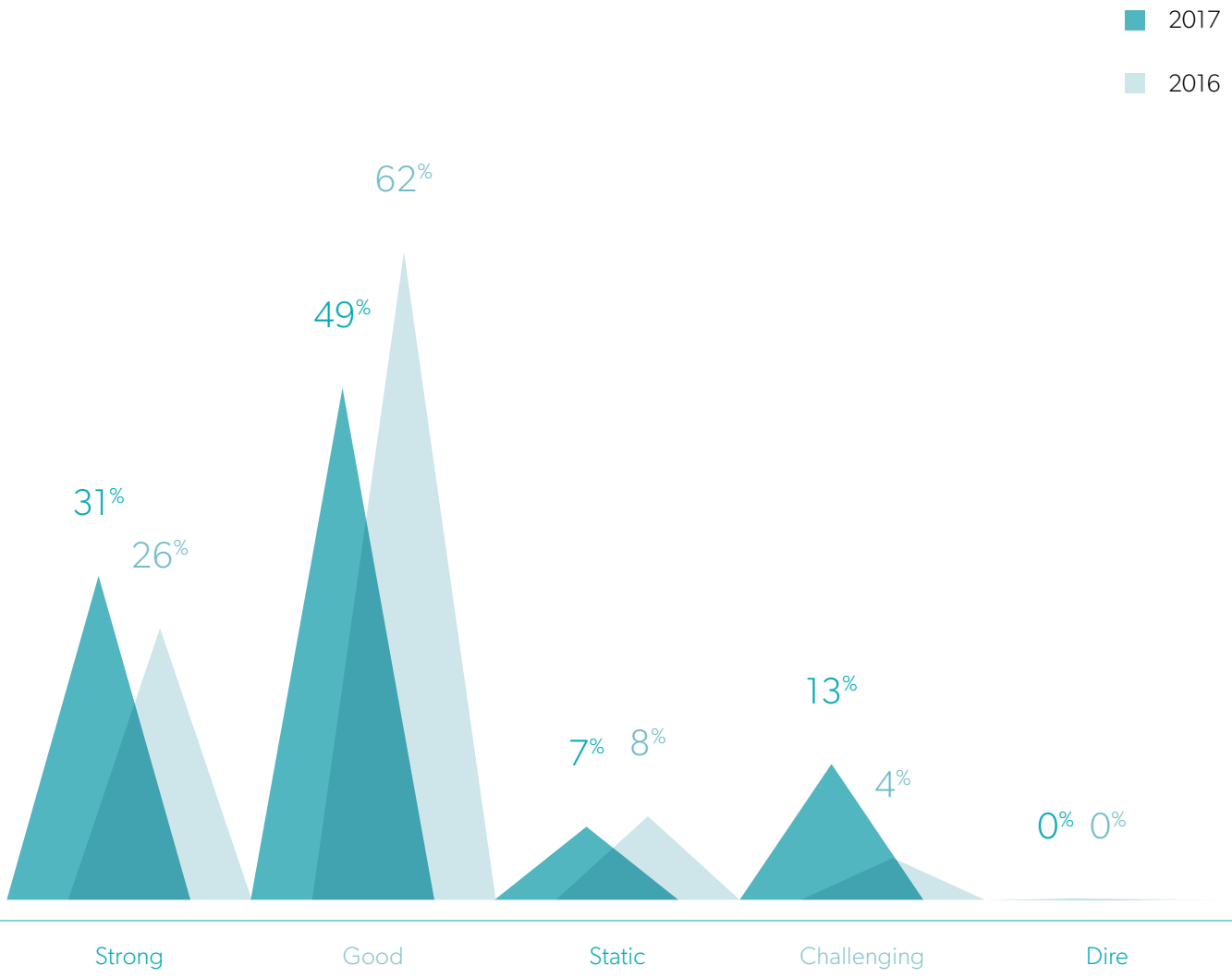
Yet, it should be pointed out that almost half still described market conditions as good, a similar proportion to last year's findings. A further 31% reported they were strong, up 5% on the previous year. This demonstrates that agencies, on the whole, remain positive about the circumstances.

An antidote to the challenging conditions could be to diversify the client base; the research found just under a third of agencies (31%) generated all their revenue from just five sectors (or fewer) in the past 12 months. Some 68% cited IT and telecoms as their strongest sector. The second most served sectors were financial services at shared second place with the industrial, manufacturing and engineering sector, both taking 45%. Under-served markets are leisure and entertainment, health and beauty and not surprisingly, the public sector.

For the first year we included ABM as a service that respondents could list as one of their offerings and already a fifth of agencies told us they are delivering ABM-related services.

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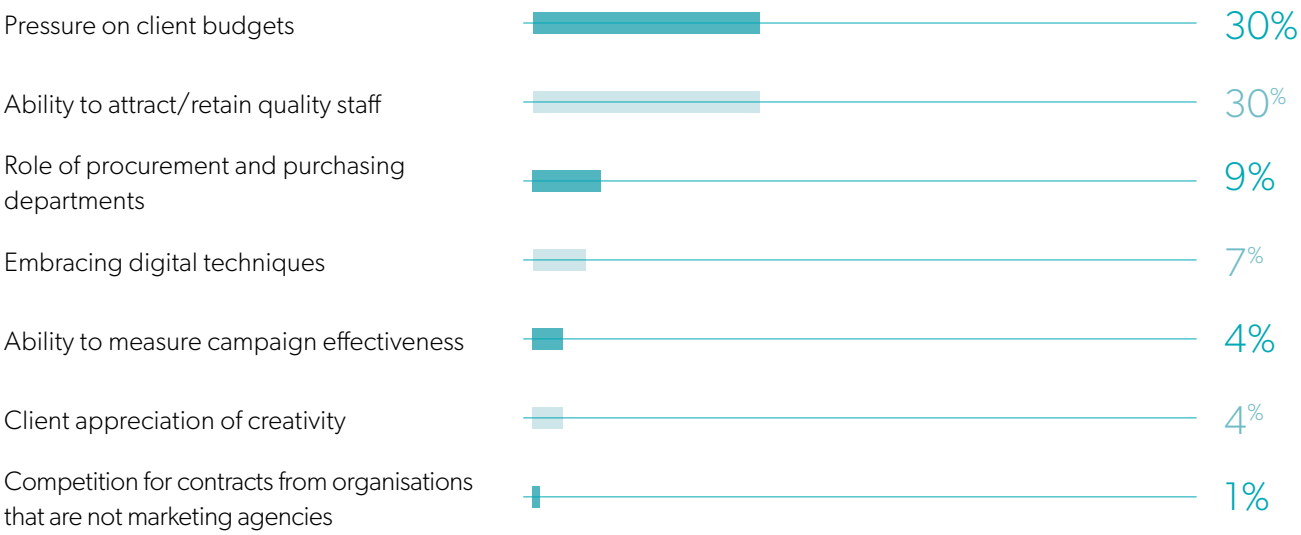
Q: How would you describe the current state of the demand for B2B marketing services?



Pressure on client budgets was cited as the biggest external challenge agencies are facing, while the ability to attract and retain quality staff was the biggest internal concern. These options, which both polled at 30%, were some way ahead of the next perceived challenge, which was the role of procurement and purchasing departments, with 9% of the vote.

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Q: What is your single biggest challenge as an agency at present?



Agencies currently pitch for around 40% of the briefs they receive, and most are successful at winning the business around 60–80% of the time.

While none of the agencies cited pitching as their biggest challenge, their frustrations over them are increasing. A separate survey question revealed the number of agencies reporting the pitching process as being poorly run climbed from 14–28%. Only half (56%) of agencies feel pitching is fair, though this figure is in keeping with our previous surveys and reflects the tricky nature of some aspects of the client/agency relationship.

The usual frustrations

Slow approval processes, too much inward focus and the lack of a clear brief – agencies' frustrations with clients had a familiar ring to them as ever.

Too short-term a focus was another widely expressed complaint, but many agencies refused to put the blame on clients – recognising they too are at the mercy of current tough market conditions.

"Clients are under such pressure to work tactically and not given proper time to develop work that'll benefit the brand in the long term," said one. "Is it their fault? No, it simply reflects the pressures they face in their own organisations. However, the outcome is the work, in the short-term, is less robust, creative and effective, and often needs to be redone as a result."

Another said: "[The biggest frustration is] being tasked to deliver long-term goals against short-term campaign KPIs. Marketing teams are all too aware of the need to develop brand awareness and credibility, but are often pressured to deliver against short term CPA goals that stifle any long-term growth opportunities."

Another consistent grumble – more prominent than in recent years – is that clients are too conservative

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and lack willingness to take risks. One bemoaned: "A frustration is a client seeking creative alternatives and new ideas, but resorting to tried and tested (but failing) conservative approaches – and judging their agency negatively for attempting to be different!"

There's the perception that agencies feel they're trying to move ahead of the curve, but find themselves held back by clients who aren't ready or prepared to accept changes.

Ironically, agencies' failure to introduce new ideas or methods and push the brief were recognised as frustrations clients have with them. "A client should be able to come with their key objectives of what they want to achieve, even for more mediocre projects, and be provided with various ideas and propositions on how to make the project even better, but we know this doesn't always happen with some agencies," said one.

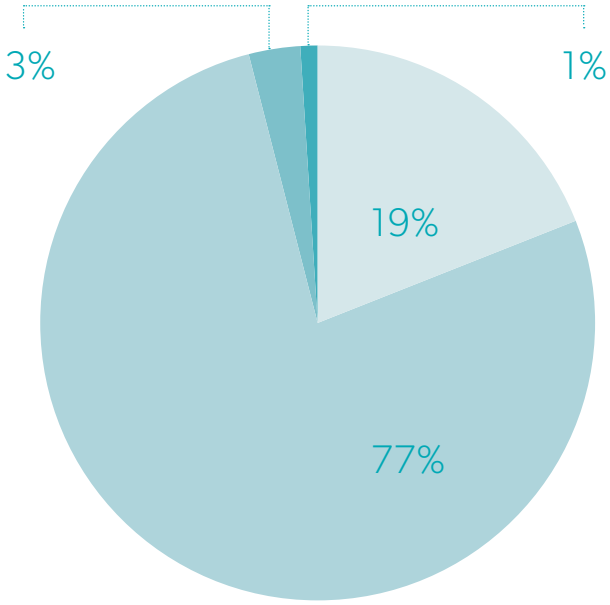
Another complaint was agency turnover of staff: "One area of frustration is around changes in personnel. As a fast-paced industry, this is something which seems to happen more frequently than perhaps elsewhere, and we've been told that changes in account managers and teams can impact and change clients' working relationships," said one.

If you take a look at the Trend Tracker on p40, customer experience ranks right at the top of both client-side and agency priorities. So, it's not surprising to learn from the research that 84% of agencies have increased their focus on CX in the past 12 months – not only to improve the campaign they're working on for clients, but also to provide them with a better service.

It's anticipated that GDPR will have a significant impact of B2B marketing when it comes into force on 25 May 2018. But agencies believe they're ready for the potential implications. When surveyed at the end of 2017, just under a fifth claim to be fully compliant already. A further three-quarters say their preparations mean they expect to be ready by May. This leaves just 4% who either don't expect to be ready in time, or haven't even begun their preparations yet.

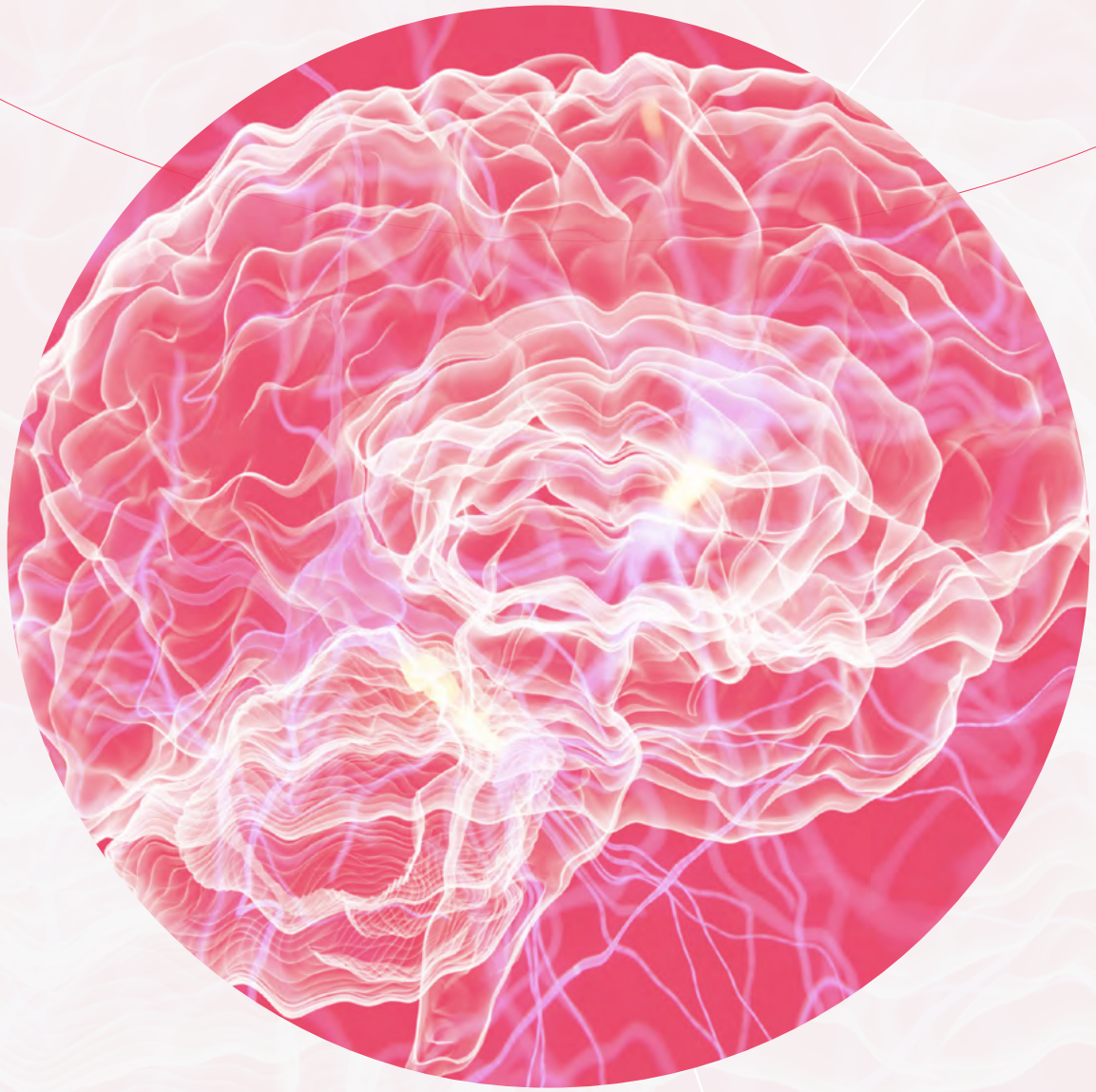
Q: How would you describe your preparation for GDPR?

- 19% We are already fully compliant ahead of the May 2018 deadline
- 77% Out preparations are underway and we expect to be ready by the May deadline
- 3% Our preparations are underway, but we don't expect to be compliant by May
- 1% We have not started to prepare for the GDPR



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4 predictions: What agencies can expect in 2018



Following B2B Marketing's annual Agencies Benchmarking results for 2018, **Paul Snell** reports on the four key industry predictions we've made for the year ahead.

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There is a saying that "predictions are hard, especially about the future". Nevertheless, we've stuck our neck out. Based on the findings of B2B Marketing's 2018 Agencies Benchmarking Survey, and having listened to both agencies and client-side marketers, we've noted four key things dictating the market in the year ahead.

1. The trend for ABM is going strong

Our previous survey predicted that 2017 would be the year in which the hype around account-based marketing (ABM) would drop away, creating clarity on what it can really offer.

We see that the hype is not abating, yet the market is considerably more confident about the benefits ABM can deliver. This year's survey shows that a third of respondents see ABM as the biggest trend in the year ahead. A fifth of agencies already cite ABM as one of the three top revenue-generating services for their business.

This marries well with another key piece of market analysis we carried out, which you can see on page 40. Our Trend Tracker measures the areas in which agencies and clients are investing most attention. Both place ABM as the fourth significant interest, preceded by CX, marketing automation and GDPR. We offer more analysis on those findings on page 41.

Driving this surge of interest in ABM is the demand for a personalised, tailored approach, which we examine more on pages 46–51. Necessity is the other crucial factor behind the enthusiasm for ABM. As returns from traditional mass lead generation continue to dwindle, coupled with the potential of GDPR to dramatically reduce the size of marketing databases, both enterprises and agencies will look for alternatives to drive better results and replace lost revenue streams.

Yet ABM also has the potential to create new pressures. Marketers are already reporting difficulties in finding talent with the right skills and experience. Competition for individuals with a proven track record will only become more acute as agencies endeavor to increase their in-house ABM capabilities.

2. The appetite for B2B acquisitions will continue

The number of mergers and acquisitions involving marcomms agencies in the wider market was relatively flat in 2017, but the past year did feature a flurry of B2B agency and market researcher acquisitions.

Notable M&A deals included Next 15's purchase of Velocity Partners, Centaur's deal for MarketMakers and as 2017 came to a close, Dentsu Aegis Network's purchase of DWA. In addition were the acquisitions of Circle Research, Optimisa Research and Brand Learning.

Buoyed by strategic purchases carried out by traditional publishers and broadcasters, 1H deals for martech firms were at the second highest recorded level, Results International found.

We also examine the spate of M&A deals more on page 46–51. For now we will say that we believe interest in agencies from more 'unconventional' sources will continue this run of B2B acquisitions in the next 12 months.

Last year saw consumer brands including Domino's Pizza and Shiseido sign six figure deals for creative and communication agencies, and this trend could catch on in B2B as brands look to take greater control of marketing. Salesforce has already been active in this area, buying the UX design agency Sequence for a reported $56 million. Most of the large consulting firms, including Deloitte and PwC, have made strategic acquisitions to boost their own creative offer.

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These M&A deals could be perceived as another facet of the war for talent, as companies – particularly those outside the marketing sphere – look for fast access to groups of talented people to quickly scale operations in areas where they don't traditionally hold such expertise.

Speaking to B2B Marketing following Next 15's acquisitions last year, CEO Tim Dyson reiterated the importance of access and retention of talent as part of the group. "Whenever we look at an agency as an acquisition target, we ask ourselves how rigorous they are about talent and customers," he said.

3. Agencies will have to learn to work together

There is no doubt client-agency relationships will continue their evolution in the year ahead and agencies acknowledge that a shift is taking place. According to our survey, more than three-quarters believe clients are looking to form deeper relationships with their agencies. Almost two-thirds believe clients want agencies that are specialists, rather than generalists.

This links to the trend for clients working with numerous companies, each one delivering on a different aspect of the programme. As such, agencies will have to collaborate with, rather than compete against, their rivals.

Chas Moloney, marketing director at Ricoh UK, says: "Historically, we have tried to work with a limited number of agencies. We've struggled to find one that can do everything well. Our aim now is to have a lead agency that can work with other specialists and optimise relationships with them."

As one senior marketing leader shared at a recent B2B Marketing roundtable: "If they can't collaborate they're not someone I can see a long-term relationship with. It reflects badly on them. I don't care if they feel slighted – if they want my money, they're going to have to do it."

4. Agencies will continue to transform into tech vendors

The agency benchmark survey's revelation that 71% of agencies are exploring the development of their own bespoke technology solutions is indicative of how serious the challenges and opportunities of martech really are.

Developing technology internally has multiple benefits, says Paul Hewerdine. He is partner and planning director at Earnest, which developed Event Wallet, an app that allows delegates to collect and share content from exhibitors and sponsors.

"If agencies can build a product and get the commercials right, this enables a different kind of business model. It creates recurring revenues (rather than fee-based work) and the ability to scale without adding more people," he says.

Some agencies are also developing their own tech out of necessity. MomentumABM built an insight platform because nothing existed in the market. CEO Alisha Lyndon says its need for a solution "was so integral to our business that briefing a third-party wasn't viable. In addition, spending time customising and integrating a third-party stack would've taken a similar investment level versus building a priority solution ourselves".

With almost two-thirds looking to take on the tech vendors at their own game, it will be interesting to see whether the year ahead will lead to greater competition between agencies and vendors, or greater collaboration — perhaps resulting in mergers or acquisitions, as discussed previously.

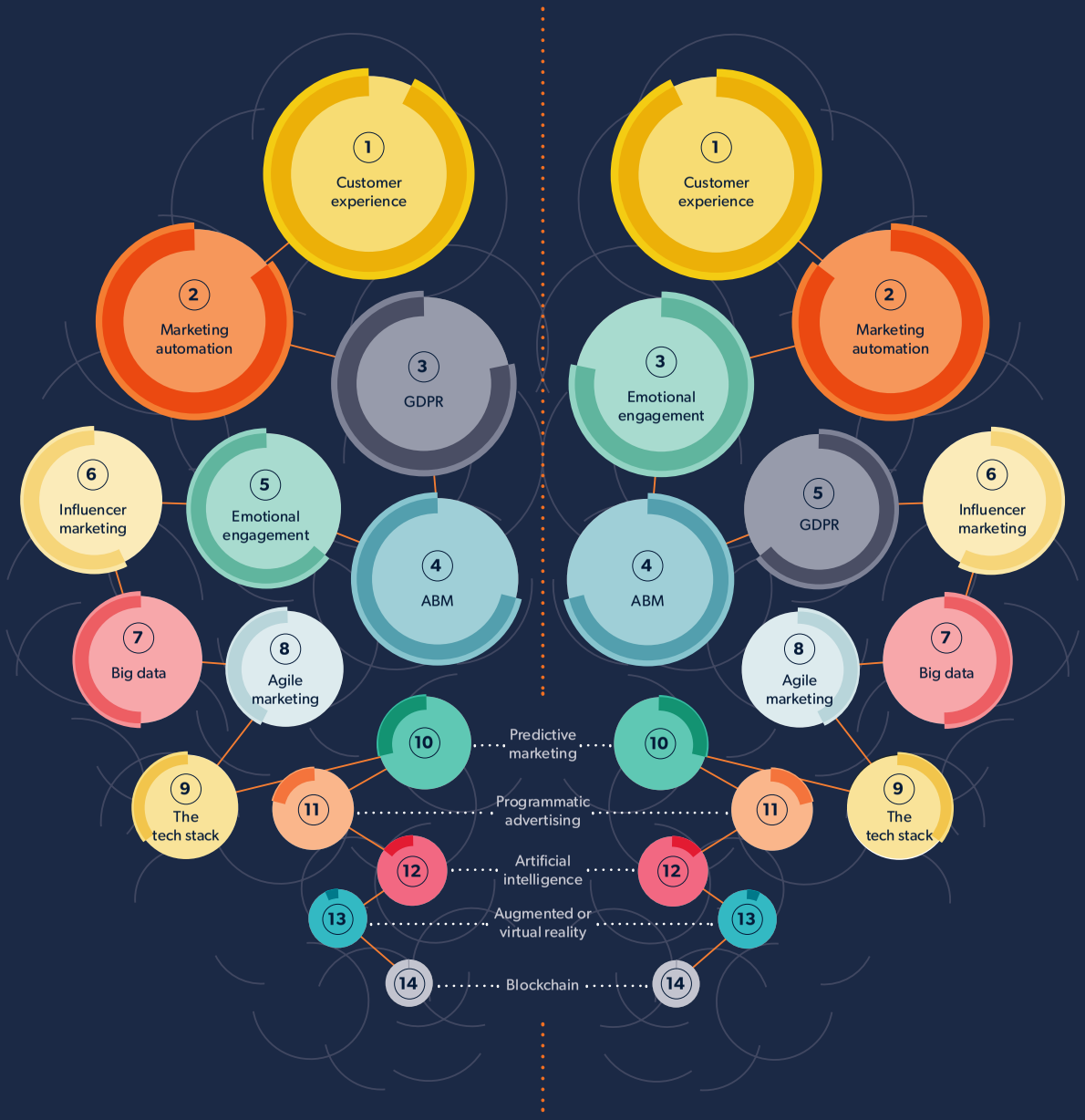
Such is the scale and pace of technology's impact on the market, we've dedicated a whole article to this subject on page 58.

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The B2B Marketing trend tracker: The B2B mind

Client-side

1. Customer experience 79%
2. Marketing automation 69%
3. GDPR 65%
4. ABM 60%
5. Emotional engagement 56%
6. Influencer marketing 56%
7. Big data 54%
8. Agile marketing 54%
9. The tech stack 49%
10. Predictive marketing 45%
11. Programmatic advertising 42%
12. Artificial intelligence 38%
13. Augmented or virtual reality 30%
14. Blockchain 26%



Agency-side

1. Customer experience 81%
2. Marketing automation 70%
3. Emotional engagement 69%
4. ABM 67%
5. GDPR 63%
6. Influencer marketing 61%
7. Big data 59%
8. Agile marketing 56%
9. The tech stack 53%
10. Predictive marketing 51%
11. Programmatic advertising 48%
12. Artificial intelligence 47%
13. Augmented or virtual reality 37%
14. Blockchain 29%

Marketers were asked to rate the attributes shown, based on how focussed their team was on each – from 1 (0% focussed) to 10 (100% focussed). Figures shown are the average scores for each attribute for both agency and client-side marketers.
Those in orange show a variance between the two sides.

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The trends your competitors and clients are investing in

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B2B Marketing, together with its partner Circle, delved into the minds of clients and agencies to determine what they are investing their attention and coffers into. **Mary-Anne Baldwin** reports.

B2B Marketing's Trend Tracker provides a snapshot of which market opportunities B2B marketers are paying attention to – and whether you should switch tack.

The clients and agencies ranked 14 of the most talked about marketing trends to show which your competitors and customers are paying attention to. So what did it find?

It's no surprise, and indeed a relief, that customers are at the heart of B2B marketing. Employees both across the pay scale and the client-agency divide believe that first and foremost, customer experience must receive the most care and attention.

Ranked as the second most important area of interest is automation, along with the productivity and services it can deliver. Looking at the two together, the onus for B2B marketers will be to implement automation with the customer in mind. While it is a means to personalise and offer a bespoke customer experience (both key trends discussed in this report), when carried out badly, automation can quickly dissolve the customer experience. Working towards a seemless and positive transition to digital-enablement will be key.

GDPR. Whose problem is it anyway?

The need to pay great attention to the customer is also being played out in both legal and business terms as marketers prepare themselves for GDPR – another of the industry's focus areas. While customers expect a personalised response and highly relevant offerings, they want them delivered in the knowledge that their data privacy is both protected and respected.

Agencies are slightly less interested in (or perhaps see themselves as less responsible for) GDPR than clients, ranking it the fifth most important trend out of 14, versus third place for clients. Yet, overall there is a close parity between the views of agencies and clients on all emerging trends, the only variance being that agencies ranked emotional engagement above GDPR, and clients vice versa.

So what about the big operational methodologies everyone is talking about? Our analysis shows that account-based marketing (ABM), influencer marketing and the use of big data are all high on the agenda for both clients and agents. ABM is chief among them.

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UK AGENCY AWARDS 2017 SHORTLIST

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Senior level marketers are more focused on current marketing methodologies, which are seen to improve their business over the near-term

Interestingly, predictive and programmatic marketing ranked lower down the list (at 10 and 11 out of 14, respectively). And while the purchase and integration of technology is both high cost and high risk, it ranked at a surprisingly low ninth place.

Opinion divides the ranks

We also asked whether there's internal alignment regarding the importance of these key 14 trends. The answer was, not quite. Senior level marketers are more focused on current marketing methodologies, which are seen to improve their business over the near-term. These trends come with the promise of strong ROI, so are well in line with a marketing leaders' need to deliver shareholder value.

In comparison, their more junior and often younger, colleagues are more interested in early stage innovation including blockchain, AI and augmented and virtual reality.

So are junior marketers more attuned to the changing landscape than their out-dated bosses? Most likely not.

The difference of opinion is probably a reflection of the CMO's short-lived tenure and the impetus to deliver near-term results. They must dance a fine line between being responsive to trends yet accountable to immediate shareholder demands.

It's the next generation of marketers who are buying into, and will have to deliver on, those futuristic opportunities.

Trend Tracker by seniority of those surveyed

	Marketing leaders	Middle/junior marketer	More focused?
Customer Experience	8.3	8	Leader
Marketing Automation	7.2	7	Leader
GDPR	6.4	7.4	Junior
Account Based Marketing (ABM)	6.3	5.6	Leader
Emotional Engagement	6	6.1	Junior
Influencer Marketing	5.8	5.4	Leader
Big Data	5.6	5.3	Leader
Agile Marketing	5.3	5.8	Junior
The Tech Stack	5	4.6	Leader
Predictive Marketing	4.7	4.6	Leader
Programmatic Advertising	4.5	3.9	Leader
Artificial Intelligence	3.7	3.9	Junior
Augmented or Virtual Reality	3.1	3.2	Junior
Blockchain	2.6	2.7	Junior

Marketers were asked to rate the attributes shown, based on how focussed their team was on each – from 1 (0% focussed) to 10 (100% focussed). Figures shown are the average scores for each attribute for both agency and client-side marketers.

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Section 4

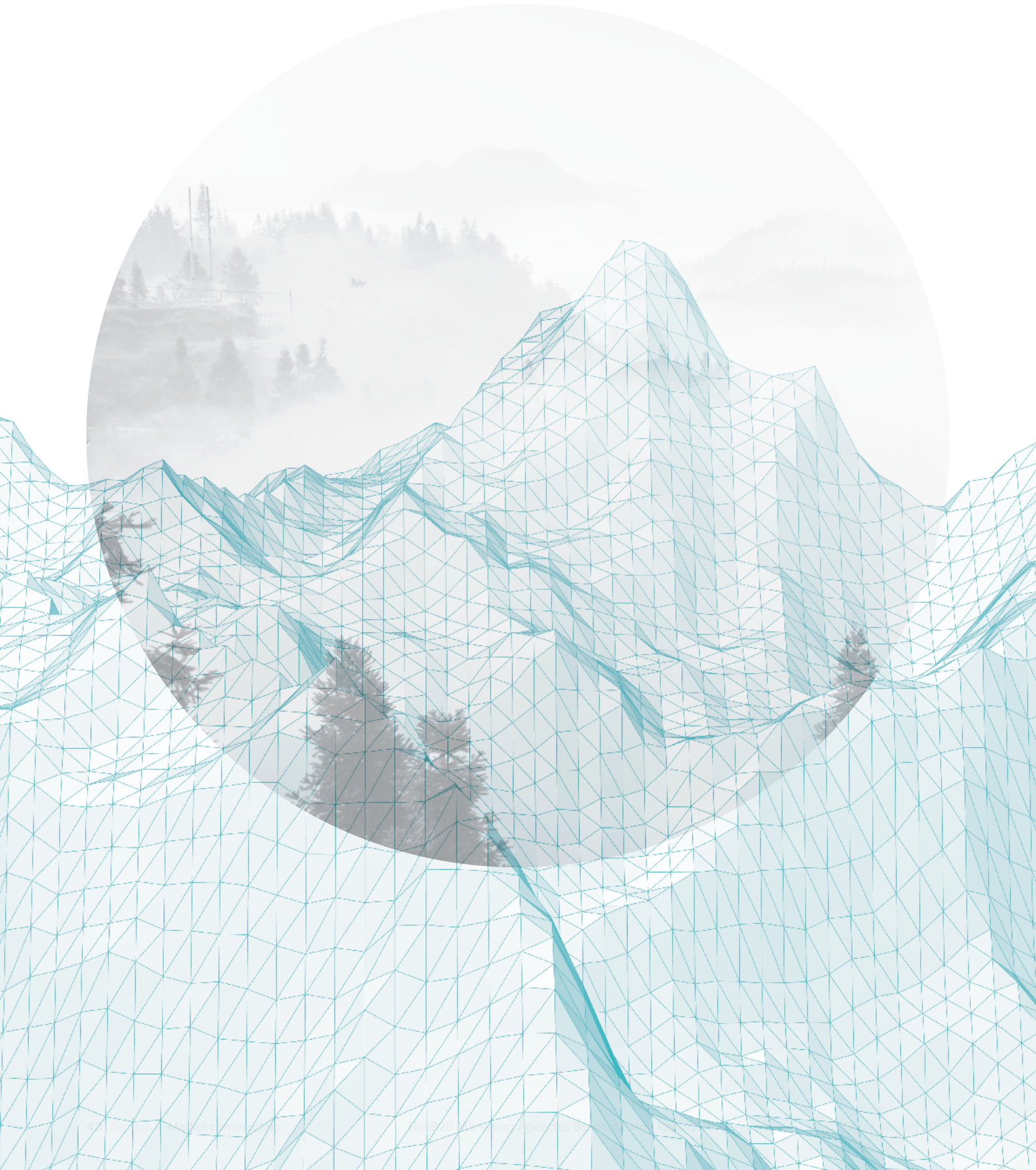
Market commentary

A tailored approach to client demands 43

What clients really expect of agencies – and how it's changed 49

Technology: The agency's game-changer 55

A tailored approach to client demands



Whether you're a boutique agency or a big brand consultancy, today's expectations are that you deliver highly tailored and specialist marketing solutions. Those demands are so high in fact, that many agencies are changing their business model as a result. **Victoria Clarke** reports

The agency landscape is shifting. Some are partnering or purchasing smaller allies, others are developing their own tech-led solutions, but all point to the demand for specialist, tailored solutions. It signals both a change in client expectations and the way in which agencies operate.

Take the recent spike in M&A activity, for example. Large consultancies have been snapping up creative and digital agencies in order to expand their traditional strategic offerings.

"It's well known that big consultancies such as Deloitte, EY and KPMG are on the acquisition trail," notes Peter Young, non-exec board member and marketing consultant. "It wouldn't surprise me if WPP, which has been hungry for buying digital companies, now turns its attention to acquiring consultancies in the same way that KMPG and Deloitte have been doing.

"It makes you wonder whether they're acquiring strategic consultancies because they can see clients are looking for another layer of management thinking that sits alongside the heavy guns at the boardroom table, and helps them plan future directional strategy," he adds.

Michael Smith, European marketing leader, digital strategy at IBM iX, argues the ability to combine digital power with data is probably the biggest motivation behind the most recent acquisitions. "There has been a big shift in the number of partnerships, acquisitions and collaborations taking place in the industry. Agencies are now differentiating on the technology they can access or own thanks to them," he says.

"Clients are now more savvy when it comes to data and technology as both become more infused into daily operations, but for the most part, agencies still play an important role. Agencies that can scale are working effectively with large enterprise clients. Smaller, more niche agencies are recognising the need to be part of a larger group, and similarly larger groups see the need to broaden capabilities and bring in new, more targeted skillsets," adds Michael.

The changing relationship between clients and agencies

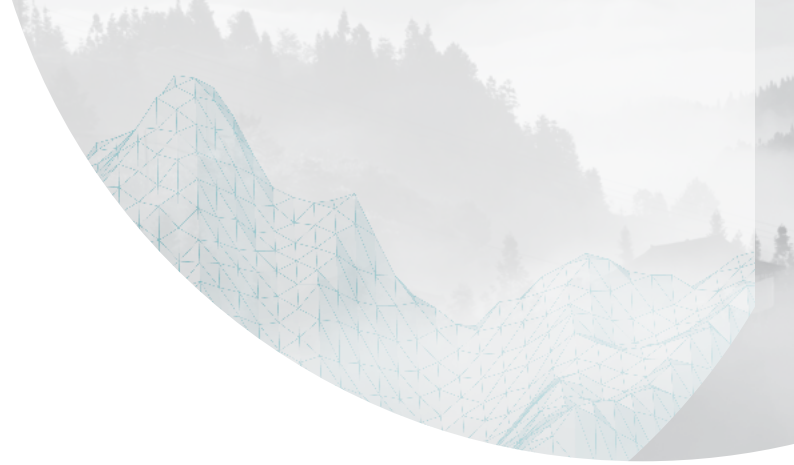
Charged by the creative power of their acquisitions, these goliaths may have the power to push the boundaries of what is offered as an agency and expected as a client.

Annabel Rake, partner and UK CMO at Deloitte, explains that her company is experimenting with changes to the agency fee structure. "The more traditional model of time and materials across the full aspect of a campaign from creative to production isn't necessarily what we're looking for," she explains.

"We're looking for agencies that are willing to flex their cost models.

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An example could be that we want to buy in expertise on creative concept development, but do the production in-house. This means agencies would need to put a price tag on the concept, which isn't easy."

> Small teams of specialists, rather than a large multi-disciplined team, appear to be a very profitable business model

Some agencies have been receptive to these different models. For example, Deloitte has paid agencies to pitch on the understanding that it owns the IP of those creative ideas after the pitch is done.

"For me, it's key to ensure you're transparent about what you're looking for and what, as a brand, what we value and are prepared to invest in," says Annabel.

It's not just the big consultancies that have joined the acquisition trail. Other recent buy-outs have included Velocity and Circle by Next 15 plus MarketMakers by Centaur. The latter acquisition of a telemarketing outfit by a publisher could be the start of a drive to build a new breed of aggressive lead generation operation. In any case, much of the recent M&A activity demonstrates the birth of a new breed of agency model – and paves the way for emerging competitors.

In addition, new types of agencies are popping up as their parent company forebears disband. Simon Rusling, partner and head of marketing at Barnett Waddingham explains: "Some of the bigger agencies that traditionally offered everything are breaking up; marketers within that agency, who have specific technical skills, are setting up boutique agencies on their own."

This supports the growing trend of clients selecting a spread of marketing specialists across a variety of areas. "Small teams of specialists, rather than a large multi-disciplined team, appear to be a very profitable business model for a growing number of smaller agencies. We're seeing this happen quite a bit now, which you didn't a few years ago," Simon observes.

The demand for specialist skills

Clients are demanding that agencies have a deeper understanding of their business, offer more specialist skills and collaborative partnerships. B2B Marketing's latest *Agencies Benchmark Report* shows 86% of clients are seeking to form a deeper relationship with their agencies, with 63% of them looking for specialist, rather than general, skills.

"Back in the day, there was a finite number of marketing disciplines," explains Simon. "Nowadays, however, there are so many more – hence the growing need for specialisms. Clients want more bespoke agencies with a greater level of expertise. It means the agency will talk the same language as them, and understand their pressures and painpoints. It's no longer enough for an agency to say 'We also have experience in X, Y or Z sector.' The most successful agencies will exclusively target certain sectors, and recruit staff with very specific skillsets to support that drive."

With specialist knowledge and expertise – whether in the planning, strategy or mechanics of marketing – agencies are stepping into the territory of business partnership. Liza Hicks, digital marketing and social media leader, IBM UK&I reveals how this is already demonstrated within IBM's marketing culture. She says: "I've been in my digital marketing role for just over two years. During this time, I've witnessed how demands on our agency, and what we do with them, have dramatically evolved.

"It's all down to data and technology, and the role of data insight has only grown in influence. Everyone is data-driven at their core and the focus is on platform-based

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execution. Our agency capability has expanded over the past year. As a global brand, we need a partner that has global reach as well as deep specialist expertise, particularly across all biddable media – programmatic, paid search and social," she explains.

"We have more of a partnership mentality with our agency than ever before. Over the past year, members of our agency team have joined agile marketing teams, together with IBMers, in particular focus areas of our portfolio."

The growing role of tech

As Hicks highlights, technology is becoming more intrinsic to the client-agency relationship. Some agencies are morphing into tech vendors by offering proprietary tools. This trend is evident in B2B Marketing's latest *Agencies Benchmark Report*, which shows a significant 71% of agencies have begun to develop their own bespoke tech solutions in the past 12 months. Other agencies are establishing themselves as experts in marketing automation or authorities in data science. Every instance is a demonstration of how agencies can exploit new technology to offer their client a better service or experience.

"There's an automatic expectation nowadays that all agencies will offer value-added technology to complement their services," explains Simon. "Clients are increasingly looking for speed and agility from their agencies because of the pressure they're under. As such, every agency is upping its game in terms of tech capability. With an increasing amount now available, you just expect agencies to have all the tools and gadgets in order to help clients be more progressive."

Technology is being used to match the growing demand for personalised marketing and the rise of account-based marketing (ABM). Across many disciplines and sectors, buyers are proving more responsive to targeted marketing that is in specific response to their individual needs.

Added to these heightened expectations for personalisation is the demand for privacy, which is reflected by the new data protection law, the GDPR. Of course, GDPR will significantly affect the way B2B marketers collect and process personal data, and imposes some significant fines for non-compliance – up to €20 million or 4% of annual global turnover, whichever is larger.

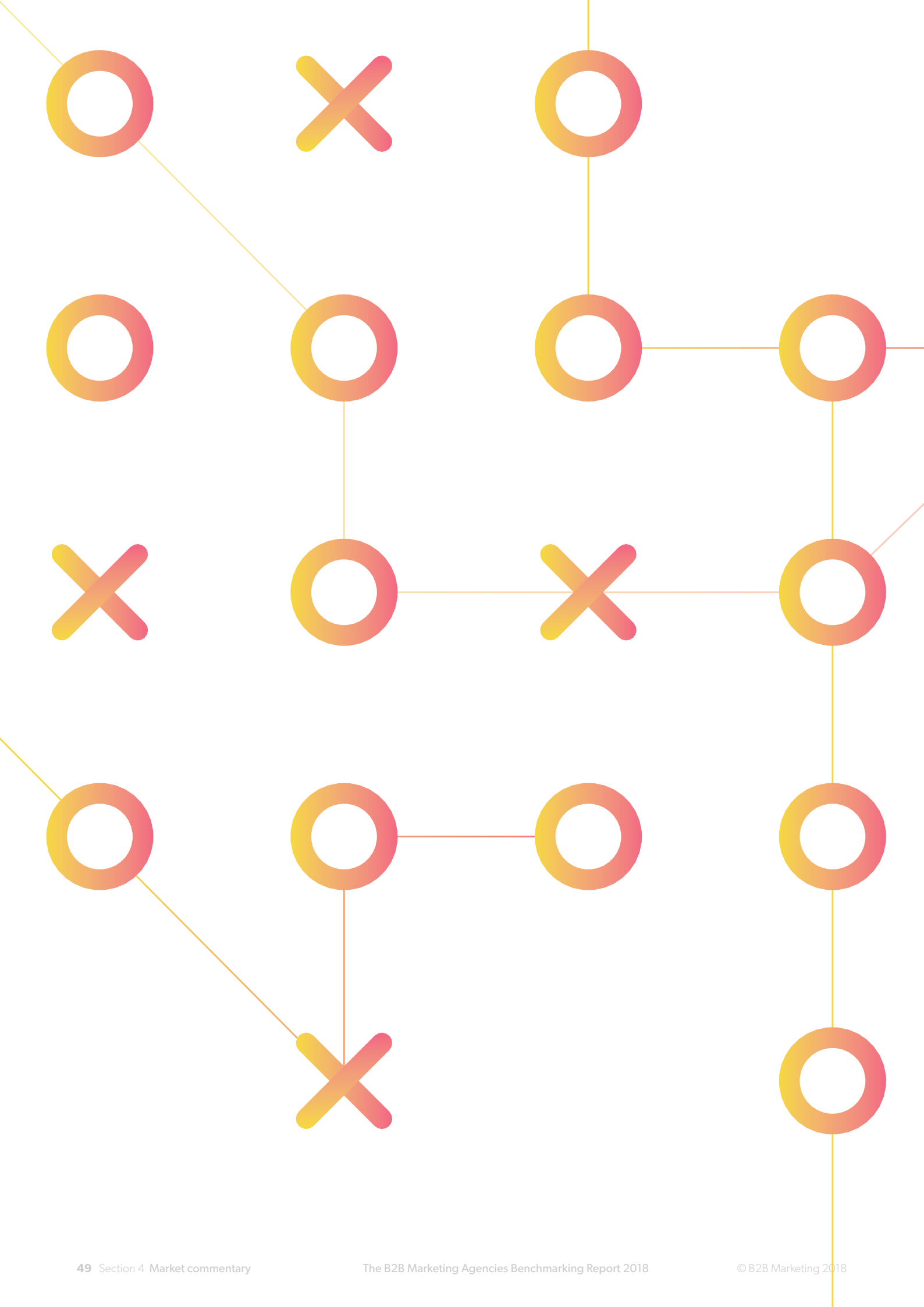
The days of farming huge data spreadsheets are over. The challenge for agencies will be gathering and managing data in an effective and value-enhancing manner, yet many see opportunities among the challenges and most agencies are prepared for change. Our survey shows that 96% of agencies are either already fully compliant or expect to be by May 2018 when the new regulations come into place.

> 71% of agencies have begun to develop their own bespoke tech solutions in the past 12 months

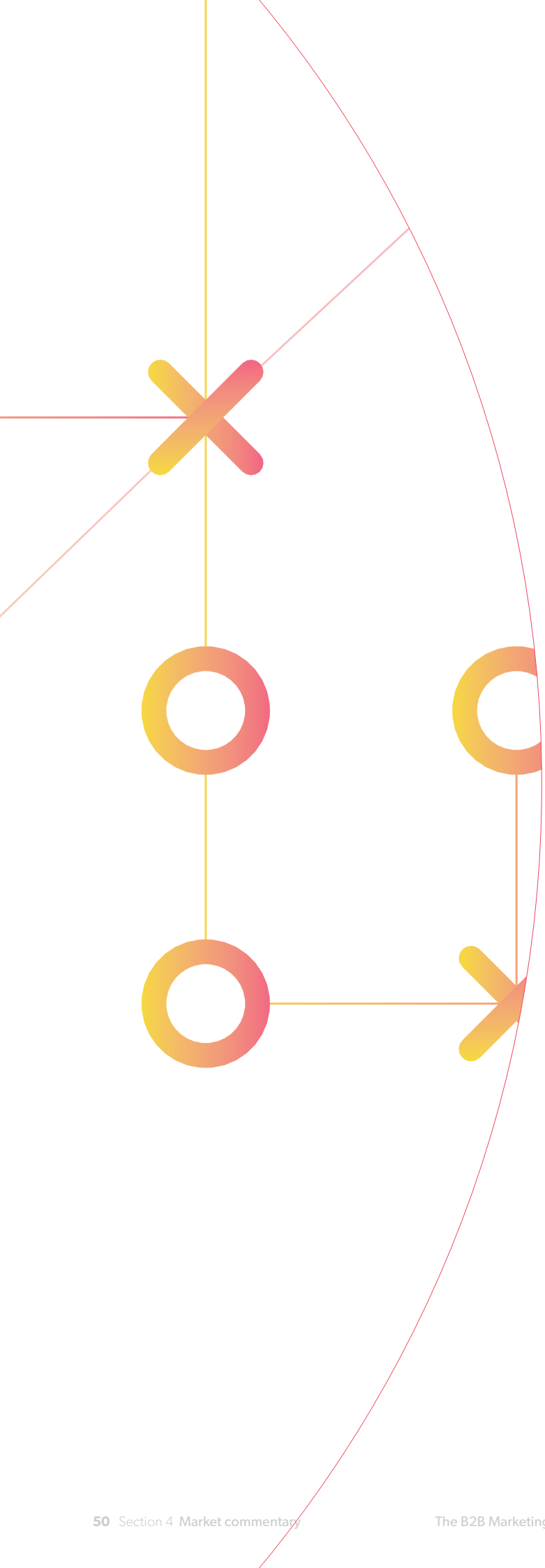
"We're going through a period of dramatic change, both as an industry and as a nation," Rachel Aldighieri, MD of the DMA commented earlier this year. "GDPR, in particular, is a unique opportunity for business transformation and to forge new relationships with customers based on trust. Organisations that put creativity at the heart of a customer-centric approach, not simply viewing the new laws as a legal issue, will thrive in this new environment."

Indeed, a creative and customer-centric approach is core to all of these industry-shifting trends. Now more than ever, there is an emphasis on an in-depth knowledge of customers' needs and having the specific data-driven creative insight to meet them.

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What clients really expect of agencies – and how it's changed

Agencies, and the B2B marketing industry they play in, are in a state of intense evolution. **Victoria Clarke** examines the shifting stakeholder demands, motivations and expectations

Nothing in marketing stays still for long, and it's certainly no different for agencies. Yet it seems there's never been a time when so many factors are converging at once. An unpredictable economy, increased globalisation, fast-paced tech and changing stakeholder expectations are transitioning us to a new era.

Key to any kind of evolution, of course, is adaptation. Relationships with clients are fundamental to the survival of agencies, so it's imperative they adapt to meet the challenges of the current climate.

Communicating value

There's been a real divergence in marketing activity in recent years,

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"Agencies will need to show more evidence on the importance of brand to encourage B2B clients to invest"

Shane Redding,
Marketing consultant,
Think Direct



"Clients are increasingly cherry-picking narrow skills sets rather than traditional agency skills"

Peter Young,
Portfolio NED and marketing consultant

with many brands moving away from big seasonal campaigns to always-on, content-driven marketing (or as some put it, from marketing to publishing). The latter is increasingly quicker and easier for clients to execute internally, and supports the growing need for marketing agility.

A move away from so-called 'burst marketing' campaigns is also a response to changes in the media landscape, in which spending patterns are being reshaped. After all, big budgets are harder to justify. The impact of this change on client-agency relationships is multi-faceted, but the key thing to emerge is that agencies have to prove their value now more than ever. That doesn't just mean value for money, but for strategic planning, innovation and productivity.

Value for innovation is particularly significant because agencies have traditionally been strong at cultivating 'the big idea' – arguably one of the most valuable marketing assets. While always-on marketing has undoubtedly become more popular, every marketer (regardless of which side of the client-agency fence they sit) will agree that the need for strategic, creative endeavour is at its peak.

David Burnand, director of enterprise marketing EMEA at Adobe, says despite the fact some marketing activity is shifting in-house, "smaller agencies in particular have a vital role to play in creative thinking, creative strategy, messaging strategy and audience profiling." After all, the marketplace is crowded with every brand vying for attention so it's crucial they create differentiation and cut-through with bold ideas that push the brand.

Shane Redding, digital, direct and data marketing consultant at Think Direct, echoes this point: "I think the big idea, or unique creative, has become even more important; you need it to create stand out. Drip-fed content just gets lost otherwise, even with excellent targeting. Agencies will need to show more evidence on the importance of brand to encourage B2B clients to invest."

Retainers and roles

Getting clients to invest in the big idea remains tough, particularly when marketing is increasingly focused on measurement, metrics and ROI. Sometimes the most innovative ideas are born out of gut instinct and less easy to assign a numerical value. This creates conflict when clients demand measurable results because they're under pressure to prove a return. The result is agencies may become too fearful of sticking their head above the parapet with bold, creative ideas. However, Peter Young, non-exec board member and marketing consultant, warns: "Agencies should

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be cautious of offering trackable results at the expense of intellectual and strategic rigour."

Peter explains how this conflict is impacting client-agency relationships, particularly with regards to agency tenures. He comments: "Clients are increasingly cherry-picking narrow skills sets [e.g. digital skills] rather than traditional agency skills because the latter can't always deliver numerically measurable results.

"In the past, retainers enabled agencies to invest in delivering strategic impact and commercial planning, as well as working on a specific campaign. As retainers are now in decline due to the cost to clients, agencies are instead being paid to work on a project basis and deliver a single, fairly narrow project. This scenario devalues the contribution an agency can make because it strips away the brains – the intellectual inquisitiveness and strategic planning – and replaces it with the mechanics of the delivery, which is more easily measurable."

This, concludes Peter, creates a very different kind of client-agency relationship.

Transparency through technology

Despite the challenges, Peter highlights that technology is also strengthening client-agency relationships. It enables greater transparency and clearer accountability, both of which are essential for effective partnerships.

> There's an increasing need for openness between agencies and their clients, because marketing is much more accountable

There's an increasing need for openness between agencies and their clients, because marketing is much more accountable. Timelines are shorter and deliverables bigger, so it's crucial agencies can demonstrate results. "Expectations are higher and there is more emphasis on measurement, which means any mismatch between expectations and delivery are more readily exposed," highlights Shane.

David further explains: "Marketers now have the tech and tools at their disposal to measure results more tightly – and show the revenue impact to their business. Internal marketing teams are directly responsible for contributions and pipeline, and they can now show a clear link between investment and return. Clients are being held more accountable and are becoming more strategic, which, in turn, plays out in their agency relationship. If there's a demand on clients to be increasingly transparent in driving results there's a logical knock-on effect to their agencies."

Mutual upskilling

While smart agencies have always been strategic and collaborative, a growing number of organisations are going above and beyond to create more consultative relationships. Clients now demand "better integration in processes to make it easier to work together, a more proactive approach and problem-solving beyond the big idea," comments Shane.

In order to achieve this, agencies are increasingly weaving their teams directly into those of their clients'. In some instances, particularly within larger organisations, agencies are seconding their staff to work directly for a brand. The benefits are that they get fresh insight, ideas and perspective, as well as cutting-edge tech or digital expertise from the agency-side marketer. The agency meanwhile gets first-hand, in-depth knowledge of what makes that brand tick – its challenges, c-suite influencers and decision-makers. The agency can then use that to pitch for business, as well as build on existing relationships.

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"While clients are demanding more from their agencies in terms of skills, agency fees are not reflecting this"

Jason Neale, MD, BMC

As clients and agencies enter into more integrated relationships, we can expect an increase in mutual upskilling and collaboration to help foster these working practices.

> Agencies' margins are being squeezed, which adds pressure to their client relationships

Collaborative challenges

Collaboration is not without its challenges. As marketing becomes more innovative, targeted and technology-driven, it's inevitable the skills needed to execute these activities will need to come from more than one agency. This demands greater collaboration or projects could become fragmented and inharmonious. In the past, virtual agency networks could have helped address this fragmentation, but the relationship with these networks is also changing. David suggests that because clients are seeking consistency across their partners, they're viewing relationships with agency networks as less operationally robust.

Changing skillsets are affecting collaborative relationships in other ways, as Peter explains: "In the past when agencies planned and delivered all aspects of communication, because they were rarely a specialist or niche agency, there was a mutual desire to collaborate in addressing business and commercial issues. Agencies had skill sets that were quite different from their clients and therefore highly sought after and valued.

"The trouble is that some of those skills have become fragmented over time, they've become more specialised, and this has had a somewhat corrosive effect on relationships because now every specialist is protecting their own revenue and bottom line rather than being collaborative and operating as a single unit. This has a knock-on effect with the depth of client relationships."

Skills and fee disconnect

Changing skillsets are affecting client-agency relationships in many ways. Despite the fact the marketing landscape has transformed beyond recognition in recent years, not everything has kept up with this pace of change. According to Jason Neale, MD of the BMC, hourly rates for agency skills have remained static for nearly 20 years and this is having a significant impact on business relationships.

He comments: "While clients are demanding more from their agencies in terms of skills, agency fees are not reflecting this. Technology, in particular, is driving clients to embark on more complex, revenue-generating marketing activity but the skills needed to deliver these campaigns don't come cheap. Salaries for tech and digital roles are typically higher, which means resourcing costs for agencies are rising.

"Clients, on the other hand, are under pressure from their procurement departments to keep costs down when outsourcing to agencies. The result is that agencies' margins are being squeezed, which adds pressure to their client relationships."

To mitigate this scenario, Jason says many agencies take on too much business to try and cover the cost, but there's always a danger of under-delivering when over-committing. The solution, he suggests, is for agencies to "take a bolder, braver stand when it comes to setting their fees."

Being bold and brave is a recurrent theme among marketing leaders with regard to the future of client-agency relationships. Clients are seeking greater innovation, more honest counsel and solution-focused partners, while agencies need to take care not to under value their technical expertise or strategic planning skills. Like any relationship, success will depend on getting the right chemistry, as well as establishing mutual trust and transparency.

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Technology: The agency's game-changer

Technology is driving the current transformation of B2B agencies. It's shifting behaviours, attitudes and client relationships, adding complexity to existing challenges and creating game-changing opportunities. **Victoria Clarke** surveys the landscape

We have all witnessed that technology is an increasingly vital weapon in the marketing armoury, not least as agencies look for ways to overcome escalating content saturation and declining response rates.

Technology is not just about leveraging the latest tools or implementing a sophisticated martech stack. In some instances, it's having much deeper implications and changing the very role of agencies. Many are heavily investing in tech-driven talent pools in order to offer clients greater value and create longer-lasting partnerships. Some are pitching themselves as tech experts (for example in marketing automation) or partnering with other agencies to offer an enhanced digital offering. Other agencies are developing their own proprietary solutions to fill gaps in the marketplace or compete with established vendors.

But it's not all milk and honey. Technology is also making some agencies fearful – that unless they keep pace, they'll be swallowed by one of the big players, or pushed to the side-lines.

Andrew Nicholson, CMO at Kulea MA, comments: "I've seen a number of agencies struggle to keep up with the current pace of change. This seems to be happening more with the traditional marketing agencies that evolved into digital a few years back, and are now having to evolve again as martech forces another paradigm shift."

So how are agencies positioning themselves in an ever-shifting tech landscape? And how is technology helping them to better serve their clients?

A martech paradigm shift

Nicholson's paradigm shift echoes many descriptions of the impact of technology on agencies, including that of David Burnand, director of enterprise marketing EMEA at Adobe.

"Marketing technology is driving divergence in the agency landscape," David explains. "On the one hand, we're seeing major integrators and large networks – such as Accenture, Deloitte and WPP – become increasingly mission-critical when delivering clients' digital experiences, due to their tech-savvy capabilities and huge integration resources. Major B2B brands are increasingly looking for that support in heavy-lifting.

"On the other hand, some smaller agencies that used to offer tech-driven campaigns to major brands are becoming marginalised. They lack the skillsets to fully integrate across all marketing touchpoints, and brands are rightly cautious about data security. As a result, some clients are choosing to bring those core skills in-house."

These changing client needs are forcing agencies to re-evaluate their own offering, and think about how and where they can add value, embrace change and lead progress. One way some agencies are achieving this is by blending technology capabilities and skillsets to create a new agency model that crosses over to the tech terrain.

Tech vendor territory

Agencies are looking for ways to form longer-term relationships with clients. Retention fees are less common, particularly in B2B, so there's a significant level of financial uncertainty because of erratic billing.

It is, therefore, shrewd that many agencies are developing their own tech products to complement or enhance a client's stack. It's hoped this will not only grow the client user base but increase that important sticky engagement with clients and create a more stable income.

Paul Cash, CEO of Rooster Punk, comments: "Some 90% of creative agencies work on a project basis, so once it's over, there's no more fee. This creates an unpredictable level of billing and that's challenging when agencies have overheads to manage.

"Agencies want sticky engagement, and one of the ways they are doing this is by building technology solutions that clients

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must pay for in order to use. This creates a predictable revenue stream and helps agencies create a growing user base of customers."

> Agencies are no longer able to hide their tech of choice behind a cloak of secrecy

Credibility through expertise

Any agency with a digital offering will have its finger on the pulse when it comes to the latest marketing technology. Some, as mentioned, have opted to morph into tech vendors. Others are taking equally progressive steps by pitching themselves as tech experts with training programmes that support their ongoing professional development. This adds considerable credibility and enables them to more effectively (and objectively) counsel clients on the best solutions for their business.

Credibility is key, as Nicholson highlights: "Today's technology doesn't sit in a silo. Best of breed solutions, by their very nature, need to work across a client's martech stack, and therefore clients have to understand how tools function across their business. Agencies are no longer able to hide their tech of choice behind a cloak of secrecy. Because of this, clients are getting more and more clued up on the tools agencies use, and sensibly, they're starting to ask questions. Why is this the best tool for the job? Won't tool X do job Y better? Agencies must be able to provide viable answers (and no, 'Because tool Y pays us a higher commission,' won't cut it!).

"There are a number of agencies that get it – blending the who, how and what of martech into a very compelling proposition that generates significant client returns. These agencies are generally solution agnostic, switching between best of breed alternatives, rather than being tied to a single vendor solution, ensuring each client gets a service and solution that's tailored to their individual needs."

Tech threats and challenges

There are as many challenges as there are opportunities for agencies navigating the technology landscape. Smaller agencies have one particular concern and that revolves around resourcing requirements.

Jason Neale, MD at BMC, says some agencies are frightened of how fast technology is progressing because it makes recruiting for specialist roles almost impossible.

"Agencies are fearful of finding the right skill sets. Particularly as you move away from the big cities, the challenge for many provincial agencies is how they attract the best raw tech talent. It's very difficult for them to compete with agencies based in a big tech hub like London.

"Tech roles typically demand higher salaries because of their specialist skills. However, because spending patterns have changed (e.g. fewer agencies are on retainers), agencies aren't making the same profit margins as they used to so they don't have the budget for these higher paid roles."

Salaries aren't the only obstacle. There's also the threat of technology compromising creativity. The more emphasis there is on marketing automation, measurement and the mechanics of campaign activity, the more danger there is that all this could overshadow the big creative idea. The implications of the impending General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) will also emerge as a key challenge for agencies. Despite these hurdles, most agencies are excited by all that technology offers. With strategy, skills and valour, every agency has the potential to champion tech in a way that adds value to themselves and their clients.

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B2B International

Philosophy

B2B International is the world's largest and most experienced B2B-focused market research firm with offices across Europe, North America and Asia-Pacific. We've carried out over 3000 studies and our client portfolio includes 600 of the world's largest 1500 companies.

For more than 20 years, we've concentrated on B2B markets, knowing they differ strongly from consumer markets and, therefore, need a specialist organisation to research them.

Clients value our depth of knowledge and decades of experience in making sense of complex, often technical, product and industry verticals. Our tailored market research helps our clients make more informed decisions to drive business success.

Our expertise and experience cover an unrivalled range of industry sectors, and our geographic reach is second to none. In 2017 alone, we conducted research in 146 countries and 45 languages.

Our full-service research offering includes market assessment and market entry, segmentation, product development, branding, customer experience and loyalty research, customer/buyer journey research, employee experience, pricing strategy and advertising studies.

Awards

UK Customer Experience Awards (shortlisted)	Insight and feedback – A focus on understanding
UK Customer Experience Awards (shortlisted)	Insight and feedback – A new way of measuring
Confirmit Achievement in Customer Excellence Award (winner)	Insight through a market research agency
Engage Awards 2017 (shortlisted)	Best use of voice of the customer

Key clients

- Molson Coors
- Stanley Black & Decker
- Wolseley
- Xylem
- Kaspersky
- Brother

Specialist sectors

Business and professional services

Industrial, manufacturing, engineering

Chemicals and gases

IT and telecoms

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Nick Hague,

director at B2B International, shares why 2017 was so successful for the company

B2B International has been in existence for 20 years and each year the company has grown in revenue; 2017 was no exception. In fact, last year was our most successful to date, with revenues exceeding £10 million.

The main reason for this was a more focused business development strategy, as well as our overseas offices in New York and Dusseldorf becoming more established.

Our specialism in B2B, along with our understanding of what works in different markets and different cultures around the world, means B2B International is the company many corporates come to when they require market insight to help them confidently move forward with their business decisions.

Through a mixture of online and offline research methods, we helped our client launch new concept initiatives

One such relationship became our most exciting campaign of 2017. It saw us help one of our clients launch their global advisory board, which aims to help small businesses realise the powerful role of digital in gaining competitive advantage, rather than simply seeing communications and IT as a cost base.

Through a mixture of online and offline research methods, we helped our client launch new concept initiatives and test different marketing messages across countries from around the world.

We're excited about what 2018 will bring both in terms of new clients to target, new services offered and new markets to expand into… watch this space!



We have carried out over 3,000 studies



Our client portfolio includes 600 of the world's largest 1,500 companies



In 2017 alone, we have conducted research in 146 countries...



...in 45 languages

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Bray Leino

Philosophy

Many agencies say they're different, but how many truly are?

We're Bray Leino.

We live in a big house in a field in Devon.

So, we're used to challenging expectations.

Every day, we delve deeper, work harder and create more.

Because we know success comes to those prepared to go the extra mile.

We love building brands and businesses.

We know well only succeed if our clients succeed.

To help them get where they want to be, we promise well do whatever it takes.

Awards

IPA award for CPD (platinum)	CPD
The B2B Marketing Awards 2017 (shortlisted)	Agency of the year
The B2B Marketing Awards 2017 (shortlisted)	B2B bravery award

Key clients

- BP
- British Airways
- Castrol
- Siemens
- Visa
- Department for International Trade (DIT)

Specialist sectors



Financial services



Marine and offshore



Industrial, manufacturing and construction



Oil and gas

Date founded	1974
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Adam Holder,
B2B director at Bray Leino

The B2B Agencies Benchmarking Report is a valuable tool for any business that believes a better agency partner is out there. At a glance, it quantifies the scale of an agency's capabilities. And if one has been in the top four for five years in a row – as Bray Leino has – it speaks volumes about the strength of the strategic and creative resources that make such consistent high achievement possible.

But there's much the numbers can't convey about an agency like us – and some of these truths matter even more.

The report can't tell you, for example, how diverse our capabilities are. How, should you need us to, we can develop a strategic brand identity, build an app, deliver and film a 1000-delegate event, make an animation for YouTube, create a ground-breaking global ad campaign, make a hologram, and train your staff on your new brand vision – all from an in-house pool of talent (which extends to North America and Asia).

The report can't tell you how deeply we understand the unique challenges of success in the B2B world; how to manage sales cycles that may be measured in years; how to nurture key accounts that can be worth millions; how to manage a mission-critical distributor network.

Being in the top four for five years speaks volumes about the strength or our strategic and creative resources

Most of all, it can't tell you what it's like to work with an agency so relentlessly committed to your success, it's ready to do whatever it takes to meet your challenges, excite you creatively and build your brand.

There's only one way to find out if an agency's like that. Talk to them.







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Digital Radish

Philosophy

We help brands move fearlessly forward in times of change.

Our team of experienced strategists, creatives and storytellers develop bold brands and campaigns and de-risk big business decisions. To do this, we recruit ambitious, decent people (called Radishes) and keep hold of them by giving them the opportunity to make a real difference to businesses.

We're named after the fastest-growing vegetable in the world, so we know what it means to be agile, and understand the pace needed in the face of change.

We work with clients we like and believe in, and are completely committed to their goals, working side-by-side to achieve them.

Awards

The B2B Marketing Awards 2015 (winner)	Best limited-budget campaign
The B2B Marketing Awards 2016 (winner)	Best limited-budget campaign
The B2B Marketing Awards 2016 (highly commended)	Best product launch
The B2B Marketing People Awards 2017 (highly commended)	Rising star
The B2B Marketing People Awards 2017 (shortlisted)	Creative of the year

Key clients

- APEX Analytix
- Homelyfe
- Sport England
- Trainline
- Unity Technologies
- When You Move

Date founded	2014
UK address	4 Bloomsbury Place, London, WC1A 2QA
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Digital Radish

grew its income by 33% last year. Here, Renaye Edwards, its co-founder, reveals how

CMOs are increasingly looking at more than marketing touchpoints and instead taking control of the entire customer journey. As a strategic-led agency, we work with our clients on business outcomes, as well as marketing. We work iteratively, side-by-side with our clients, which gives us the freedom to test, analyse and react in real-time to get the best results.

In the last year we've grown 33% in gross income, so it's been a really strong year for us. We've done particularly well when we've worked with fast-moving, innovative or recently funded brands going through periods of change. We're built on being agile and fast-paced ourselves, so that focus fits perfectly. A combination of first-hand client-side marketing experience and recruiting exceptionally strategic people has enabled us to have higher-level strategic conversations with business leaders.

One of our most exciting campaigns in 2017 was for Merit, a successful business but a fragmented brand. It had a raft of different services – data, customised software, marketing automation – for different types of end user within the B2B media industry. We helped Merit unify its offering and enabled it to create a brand new product – a highly innovative AI-driven Merit Lab, which brought all of the company's expertise together in one place for a clearer go-to-market proposition. Not only was it an incubator for transformative technology, Merit Lab also sat at the heart of the content strategy, giving the brand a unique, thought-leading voice.

We've outgrown our current premises, so 2018 will deliver a new home for the agency, as well as a continued drive to recruit creative and strategic management consultants. We're also looking to expand into the US as a result of client appetite – so more growth is planned all round.



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Gravity Global

Philosophy

Firstly, we're down to earth. Secondly, we're an award-winning dedicated global B2B agency network. We serve clients around the world that face challenging business issues and operating in similarly challenging environments. The results our clients achieve are testament to our marketing models, processes and industry-leading creativity. If it looks like a tough brief, we're the guys.

The world is a difficult place for brands. It's more connected, more involved, more immediate and more competitive. Our research shows many CEOs have lost faith in the marketing function of their organisations. We're here to restore that faith through strong returns on investment for marketing spend.

Gravity is integrated and full service across all channels from strategic consultation to implementation.

Awards

The B2B Marketing Awards 2017 (winner)	Best multichannel campaign
The B2B Marketing Awards 2017 (winner)	B2B bravery award
The B2B Marketing Awards 2017 (winner)	Grand Prix campaign of the year

Key clients

- Airbus
- Aviva Investors
- CFM
- Embraer
- Janus Henderson
- Sage

Date founded	1989 as A.G.A Group, 2010 as Gravity
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Mark Lethbridge,
CEO of Gravity Global shares the secret of their success

I see a significant amount of uncertainty in the market and across the UK in general, which is leading companies to take a reserved approach to their marketing campaigns. That's a problem, because too much fear leads to safe ideas and tired approaches. But it also leads to opportunity for those who are courageous, and that's where we've focused our attention.

We've had considerable success this past year in convincing clients to take a bold and brave approach. Our campaign for Embraer and its E2 aircraft, for example, delivered a 1305% increase in engagement.

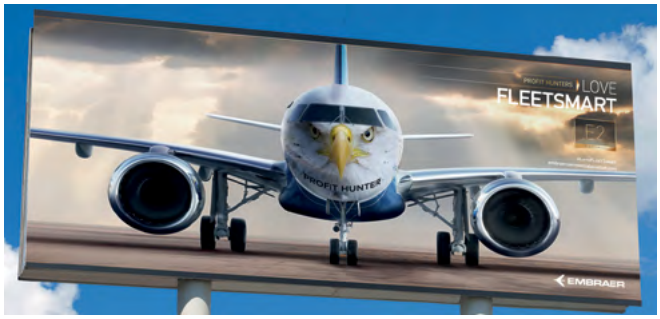
It also swept up four B2B Marketing awards, including the top trophy of the night, the Grand Prix. Another was the B2B bravery award, which we're also very proud of as it reflects the ethos behind our success.

We like to take assertive moves. We renamed Embraer's aircraft 'The Profit Hunter' and repainted the nose of one of its £50 million aircraft with the image of an eagle. They were risky moves but every element of boldness garnered increasing returns.

We also embraced some methods that I see as trends for the year ahead; really knowing the customer at an intricate level, emotive storytelling and the use of innovative technologies, such as VR. For Embraer that meant allowing people to experience the E2 in a totally virtual environment. We've done similar things with other clients, such as the engine manufacturer CFM, where we've made brand storytelling immersive with VR.

> I see a lot of uncertainty in the market and across the UK in general, which is leading companies to take a reserved approach to their marketing campaigns

B2B marketing has to be creative and strong-minded to cut through the noise. We're really proud to be an example of what happens when you get that right.









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Kingpin

Philosophy

Our philosophy is built on our principle of addressing the audience first. It doesn't matter what we think looks or sounds good, or indeed what our clients and partners do. What matters most is what *their* clients and prospects think, feel and respond to.

Our core mantra is simple: 'Dive deeper. Reach further'. It's something we live and breathe every day. It's a cliché perhaps to say it's in our DNA. But it is.

Through a combination of insight, experience and knowledge we develop real-time intelligence that keeps up with your target audience, including what motivates their purchase decisions. This means we always know exactly how to position your brand, to who and when. We turn data into execution and turn execution into pipeline. We're not into spending for the sake of it.

We're also really not into poppycock, hogwash or gibberish. We'll never just tell you what you want to hear; it'll always be about what's best for you and your audience. Not us.

Kingpin strives to be the world's leading partner for delivering intelligent insights on how to engage and influence B2B audiences. We are the go-to marketing gurus for companies seeking data-driven decisions that get results.

Awards

Computing's Tech Marketing & Innovation Awards 2017 (winner)	Marketing agency of the year
Computing's Tech Marketing & Innovation Awards 2017 (winner)	Multi-channel campaign of the year

Key clients

- Commvault Systems Limited
- LogRhythm Ltd
- McAfee
- Microsoft Corporation
- Proofpoint
- Quest Software
- Trend Micro EMEA Ltd

Specialist sectors

Financial services

Retail

Media

Technology

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James Foulkes,

director and co-founder, surveys 2017 and the year ahead at Kingpin

2017 was a fantastic year for us. We increased our US staff numbers by 300% and grew our global revenues by over 60%. I'd put that down to two basics; recruiting and retaining world-class talent and looking after our customers.

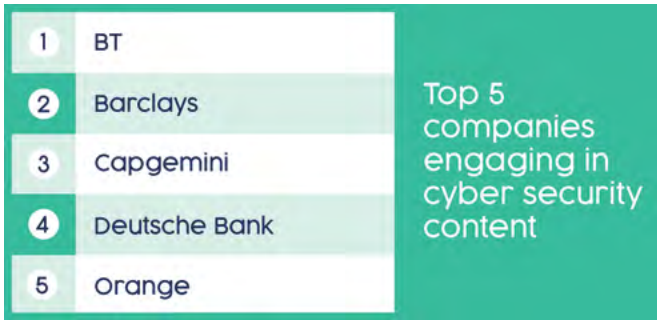
> We're looking for campaigns that have us working as true partners, in it together with the client

We also like to keep a beady eye on the future and tech, hence the development of Argus, our in-house data scoring and validation platform. It becomes better every second of every day and we can now turn this data into enhanced campaign performance, which underpins everything we do. We want to start delivering real-time information on organisations and their content consumption as they're consuming it. By turning this knowledge into true sales acceleration, maybe, just maybe, we can help sales and marketing work in better harmony. That's certainly an aim for 2018.

ABM and organisational scoring are the main things we're working on right now, though it can feel a bit like 'just proper targeted marketing'. Attribution is also key for us. It's something that doesn't feel sexy, but it's the backbone of everything we do. We always ask, how are we helping our clients make wise investments? How will this improve their bottom line? What effect will this have on their customers?

We're looking for campaigns that have us working as true partners, in it together with the client.

A recent project had us working with the client to redefine KPIs and deliver a true omni-channel campaign that included outdoor, offline and hyper-targeted digital – plus a bit of Rickshaw swarming. The results were stunning; 4.8 million impressions, 17,000 conversions and 1100 sales opportunities.









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MOI

Philosophy

MOI is a global B2B juggernaut delivering head-turning, multichannel campaigns that are distinctly local.

We work with the world's largest organisations, and fastest growing start-ups, to re-engineer the way they target today's new breed of buyer – in the places they hang out, and through the people they listen to.

Our recent awards success across the globe is recognition that we're helping brands do exactly this. Our MD, Matthew Stevens said, "In building our agency vision and culture of challenging the status quo in B2B marketing, we're pushing the boundaries for our clients and delivering successful local and global campaigns week in, week out."

From account-based to volume marketing, MOI are the emerging force in B2B demand generation, with a fast-growing global infrastructure of planners, creatives, suits and technologists ready to launch your next head-turning campaign.

Awards

The B2B Marketing Awards 2017 (winner)	Best use of digital technologies
The B2B Marketing Awards 2017 (winner)	Best international campaign
The Drum B2B Brave Awards 2017 (winner)	Best use of content in demand generation
Marketing Magazine Agency of the Year Awards 2017 (bronze)	B2B agency of the year

Key clients

- F5
- Genesys
- Oracle
- Sage
- Software AG

Services offered

- Account-based marketing
- Creative and content
- Digital demand generation
- Strategy

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Matthew Stevens,

global MD, shares the impact MOI's evolving proposition has had on its international success

It's been a record-breaking year for MOI in terms of global agency growth and reputation. To see our established business in the UK going from strength to strength, and international offices expanding rapidly, means our ideas on modern marketing are resonating with technology clients.

> We put success down to empowering young blood, pioneering data-led experiences and growing our global creative network

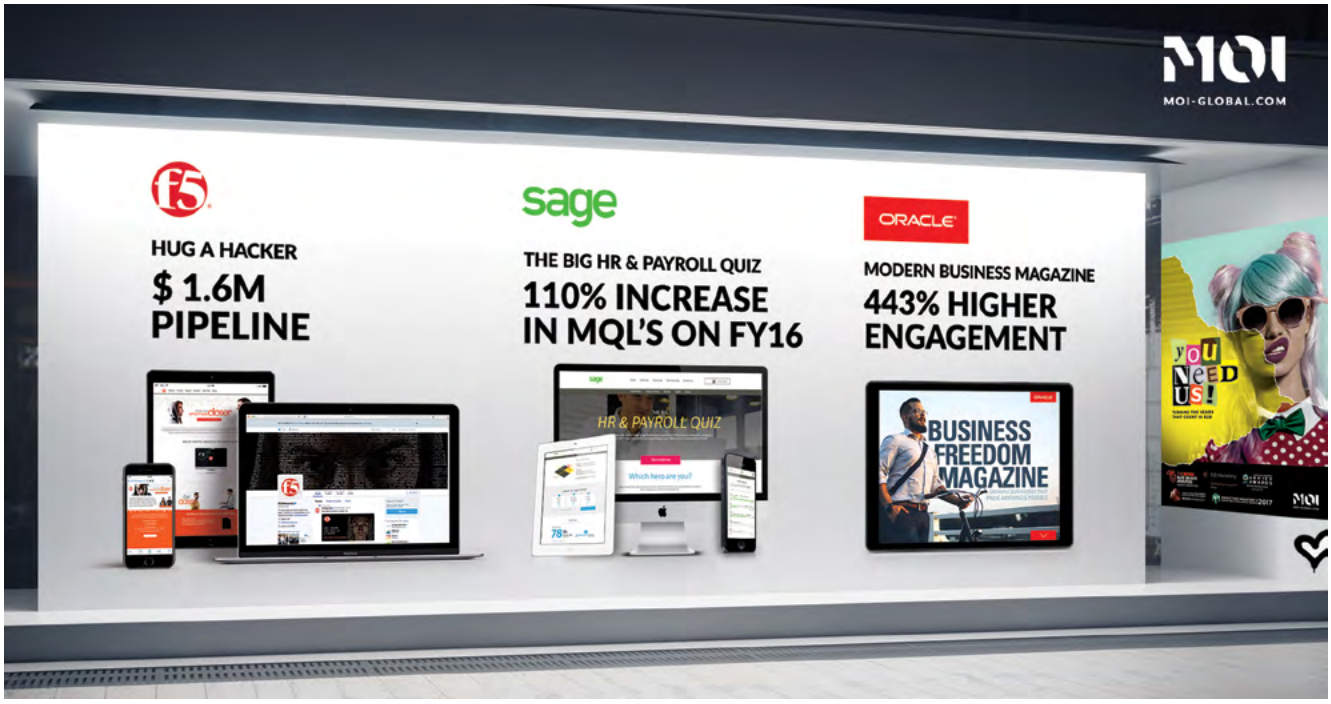
Our campaigns have been winning kudos with our clients and gaining industry recognition across the globe. Infact, with five globally recognised awards, this was the year MOI announced itself as one of the industry's leading agencies. We put that success down to our focus on empowering young blood, pioneering data-led experiences and growing our global creative network.

We've received accolades for helping F5 uplift their lead conversion through modern campaign journeys, we've been a driving force behind Oracle's move into the mid-size space and built digital experiences for Sage, which demonstrated significant increases in audience engagement. All of this has relied on outstanding creative ideas, aligned to today's buying behaviours.

Moving into 2018 and beyond, our clients are already benefiting from new service propositions across ABM, B2B events, digital content and media. To support growth in these areas the agency will be further investing in enhancing the relevance of our creative through data and Martech.

As data continues to change both the world we live in and consumer behaviours, adoption of these emerging opportunities (whether it's AI, social data or 2.0 analytics) will be critical in contextualising every message and experience we deliver. Combined with our creative pedigree, this will be our formula for turning heads both today and in to the future.

Here's to a future of marketing to the individual, and a goodbye to the collective.



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Napier Partnership

Philosophy

Napier is a B2B technology PR and marketing agency based in Chichester. With our four-step process we have the unique ability to identify what's important and strip away the irrelevant.

Napier has been at the heart of marketing technology in Europe since 1984, from electronics and IT to industrial technology; we're specialists in the markets we target. We pride ourselves on planning and executing campaigns that excite, engage and enthral, using our proven expertise to ensure our efforts focus on getting the right results for our clients.

Our use of deep market insight to build integrated campaigns helps our clients turn their objectives into achievements. We focus on speed through the funnel to help our clients move their customers quickly from awareness to opportunity. As a team of individuals who are energetic, creative and enthusiastic about any challenges we may face, our clients understand the benefits in our approach, as we always deliver results.

Awards

Best for PR 2015 (gold award)	Technology category
Best for PR 2017 (top 5)	National Awards
PR Consultants Association (PRCA)	Communications management standard (CMS) certified

Key clients

- Anritsu
- Farnell
- IronCAD
- Microchip
- Pansas
- PENN

Specialist sectors

- Engineering
- Industrial technology
- Electronic components
- IT

Date founded	1985
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Mike Maynard,

MD at Napier, explains why he's so excited about the technological opportunities on offer

As the company geek, I'm really excited about many new areas of marketing technology. There are two that stand out to me as great opportunities: ABM and chatbots. With marketing technology finally able to effectively target the right people in particular accounts, ABM will be a priority for Napier and many of our clients for the year ahead and beyond. Chatbots are another exciting field. The technology is available to allow intelligent interactions that help customers, and with Facebook allowing brands to embed chat on their websites in 2018, I'm sure we will see explosive growth in the use of this technology by B2B companies next year.

We see 2018 as a year of opportunity. Although we are proud of our achievements in 2017, we've spent a lot of time removing the barriers that limit collaboration within Napier, so next year our teams will work together to deliver even better campaigns. We're also keen to expand our team, including the continuation of our very successful internship and apprenticeship campaigns, and further strengthen our specialist digital and marketing automation teams.

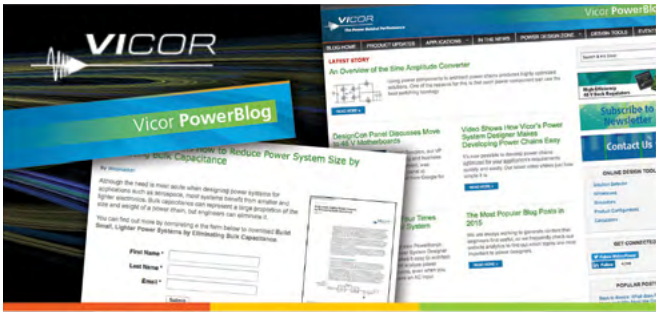
Napier did have a fabulous 2017. Through hard work and a talented team we launched our unique four-step process to help ensure our campaigns delivered even greater results. We also recognised that our strength is our ability to help clients move prospects through the funnel faster. By focusing on moving contacts from awareness to opportunity, we clearly defined where our unique value lies, and allowed clients to see the impact of our work.

If I had to pick one campaign highlight in 2017, it would be 'Change the World', which we ran for Farnell. Engineers, hobbyists and students were asked to submit ideas that could change the world for the better using components supplied by Farnell. The finalists' ideas ranged from flood detectors, tools to improve the yields for poor farmers and 3D-printed baby incubators for the developing world. We're now working with Farnell to help the finalists make their ideas become reality.









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Nelson Bostock Unlimited

Philosophy

The right conversations make business happen.

The wrong ones can ruin a reputation.

Nelson Bostock has over 30 years' experience helping business and technology brands talk the talk.

We build and protect corporate profile, and create dialogue that engages and influences the right people.

If you need to make your voice heard, we should… talk.

Awards

PR Week (winner)	Best places to work
The B2B Marketing Awards (shortlisted)	PR agency of the year
The B2B Marketing Awards (shortlisted)	Best limited-budget campaign
Digiday Publishing Awards (winner)	Best brand partnership

Key clients

- Canon
- Criteo
- Eddie Stobart
- Google
- Toshiba
- Twilio

Specialist sectors

- IT and telecoms
- Retail technology
- Media and marketing
- Start-up and high-growth technology

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Every sale starts with a conversation.

NelsonBostockUnlimited...

The art of conversation, the science of influence.

Nick.Clark@nb-unlimited.com www.nelsonbostockunlimited.com

Radley Yeldar

Philosophy

Radley Yeldar is an independent, London-based brand, marketing and communications agency.

Our 200-strong team of specialists have been working with multinationals, start-ups, private companies and public bodies for more than 30 years.

Together, we tackle complex challenges for complex organisations by defining their story, communicating it simply, changing behaviour and delivering results. As a family-owned business, we're better placed to take a long-term view.

We want to be the best place to work and where the best work gets done.

Awards

New York Film Festival 2017 (gold)	Internal film
Creative Review 2017	Brand identity, featured in the annual
Cannes Corporate Media and TV Awards 2017 (silver)	Internal film
Business Green Leaders Awards 2017 (gold)	Sustainability report of year
PWC Public Trust Awards 2017 (winner)	Corporate reporting award for sustainability

Key clients

- Coca Cola Hellenic
- GSK
- Heineken
- Travelers
- Visit Britain
- Vodafone

Specialist sectors

Financial and professional services

Property and construction

Pharmaceuticals

Retail

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Cameron Gunn,
head of customer engagement, gives an overview of 2017 at Radley Yeldar

Marketing is no longer about 'one-off' engagements with customers. It's about using data to uncover insight and using it to build long-term, meaningful relationships. This shift to an ongoing dialogue across multiple channels has necessitated a more digitally savvy, integrated approach.

> Customer expectations are constantly changing, so the campaigns that target them have to change too

Customer expectations are constantly changing, so the campaigns that target them have to change too. We'll always lead with creativity, but we know we must also take advantage of the new technologies and opportunities for marketers. In 2018 we plan to push the boundaries of both even further.

With this philosophy behind us, we've had a standout year in which we delivered award-winning work for the likes of GSK, Cargill, Coca-Cola, Hellenic and EY.

Our campaign for VisitBritain was my hightlight though. The challenge was to get more foreign visitors to explore Inverness. We did it with an end-to-end digital marketing campaign matched with a monster hunt and the idea that if you really want to spot a monster, you must know the area and the locals.

The campaign generated more than 195 million impressions on all digital advertising units and 14 million new unique users across all digital channels. Most importantly more than 7,700 people revealed they had plans to travel to Inverness.

This is a good example of our focus on both digital and customer engagement. We also draw on our range of experts to build bespoke teams to meet our clients' challenges.

We're delighted that clients have recognised the value of this approach and look forward to working with more of them in 2018.









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Saatchi & Saatchi pro

SAATCHI & SAATCHI pro

Philosophy

We are a creative B2B agency where nothing is impossible. We know the business world has changed and we are here to navigate that change by talking to people rather than businesses.

We use creativity to solve complex business problems, collaborating to make work that is relevant, emotional and human. This means our clients have intelligent solutions full of imagination.

We are Saatchi & Saatchi pro. Where business finds imagination.

As part of the Saatchi & Saatchi global network, we have an unrivalled pool of world-renowned creative and innovative talent to draw upon. More than 6500 employees in 67 countries, in fact. We have best-in-class strategists, creatives, data analysts, consultants, technologists – all of who embody our philosophy of 'nothing is impossible'.

Our 'power of one' approach structures teams around client needs, putting you at the heart of our three pillars of creativity, media and technology.

Key clients

- GSK
- PIMCO
- Saab
- Vaillant
- Visa

Specialist sectors



Engineering



Professional services



Finance



Technology

Services offered

- Brand activation
- Brand identity/design
- Brand strategy
- Creative/advertising campaigns
- Digital
- Internal/employee engagement
- Promotional marketing
- Social
- Technology

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Peter Lovatt,

chairman at the newly-formed Saatchi & Saatchi pro, discusses his ambitions for the business

We launched in 2017 as the B2B offering from Saatchi & Saatchi with some good new business wins. Our aim is to take the skills we've gained from the B2C world into B2B, blurring the lines and letting businesses know we understand they're people too.

We're a flexible group of people with a hunger for knowledge, eager to embrace any idea or technology that allows us to help our clients achieve their objectives. If we don't have the precise expertise in-house, you can be sure the answer can be found within the Publicis Groupe, our parent. With DigitasLBi and Sapient within the group, we have instant access to world-leading experts, often integrating them within our team.

We'd like to grow the agency in 2018 by working with more like-minded clients, who share our ambition and buy into the Saatchi spirit of 'nothing is impossible'

We'd like to grow the agency in 2018 by working with more like-minded clients, who share our ambition and buy into the Saatchi spirit of 'nothing is impossible'.

Already, we've launched Vaillant's largest ever UK integrated campaign for its innovative heating systems. The B2B2C campaign targets the end consumer with TV and contextual digital advertising, but arms installers with a toolkit of marketing materials to help their business capitalise on the campaign and generate more leads.

The concept is that the modern world constantly demands that we get out of our comfort zone in order to achieve more, see more and do more. But in this world of pressure, noise and stress, it's more important than ever to have a safe haven of comfort – a home powered by Vaillant's smart heating technology.









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Speed Communications



Philosophy

Communication is evolving faster than ever and Speed's philosophy is to keep its clients one step ahead.

Our focus is to help the businesses we work with achieve results and to do it quicker. That doesn't mean a rushed job (although, we never waste a second); it's about quick thinkers who get straight to the heart of the challenge. Who stay curious. Who ask the right questions to find the fastest possible route to the most powerful communication solutions.

We match business brains with creative muscle to get under the skin of the brands and businesses we work with. We help them tell inspiring stories that stick, and create content that compels and captures hearts and minds.

We're a team of business consultants with the media savvy to get our clients noticed. We know the audiences to reach and believe in working together to decide what should be said.

Measurement is integral in everything we do. Whether increasing sales, brand awareness or driving engagement, we focus on the end goal. That's why we've developed our own industry-leading measurement system – PACE – to underscore the value of PR.

Awards

CV Magazine 2017	Most outstanding multi-sector PR agency
Finance Monthly Global 2017	PR agency of the year
PRCA Dare Awards 2017	Large consultancy of the year

Key clients

- Affinion
- DS Smith
- Michelmores Solicitors
- Petro-Canada
- Tungsten Network
- Ultimate Finance

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ACHIEVE. FASTER.

It's not about getting things done fast (although we never waste a second).
It's about quick thinkers who get straight to the heart of the challenge.
Who are incessantly curious. Asking the right questions to get to the right answers.
Matching Business Brains with Creative Muscle across PR, content and social.
To find the fastest route to the most powerful communication solution.

speedcommunications.com

SPEED

Stein IAS

Philosophy

Stein IAS is the post-modern marketing agency – a global B2B specialist that serves as a strategic partner to brand leaders around the world.

We fuse award-winning creative and content experiences with transformative digital, data and technology-driven interactions. Most importantly, we seamlessly connect brand to demand, and then to business results.

In recent years, B2B marketers have embraced digital marketing transformation. Modern marketing has been our path forward, and Stein IAS has been a modern marketing leader.

Now, the stakes are even higher with enterprise marketers spending up to 25% or more of their budgets on marketing technology. Yet the impact and effectiveness hasn't risen at pace. This is why B2B needs to enter its post-modern age.

At Stein IAS, we fully realise the power and potential of modern marketing technologies. We believe B2B marketing needs more magic; it must braver and bolder. It needs the gutsy genius of pre-modern marketing, as in the days of Mad Men, but in the form of post-modern experiences and storytelling.

We fuse creativity with technology and the pragmatic with the emotional, then take the customers' breath away with it.

Awards

ANA Business Marketing Awards 2017	Agency of the year
Drum Content Awards 2017	Best content marketing ROI/measurement
Drum RAR 2017	B2B agency of the year
Northern Marketing Awards 2017	Best large agency
UK Agency Awards 2017	B2B agency of the year

Key clients

- HSBC
- Oracle
- Tetra-Pak

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Tom Stein,

chairman at Stein IAS, discusses how a post-modern approach has led to record-breaking revenue

In recent years, B2B has become massively marketing-led. B2B brands and marketers have embraced digital and marketing transformation. Now, the stakes are even higher, with enterprise marketers spending up to 25% or more of their budgets on marketing technology – yet it's not been equally effective.

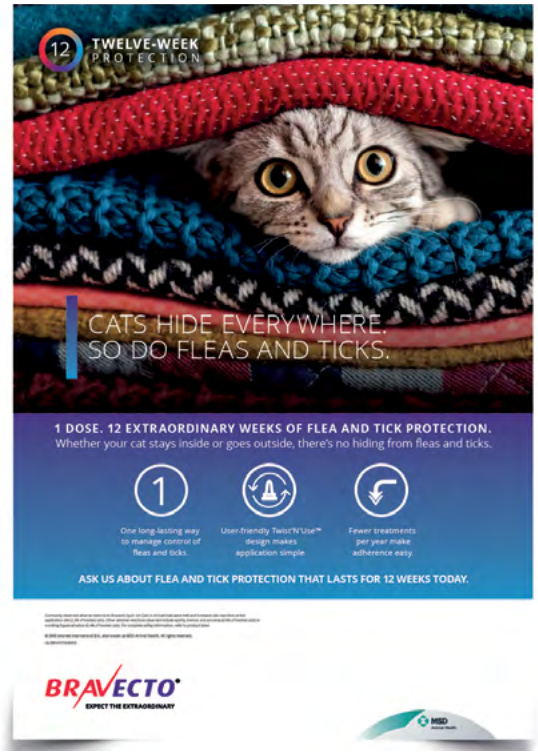
We need to realise the potential of modern marketing technologies and fuse it with gutsy creative and emotional storytelling

That's why B2B needs to enter its post-modern age. Its marketers need to be braver, bolder and go farther. We need to realise the potential of modern marketing technologies and fuse it with gutsy creative and emotional storytelling.

Our 2017 'Cats Are Everywhere' campaign for Merck's Bravecto Topical for Cats brand is an example of what I mean. It broke away from Merck's more traditional and functional advertising to focus on experience, storytelling and unexpected imagery – in this case, cats getting into all sorts of adventures. We also had a lot of digital elements from digital marketing to educational materials and a mobile game for cats!

The impact was massive. Bravecto shot to number one in Europe for cat flea and tick protection and helped power the Bravecto brand to number three status globally. To top it off, 'Cats' was named Best in Show at the 2017 ANA Business Marketing B2 Awards.

2017 was an extraordinary year for us. We won three 2017 Agency of the Year awards, our global expansion continued, highlighted by our alliance with South African B2B agency Demographica, and our revenue is at an all-time high. It won't be easy to surpass this in 2018, but we're confident we will! We'll continue to embrace emerging technologies and raise the bar on customer experience and results.







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The Crocodile

Philosophy

We're The Crocodile and we love working with ambitious, driven, goal-oriented marketers who insist on exceeding the expectations of their customer base.

We believe in simplicity and clear thinking, which is why we've stripped our strategic outlook back to basic logic built on the power of conversation. It's a disciplined approach that places the customer at the heart of strategies and requires brands to be more real-time and personal in the way they communicate. We look to build relationships and deliver a style of marketing that feels more human.

We specialise in content that adds intrinsic value to the customer conversation and delivers higher degrees of context and empathy. What's our secret to achieving this? The first step to having a rewarding conversation is to listen. It also helps to have some pretty damn good copywriters, designers, video producers and developers.

Next time you're in Shoreditch pop your head in for a chat. We'd love to hear from you.

Awards

The B2B Marketing Awards 2017 (Runner-up)	Best lead generation and nurture campaign
Social Buzz Awards 2017 (Runner-up)	Best B2B sector
The B2B Marketing Awards 2016 (Winner)	Best use of social media
Social Buzz Awards 2016 (Winner)	Best B2B sector

Key clients

- Dell|EMC
- LSEG
- Standard Life
- Volvo CE

Services offered

- Account-based marketing
- Branding and design
- Content marketing
- Customer journey mapping
- Digital marketing
- Digtal media buying
- Marketing automation
- Social media
- Strategy
- Web design and production

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Jason Talbot,

MD at The Crocodile, shares his thoughts on what it takes to win in 2018

Our clients – the likes of Standard Life, Nectar, Volvo CE and LSEG – not only lead the way in their sectors, but demand marketing that challenges norms and delivers measurable results. They expect their agencies to share their ambitions and push beyond expectations. We expect the same of ourselves, and we deliver it with great people.

Take Robyn Pierce our head of social, who challenges received wisdom within B2B, where social is often under-valued or misunderstood. She's a true leader in her field and a winner in this year's Women in Marketing Awards.

Then there's Lotte Wilkinson, account manager, an intelligent, energetic, curious, problem-solver who obsesses about the needs of her clients. She truly captures the spirit of the agency and brings enormous energy to the team.

I shout a lot about our team because I believe agencies are the sum total of their people and I'm very proud of ours.

What's going to be big for us in 2018? I'm conscious of the impact AR, VR, Blockchain, ABM and storytelling will have on the industry, but for me and for our business, the key trends for the year ahead are the stuff we already know and are doing.

I see a huge drive towards improved brand management and understanding your customers better so you're better able to serve them.

This year will also be about defining scalable strategies – finding great ideas and building on them in a controlled, strategic manner. Sometimes more is just too much, which is why we're also focusing on creating less, but better, content.

In the same vein, companies will also have to rationalise and operationalise technologies, in particular making use of more than 20% of their data.

I believe that to prosper and win in 2018, these are the big trends to focus on. This analysis may seem boring and sure; we do need to plan for tomorrow, but not to the detriment of the fundamentals.









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The Marketing Pod

Philosophy

The Marketing Pod is a fully integrated marketing agency with an unshakeable belief in making it personal. We know we'll only get the best results for our clients when we have a deep and true understanding of their business and people, their customers and processes, and their obstacles and objectives.

From the outset, we try to immerse ourselves in our client's world. Through communication and research, we ensure we have a thorough grasp on the details and how they fit into the bigger picture. It helps us make sure that our projects and campaigns really hit the mark. It also means many clients feel like we're an extension of their own teams. They know they can rely on us to listen and deliver.

We think one of the reasons we're good at what we do is our genuine passion for all things B2B. It's a different marketing world than B2C but no less dynamic and we never forget that a business customer is as human as any other. While the decision-making process might follow a different path, it's one on which individual needs and beliefs will always play a part. It's just one more reason to make it personal.

Awards

CIPR Gold Award 2017	Best publication
CIPR Silver Award 2017	Business communications campaign
B2B Marketing Expo Awards 2016	Best branding product or service

Key clients

- Blue Chip
- Inenco
- Opus Trust Marketing
- Ørsted
- Lucy Zodian
- Viridor

Specialist sectors

- Energy and utilities
- Manufacturing
- Financial services
- Technology and IT

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Jenny Hughes,

co-founder and direcor at The Marketing Pod, discusses their considerable growth over the last year

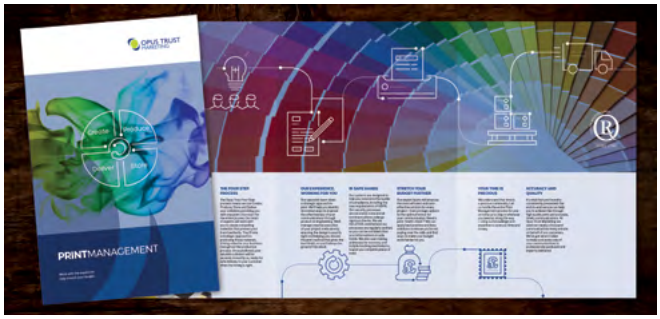
The Pod has grown by 50% since 2016; we've won new clients, received numerous awards, expanded our HQ and added to our team. Our success is mainly down to two principle factors: the first is that we built the Pod as an integrated marketing agency from day one – so all campaigns and activities are optimised through every channel. The client sees better results and gets maximum impact from their marketing efforts. The second is the combined brilliance of a talented and committed team who have all worked client-side.

Our gold winner at the CIPR awards this year was the Missing Millions campaign for client, Inenco. It had a wealth of previously overlooked data on business bills, that we believed could be used to raise awareness of the value opportunity for businesses. We approached the figures from a new angle; analysing the data to understand the frequency and causes of billing errors. With the revenue generated to date at £270, 000 and growing, the ROI currently stands at 42:1 for this campaign.

It looks like there's a big year ahead for us too. We hope to show some of our clients, who may never have done it before, what a fully developed account-based marketing (ABM) approach can achieve. We'll also be helping our clients to work within the new GDPR boundaries to achieve success.

> We've won new clients, received numerous awards, expanded our HQ and added to our team

We're lucky enough to be working with some amazing brands next year and are planning some really interesting challenger campaigns that will make the most of our specialism, which is integrated marketing.









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Tomorrow People

Philosophy

Tomorrow People is an award-winning and data-driven content marketing agency with offices in Birmingham, London and New York.

We believe the secret to marketing success, whether it's ABM, product marketing, inbound or any other strategy, is compelling content.

Founded by two partners in 2011, Tomorrow People employs over 30 people across editorial, web development, account management, design and digital marketing teams, as well as working closely with a pool of sector expert copywriters and videographers.

Working across five core areas of data, strategy, execution, technology, and consultation, we use content to redefine marketing strategies for some of the world's best-known organisations, such as Oracle, Trustpilot, Unify, Tech Data, TeamViewer, and Solvay.

We can talk ABM, inbound, product marketing, sales enablement, vertical marketing and any other service all day long. But no matter what marketing strategy you're looking for, they all share a common requirement: awesome content. So, the question for us isn't about the latest marketing trend or specialism, but the content that fuels it.

Key clients

- Oracle
- Solvay
- TeamViewer
- Tech Data
- Three
- Trustpilot
- Unify

Specialist sectors

- Financial services
- Media
- Healthcare
- Pharmaceutical
- Industrial, manufacturing, engineering
- Professional services
- IT and telecomms

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Alistair Norman,

MD of Tomorrow People, discusses his agency's rocket fuel – great content

In line with our customers' increasing demand for global growth programmes, our capacity and geographical reach has grown considerably. We've acquired some large B2B organisations looking for content to help them grow faster — and, crucially, content that's measurable and has a demonstrable impact on the bottom line.

We've spent the last year working with leading IT distribution firm, Tech Data, to digitally transform its marketing operations from traditional methods to a solution that incorporates an opt-in community for its partners to quickly achieve their own growth.

We're currently working with a leading chemicals company, headquartered in Brussels, to bring its offering to life in the consumer goods and automotive markets. We're also working with an Israeli tech startup, Applicaster, to reposition it as a disruptor brand that breaks the rules and resets the agenda.

Throughout the rest of the year, we'll be looking to grow the business on both the East and West coasts of the United States. We've already got a base in Manhattan, but we'll be looking to expand and set up a base in Silicon Valley, helping high-tech companies fuel their varied marketing programmes and ensure they run faster.

No matter what marketing strategy you want to deliver, the unifying piece of the puzzle is great content. Everyone's talking about the magic they conjure up in vertical marketing, inbound marketing, lead generation, product marketing or ABM. But they're all missing the point. The point is content. We give our customers best-in-class content to fuel whatever marketing programme supports their wider objectives. It's not about the trend or specialism. It's all about the content that fuels it.



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Torpedo

Philosophy

Torpedo is a creative agency for the digital world.

We specialise in B2B, blending insight, design, content, UX, and technology to deliver effective multichannel marketing campaigns, brand communications and digital experiences.

Creativity sits at the heart of everything we do. We champion your brand. Think like your customers. See the world through their eyes to create awareness, build trust and deliver results.

Our clients tell us they value the friendly, can-do attitude and expertise of our team but, most of all, they like the way we make their life easier, helping day-by-day to deliver their marketing vision and achieve objectives.

Torpedo is where great ideas come to life.

Awards

The B2B Marketing Awards 2017 (Runner-up)	Best multichannel campaign
Drum Network Awards (Winner)	Content marketing campaign of the year
Drum Roses Creative Awards (Gold)	Business website

Key clients

- Adobe
- Autodesk
- Epson
- Panasonic Business
- PETRONAS
- Valneva

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Where great ideas come to life.

We are a b2b creative agency for the digital world. See our work at:

torpedogroup.com



twogether

Philosophy

twogether is a global top 20 B2B marketing agency specialising in technology. We're 2017's marketing communications agency of the year, as nominated by B2B Marketing's expert judges.

We're passionate about technology and the difference it can make to people's lives. Our purpose is to help people understand what our clients' technology can do, from clouds and virtual worlds, to converged systems and life-saving radios.

Our services span creative, digital, media and channel marketing, including our own channel marketing platform, partnermarketing.com. When we take a brief, we always start with the questions that matter most. The questions that bring technology to life.

Our clients range from tier one technology brands to start-up challengers and everything in between; 70% of those clients have been with us for more than five years.

They tell us they like our people and our problem-solving approach. That, and the fact that our relentlessly fresh approach to creativity, in all media, delivers results.

At a time when technology is breaking unthinkable barriers, we're proud to play our part in telling the world.

Awards

The B2B Marketing Awards 2017 (winner)	B2B marketing communications agency of the year
The B2B Marketing Awards 2017 (shortlisted)	Best multichannel campaign
The B2B Marketing Awards 2017 (shortlisted)	Best use of direct mail
The B2B Marketing Awards 2017 (shortlisted)	Best use of live-event marketing
The B2B Marketing Awards 2017 (shortlisted)	Best use of creative
The B2B Marketing Awards 2017 (shortlisted)	Most commercially successful campaign

Key clients

- Hitachi Vantara
- Lenovo
- Microsoft
- Sage
- Sungard Availability Services
- Veritas

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Kirsty Gilchrist,

MD at twogether, shares the highlights of an incredible year for the company

Our amazing performance in 2017 is a culmination of all the effort we've put into reinventing the agency. Having left a distressed group four years ago, this year we joined Next15, achieved 100% client retention and won two thirds of our pitches. Oh, and we've launched two new global offices, and won agency of the year!

> We're focused purely on tech marketing, have a passion for beautiful creative and intelligent digital, all combined with a strong culture and great people

Sealing the end of a great year for us, we were nominated for seven B2B Marketing Awards and scooped the coveted prize of 'B2B marketing communications agency of the year' at the November 2017 awards ceremony.

Our success at the awards demonstrated why our clients love to work with us. We're focused purely on tech marketing, have a passion for beautiful creative and intelligent digital, all combined with strong culture and great people.

With the launch of our six new services: marketing automation, data and analytics, paid media, social media, ABM, and 3D design, we've delivered some incredible client campaigns. Highlights included a 360 degree immersive VR experience with premium direct mail and an interactive competition for PC giant Lenovo, which was shortlisted for several awards.

Being so passionate about technology, we do a lot to understand and invest in the latest tech trends early on. We have a really strong digital team – something still of a rarity in creative agencies.

For us, 2018 is an opportunity to further support our clients through investment in new services and trends, so we can continue to create campaigns that deliver results. We're also helping our clients manage with the evolution of marketing post-GDPR, which will also be a key focus for many organisations this year.









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About B2B Marketing

With hundreds of thousands of users across the globe, we are the leading trusted voice at the centre of the B2B marketing community.

Business development opportunities for marketing agencies

Many of the leading international marketing agencies partner with us to help drive and nurture their new business pipeline. We offer partnership options including membership, content and media outreach, event sponsorship and face-to-face ABM.

Membership

Our Agency Premium membership programmes provide a unique resource for marketing agencies targeting the lucrative B2B sector.

Agency Premium membership

Your annual Agency Premium membership brings you:

- Two bound copies of the B2B Agencies Benchmarking Report
- Our annual tech sector benchmarking report
- Two copies of the award winning *B2B Marketing* magazine, every quarter
- Access to the *B2B Marketing* magazine online
- Automatic 15% discounts on our three annual events: Ignite; InTech; The Conference.

Plus you'll receive:

- Six new industry benchmarking/best practice reports per year.
- Exclusive access to our complete Premium content hub of tactical guides and research.

The B2B Marketing Agency Plus membership programme

- Your 'Agency Plus' membership qualifies you for unique B2B marketing sector insight and intelligence, including:
- A live presentation from our founder Joel Harrison, one of the most trusted speakers in B2B
- Exclusive write-ups from our monthly B2B Leaders roundtable events
- Our annual CMOs as buyers report, lifting the lid on buying behaviours
- A complimentary ticket to one of our three annual events: Ignite; InTech; The B2B Marketing Conference – each one a hugely valuable new business and networking opportunity.
- PLUS, you'll receive all the benefits of our Agency Premium membership programme.

To find out more about Agency membership options, call our client solutions team on +44 (0)207 014 4920.

To explore our content, media outreach and sponsorship opportunities go to b2bmarketing.net/media or call our media team on 0207 014 4932.

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Ready to win even more new business?

The B2B Marketing Agency Plus membership programme could be your most powerful business development resource ever.

Membership qualifies you for unique B2B marketing sector insight and intelligence, including:

- A live presentation from Joel Harrison – one of the most trusted speakers in B2B.
- A complimentary ticket to one of our 3 annual events, for unrivalled networking.
- Our annual CMOs as buyers report.
- Exclusive write-ups from our monthly B2B Leaders roundtable events.
- Plus all the benefits of our Agency Premium membership programme.

To get all the details, call our client solutions team on +44 (0)207 014 4920

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