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CONTENTS

6–9

The countdown is on...

Call us old-fashioned, but here at B2B Marketing we're quite partial to a bit of face-to-face, in-the-flesh, up-close-and-personal networking. We might be fully paid-up fans of social, but when it comes to forging relationships with fellow B2B-ers nothing beats some good face-to-face action. And this is why we're super excited about June's Ignite: 1000 B2B marketers in one room at the same time. Magic is bound to happen.

Other than networking, Ignite 2017 will provide a veritable smorgasbord of B2B delights for each and every attendee: think big-name speakers, a bustling tech playground, more than 60 seminar sessions and the B2B Marketing People Awards ceremony to round things off. To give you a taste of what's planned, we've put together an Ignite-themed extravaganza – hopefully it'll set your hearts racing for what's in store on the day.

As well as playing a central theme to the Ignite agenda, career advancement is a big focus in this issue: turn to page 16 to find out how seven B2B marketing leaders manage teams scattered around the world. How do they overcome cultural differences? And what's the best non-medicinal cure to a debilitating bout of jet lag?

Elsewhere, we speak to a host of experts about the ethical questions surrounding programmatic, discover how different brands are overcoming the sales/marketing divide, and hear about the often-overlooked benefits of influencer marketing.

Have a wonderful month and we'll see you at Ignite in June!

Jess Pike
Head of content, B2B Marketing

Roll up, roll up



With 1000 fired-up B2B marketers and a playground showcasing the latest tech, what's not to love about Ignite 2017? Lifting the lid on some of the best sessions, Michael King speaks to experts from Cisco and Adobe to get a taste of what they'll be sharing on the day

John Watton, senior marketing director at Adobe, is the mastermind behind the 'Humanising B2B marketing' keynote session (10:35-11:05am). Here, he examines automation-related headaches and explores

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b2bmarketing.net

B2B Marketing
Clover House
147–149 Farringdon Road
London
EC1R 3HN

Tel: +44 (0)20 7014 4920
b2bmarketing.net
info@b2bmarketing.net

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Editor-in-chief
Joel Harrison

Head of content
Jess Pike

Deputy editor
Paul Snell

Reports editor
Danielle Howe

Digital content manager
Alex Clarke

Content writer
Michael King

Head of business development
Matt Garisch

Publishing director
James Farmer

Senior designer
Peter Rüpschl

Designer
Nicola Stephens

Printing
Buxton Press Ltd

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10–14

The sleepless CEO



One way to strengthen your relationship with your CEO is to tackle the problems that leave them wide awake at 3am. Paul Snell investigates how CMOs can help them sleep easy

Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg's dog Beast has more than 2.5 million likes on the social network. But what's the name of your CEO's dog? Does he or she even have a dog? Or are they more of a cat person? These might appear trivial questions – and they are – but whether you can answer them should shine a light on

16–20

The world's your oyster

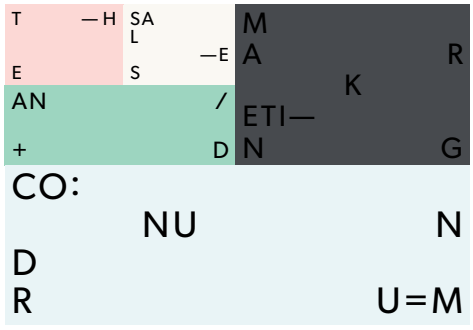


As busy leaders with remits stretching from San Francisco to Singapore and Taiwan to Timbuktu, how do you overcome the challenges involved with disparate time zones, languages and cultures? Jess Pike speaks to seven B2B big-hitters to find out

Jennifer Watkiss: In the UK people tend not to want to impose, and the way that manifests itself in our UK office is that you don't ask someone for a favour unless you've really thought about it. In the US, however, there's a

22–26

The sales and marketing conundrum



The sales/marketing question is as old and predictable as the format of *University Challenge*. Alex Clarke finds out about the pros and cons of various structural options and asks what happens in organisations where marketing sits directly within the sales department

Louis Fernandes, director, demand generation, UKI, HPE, has a rather unique perspective, stemming from the fact that he sits within the sales department and earns commission like his colleagues in sales

28–33

Programmatic advertising: Deep science or dark art?

Jess Pike speaks to experts on both sides of the fence to find out whether recent ethical questions spell the end for this new (and highly technical) way of advertising

35–39

Good vibrations

With B2B marketers slow to embrace influencer marketing, Michael King busts a few myths and examines how to develop a successful strategy

40–41

Opinion

Our four resident columnists give us their take on everything from un-corporate communications to the importance of top-notch customer service

ROLL UP, ROLL UP

With 1000 fired-up B2B marketers and a playground showcasing the latest tech, what's not to love about Ignite 2017? Lifting the lid on four sessions, **Michael King** speaks to experts from Cisco and Adobe to get a taste of what they'll be sharing

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Four of Ignite 2017's keynote sessions and speakers

Humanising B2B marketing

John Watton, Adobe

Creative on demand

Carla Johnson, author

Cisco: A transformational story

Emma Roffey, Cisco

Smash it all up!

Doug Kessler, Velocity

The brands that connect with their audience aren't afraid to relax their tone of voice, have fun, provoke thought, have an opinion and speak in the customer's language

JOHN WATTON

John Watton, Adobe



Humanising marketing in B2B

John Watton, senior marketing director at Adobe, is the mastermind behind the 'Humanising B2B marketing' keynote session (10:35-11:05am). Here, he examines automation-related headaches and explores how to ensure they don't directly impact the end consumer

"The misconception is that automation is the answer to all of our B2B marketing ills," says John. "Well, it's not. Automation helps us be more intelligent about reaching customers at the right place and the right time. But the message is still missing. The key is to sprinkle some creativity into the mix in order to cut through the digital noise and create that emotional connection."

John outlines how research conducted by Adobe and Goldsmiths University found that AR and VR can enhance the customer experience in a highly personal way. "For example, in a B2B setting, marine engine manufacturer Wärtsilä deploys VR technology to allow its engineers to remotely diagnose engine faults. This negates the need to fly them out to ships, and thereby improves the overall experience on the service side."

It's also vital to convey personality through marketing, which is what many of the more adept B2B brands are doing. "The brands that connect with their audience aren't afraid to relax their tone of voice, have fun, provoke thought, have an opinion and speak in the customer's language," John explains. "Two examples I love are the sophisticated marketing campaign from LinkedIn Marketing Solutions and 'The Message', which is a sci-fi podcast from GE."

As we've already seen, technology can be used to enhance the customer experience, and with this in mind, John provides three top tips for marketers looking to humanise their own CX:

1. **Spend a day experiencing your company's customer-facing services**

"Sign up for your own newsletters and experiment with the company's website by ordering something," he says. "You'll learn more in that day than through a month of third-party research."

2. **Use search data to understand the language your customers use to find your services**

John advises companies drop the acronyms and marketing lingo and to speak in a language that customers understand. "This means using language that is jargon free. The language we'd use in everyday conversation."

3. **Run multiple content audits to test different customer responses**

John emphasises the need to take a more experimental approach when it comes to content. "Marketers could try using a slightly different email copy or sending a small proportion of web traffic to an alternative web page," he says. "Another idea is to swap a whitepaper for an infographic. Start small and measure the impact."

Automation helps us be more intelligent about reaching customers at the right place and the right time. But the message is still missing

Doug Kessler, Velocity



The secret to great B2B storytelling

Our next keynote speaker, who'll be presenting at 2:45pm, is content wizard and storytelling guru Doug Kessler, co-founder and creative director of content marketing agency Velocity. Doug tells us what makes great storytelling and how B2B marketing conventions are stifling creativity

"Great storytelling is about grabbing the reader, viewer or listener by the hand and not letting go until you've delivered your tale, made an impact and changed their mind," Doug says. "But to do that, you need to know where your audience is coming from and what's likely to interest and move them."

Doug admits that B2B marketing is stuck in its ways, and certain conventions are stifling creativity. "More than 98% of B2B marketing is exactly as you'd expect. It's a tired old trope that asks the audience to suspend disbelief and join in the buyer-seller dance. But it's a boring dance. Our B2B stories deserve so much better. If we're excited about something, surely there's a way to get our audience excited too. If we're not getting our audience excited, then the problem is much bigger than storytelling."

Great storytelling is about grabbing the reader, viewer or listener by the hand and not letting go until you've delivered your tale, made an impact and changed their mind

DOUG KESSLER

Carla Johnson, co-author, *Experiences: The 7th Era of Marketing*



Mastering the art of creative thinking

Nurturing creativity in B2B is no mean feat, right? Keynote speaker, author and customer experience expert Carla Johnson will be taking to the stage at 11:30am to explain how you can unleash your creative potential. Here, she reveals the secret to nurturing creativity in the workplace

"To consistently nurture creativity, we need to consistently connect the dots between inspiration and action," Carla explains. "Connecting the dots between exciting ideas or experiences and our customers' problems gives us opportunities to be different. It allows us to stand out in ways our competition could never copy. Creativity isn't a gift bestowed upon a few. It's a trainable muscle that improves through consistent practice."

Carla believes the B2B sector is hampered by dynamics that prevent it from breaking free from the mould. "For example, we tell ourselves we don't have big budgets, it's too big of a risk, our execs would never go for it or, when it comes down to it, what we sell is quite boring. B2B marketers need to use the great work of iconic brands as inspiration for their own work, rather than dismiss it as unattainable."





Emma Roffey, Cisco



Transforming a marketing culture

Cisco's senior director of marketing, Emma Roffey, who'll be delivering a keynote session at 2:45pm on transformative change, reveals the single biggest challenge she's faced while transforming the marketing function at Cisco

"One of the most challenging aspects of our transformation was not underestimating the impact of change on individuals, which means their speed of understanding, acceptance, and finally, their commitment to that change," says Emma. "Before the transformation took effect, we didn't have a plan B. But we dared to begin and needed to make this work, because although we're a technology company, we're also a people business."

The change across the global marketing organisation at Cisco caused ripples among employees, but the experience was overwhelmingly positive. "Staff were given the opportunity to apply and interview for more than 80 new positions across EMEAR," Emma explains. "People reacted differently, but the end result is we now have many new people with very different backgrounds and experiences, with existing Cisco employees settled into new roles."

Going through transformative change can be a harrowing ordeal for staff, but one thing Emma learned was that employees were after one simple thing. "Everyone wanted absolute clarity around processes, roles and responsibilities because ambiguity can lead to conflict, and with conflict comes roadblocks that cause delays.

However, we were given some great advice around dealing with change and complexity on such a large scale, and that was to create some 'hard rules'. One piece of advice that stands out was: 'If you find yourself working alone, question why'. After all, it's all about people!"

Here, Emma takes this a step further by serving up three of her failsafe tips for making organisational change a simple process.

1. **Don't underestimate the time it takes to implement change**

Embedding change is a gradual process; employees shouldn't be expected to adapt immediately. "It's key to remember that recruiting new staff, onboarding, and allowing employees to absorb the impact of the change all takes time. It's pointless hiring new people, introducing new roles and then going back to doing things the way you've always done them."

2. **Let new recruits be brave and take risks**

Emma highlights the importance of giving new recruits creative freedom during the transformation. "If you employ people with different backgrounds and experience, don't mould them into your existing work culture. Let them make a difference, and give them the freedom to make an impact. Don't say: 'We don't do things like that here' or: 'That's not the way it's done'. Encourage everyone to learn from and inspire each other. More importantly, have fun!"

3. **Involve sales**

Involving other departments in the change is a must and it's crucial that you proactively ask them for updates on the specific changes that are taking place. "Make sure they fully understand the journey you're on and the positive impact it will have on them and the company. It's also important not to be afraid to ask them for help."



THE SLEEPLESS CEO

One way to strengthen your relationship with your CEO is to tackle the problems that leave them wide awake at 3am. **Paul Snell** investigates how CMOs can help them sleep easy

Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg's dog Beast has more than 2.5 million likes on the social network. But what's the name of your CEO's dog? Does he or she even have a dog? Or are they more of a cat person? These might appear trivial questions – and they are – but whether you can answer them should shine a light on your relationship with your boss.

For many senior marketers, this relationship isn't as good as it could be. Recent research from technology and strategy firm Squiz found that just 27% said their marketing team works closely with the CEO, which may explain why more than half also believe board-level management doesn't understand marketing.

According to Neil Davis, MD, UK and Europe at Squiz – someone who's been both a B2B marketer *and* a CEO – the need to form a strong bond is more crucial than ever before when we consider the uncertain business landscape. "We're going through a period of transition where the relationship between CEO and CMO has to be stronger than ever before. The lines between different departments are becoming more blurred, and the entire exec suite has to be far more integrated."

CEOs who traditionally haven't needed to understand the intricacies of marketing now need to adapt to the advance of digitisation. Some brands, says Neil, are bridging this gap with the appointment of chief digital officers (CDOs). But could this pose a threat to the role of the CMO?

"There may well be some marketers out there who have that fear, but I wouldn't say it's one that will be realised," he says. "CEOs had to get their heads around finance, but that didn't mean the CFO disappeared. There's still a need for people who can get on and do it on a day-to-day basis."

So what's the key to integrated working? First, dispel the myth that you're battling each other for the CEO's attention, Neil urges. "Rather than competing for the CEO's time, it's about everyone working together more collaboratively. The issues going

to the CEO shouldn't be an IT update, marketing update or finance update, but a business challenges update – and what the different parts of the business are doing to overcome that."

Spencer Waldron, European regional director at Prezi, highlights the need to look at the bigger picture. "You should have an appreciation of the world outside marketing if you're the CMO. When you show the mentality of a COO, you have a wider appreciation of what's going on in the company."

SWEET DREAMS ARE MADE OF THIS

So what's keeping CEOs awake at night, and how can marketers help them sleep more easily? As part of its annual CEO survey, which canvassed the opinion of over 1300 business leaders across the globe, PwC identified a number of issues currently weighing heavily on CEO minds. Chief among these was how to deal with an unpredictable future and volatile economy – and this is definitely an area where marketers can offer some support.

"The world of business has been changing very quickly, and is not showing any sign of slowing down (if anything it's speeding up)," says Neil. "And it's incredibly difficult to be precise, because we don't know what technologies will be around in five years' time – whether people will be using social media, instant messaging or something else. That's a big concern for CEOs: what are my customers going to be looking for and am I going to be relevant to them as a business?

"Marketers are probably in the best position in the business to help with that, as they're the closest to the customer. They have some brilliant insights that can start to set the trends around what your customers are looking for."

Customers are also front of mind for Danny Bluestone, CEO of digital agency Cyber-Duck. "There's no denying that the digital landscape is incredibly competitive. Developing client loyalty and repeat business is constantly on my mind," he says. "We must ensure our services remainrelevant and compatible through data analysis, project performance and ongoing, supportive communication." It can be a juggling act, he says, but marketing's role is to cut through the noise and let the quality of work shine across multiple channels. Danny wants the personalisation and automation efforts of his marketers to engage clients, enable the business to retain its customers, and engender loyalty.

The lines between different departments are becoming more blurred, and the entire exec suite has to be far more integrated

The PwC survey raised public trust as another concern for CEOs, with more than half sharing the opinion that lack of trust in their business would damage growth. As the managers of brand reputation, marketers are well placed to alleviate this anxiety, particularly as 87% of CEOs think social media could have a negative impact on trust in their industry. In the simplest way – concentrating on this particular concern – CMOs should explain marketing's role in monitoring and engaging with social media, and outline what plans are in place if a reputational crisis occurs.

Innovation is another perennial concern for CEOs, who worry their business will be left in the wake of more forward-thinking rivals. But for Michael Lindberg, CEO of business consultancy Lindberg International, it's something far subtler – neatly encapsulated by a quote from Clayton Christensen, author of *The Innovator's Dilemma* – that keeps him awake at night.

"I had the great fortune of meeting Christensen a few years ago and ever since then his 'wake-up call' has kept me awake more than I care for, all because of this quote," he explains. "'As companies tend to innovate faster than their customers' needs evolve, most organisations eventually end up producing products or services that are actually too sophisticated, too expensive and too complicated for many customers in their market'. Of course we need to innovate, but how do we find the right balance? I need bright marketing people to help me by providing deep insights about not what the market wants, but what the market needs."

If you can give your CEO the support, reassurance and inspiration they're looking for, you'll be in the perfect position to drive the relationship forward in the weeks, months and years to come – and who knows? They may even sleep more soundly as a result.

Spencer Waldron, Danny Bluestone and Michael Lindberg will all be speaking at Ignite 2017, Europe's biggest B2B marketing event, on Thursday 22 June in London. Go to ***bit.ly/2puoFhl*** *to book your ticket.*

It's perhaps no surprise this serial entrepreneur is looking for marketers who are willing to take risks and be "curious and creative"



ALEX BARD, CEO, CAMPAIGN MONITOR

THE CEO VIEWPOINT: ALEX BARD, CAMPAIGN MONITOR

Alex Bard joined email marketing brand Campaign Monitor as CEO in 2014, and is responsible for 250 employees globally, primarily based in the firm's three offices in Sydney, San Francisco and London.

In March, Campaign Monitor acquired Tagga, a B2C customer data platform. And making sure this acquisition is successful is what's currently keeping Alex awake.

"Now the really hard work begins," he says. "It's about establishing what the plan is and how we roll that out to the market. We have to be a team of one, and all on the same page."

Having done much of the due diligence and cultural alignment work beforehand, there's a crucial area in which marketing has a role to play. "The third thing is the 'go-to-market' piece. Can we message it in the right way, with a unique voice and deliver it at scale?"

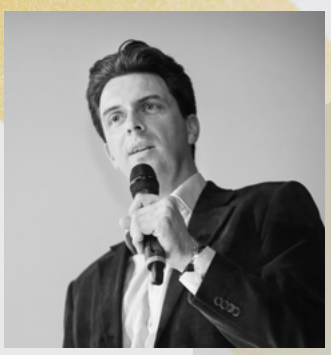
So what underpins a great relationship between CEO and CMO, according to Alex? It all comes down to taking the time to build trust. "You have to have an inbuilt trust in one another. A vulnerability based-trust, where you can admit you don't know or need help with something."

This can create an atmosphere of 'productive conflict' (as opposed to personal conflict or artificial harmony, where people just pretend to get on with each other), enabling both parties to share and challenge conflicting ideas and opinions.

"It's about being able to push and pull. If your relationship's built on genuine trust, you can hold each other accountable," he adds.

In terms of what Alex wants to see from his marketing team, it's perhaps no surprise that this serial entrepreneur (who founded four cloud software companies and sold his customer service start-up Assistly to Salesforce in 2011) is looking for marketers who are willing to take risks and be "curious and creative".

"Risk starts with leadership. Taking risks and making sure there's a small blast radius," he says. "If you don't, you'll ossify as a business. Taking measured risk is vital, but so is making sure the risk is not fatal."



SPENCER WALDRON, EUROPEAN REGIONAL DIRECTOR, PREZI

Consider your CEO's background and the way in which they consume information

HOW TO TALK THE TALK

You've just had an amazing idea that's going to increase conversion rates and boost revenue, blowing away the competition in the process. But what's the best way to present this to the CEO to ensure you get the buy-in (and credit) you deserve? We asked presentation expert Spencer Waldron for the low down

"CEOs have a bad reputation for being quite a tough audience – interrupting and always asking hard questions," says Spencer. "They have to make decisions quickly with minimal information, and what they don't have is a lot of time to work out the point you're trying to make."

The challenge is to strike the balance between brevity and rigour. One method, he says, is rather than building up to a 'ta-da' moment when making your case, starting with the headline up front.

"This connects to how we make decisions; we all make decisions on an emotional level first, then justify them by using logic, reason and evidence. Where people use storytelling and data, they are more persuasive, or can shorten the decision-making process."

You should also consider your CEO's background and the way in which they consume information. If they started out in finance or engineering, you'll need to paint the picture in a way that's familiar to them. And don't forget that everyone has their own habits, Spencer advises. "I worked with a CEO who hated anyone using the word 'challenge'; just say it's a problem, don't dress it up," says Spencer. "Understand the little idiosyncrasies they like or don't like because this will have an impact on how they receive your message."

And if they begin shifting in their chair or checking their phone while you're talking? "If you feel like you're losing them, stop talking and ask for direction," Spencer says. "The first minute you're talking is the most important – this is where you signal to the person you're talking to that what you're about to say is worth their time.

"We're very protective of our attention and who we give it to – we don't want people to waste it."

Spencer Waldron will be speaking at Ignite 2017 on The secret language of leadership: Six techniques to help you speak like a leader.

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THE WORLD'S YOUR OYSTER

As busy leaders with remits stretching from San Francisco to Singapore and Taiwan to Timbuktu, how do you overcome the challenges involved with disparate time zones, languages and cultures? **Jess Pike** speaks to seven B2B big-hitters to find out

INTRODUCING THE B2B JET-SETTERS



Georgiana Verdonk-Sim
VP, The B2B Marketing Lab, Asia

Based in Singapore
Manages teams in: Europe and APAC.
Number of business trips taken per month/ quarter: At least one.



Sarah Donnelly
Strategic marketing director, Atkins

Based in London
Manages teams in: Currently UK but previously every continent.
Number of business trips taken per month/ quarter: 20 per month in previous role.



Guillaume Roques
VP marketing EMEA, Salesforce

Based in Paris
Manages teams in: APAC, EMEA and Canada.
Number of business trips taken per month/ quarter: Most weeks.



Jennifer Watkiss
Head of marketing communications, Adestra

Based in Oxford
Manages teams in: UK, US and Australia.
Number of business trips taken per month/ quarter: Two to three on average per quarter.



Stephanie Robotham
VP of corporate marketing, Optimizely

Based in San Francisco
Manages teams in: UK, US, Holland, Germany and Australia
Number of business trips taken per month/ quarter: Every other week on average.



Rob Gorby
VP SMB Business, SDL Managed Translation

Based in Basingstoke
Manages teams in: UK, US, Germany and Romania
Number of business trips taken per month/ quarter: Two per month



Corinne Sklar
CMO, Bluewolf

Based in San Francisco
Manages teams: Globally
Number of business trips taken per month/ quarter: Two per month

DEALING WITH CULTURAL DIFFERENCES

Jennifer Watkiss: In the UK people tend not to want to impose, and the way that manifests itself in our UK office is that you don't ask someone for a favour unless you've really thought about it. In the US, however, there's a much more casual approach; some of our US colleagues wouldn't think twice about asking a question, knowing full well that they're likely to hear a: 'No' or: 'Not right now' and being okay with that. This led to people in the UK feeling put upon, and US colleagues not knowing why they were being treated as though they were annoyingly high-maintenance. Thankfully, everyone is now more used to each other: the US team is more considered with requests, and the UK team has become more comfortable pushing back.

Georgiana Verdonk-Sim: In many countries, someone's position is based on their ability and responsibilities. But in countries that value hierarchical structure, age is often a big factor when it comes to promotion. A few years ago, I appointed a team leader on a global project and found out that certain people in my team thought she was too 'young' for the role. I didn't try to fix the issue right away; instead, I waited for the 'younger' team leader to prove her abilities, and consequently, those who were initially sceptical ended up changing their minds. I'd also say that not all leaders are a natural fit for a global team; sometimes it helps if the person in question has experience living and working abroad.

Sarah Donnelly: In my previous role there were some big cultural differences: those in the UK, for example, were predominantly proactive when it came to ideas, clear on where they wanted their careers to go, and keen to get in front of senior leaders. Conversely, those in Asia would rarely give an opinion or offer an idea and wouldn't necessarily see a need to report back to individuals who weren't their direct manager. As a leader you have to be respectful of cultural differences and recognise that different people need managing differently. If you're new to a global role, ask for training around cultural awareness if you haven't had it.

Stephanie Robotham: It's not just about differences within the team, but differences between markets. We ran a virtual event recently in the US following a big customer research conference and it went down well with the US executive decision-maker audience. However, we know it would never have gone down so well in EMEA. People just have different attitudes and ways of thinking.

Not all leaders are a natural fit for a global team; sometimes it helps if the person in question has experience living and working abroad

Corinne Sklar: Collaboration in marketing is crucial (it's why I actually don't encourage my team in San Francisco to work from home too much), and this remains true whether you're talking about local or regional teams. True moments of creative genius come around when people are free to take what they know about their region and run with it – don't try and impose what works in one market on another. More often than not, it won't.

TECHNOLOGY SAVES THE DAY

Guillaume Roques: At Salesforce we use Chatter (an enterprise social networking app) and Quip to collaborate across the global team, as well as Google Hangouts. These tools are great because they mimic the way people naturally communicate through conversation and collaboration. I also host weekly 'unplugged' calls where my entire team can drop in and ask me questions – it could be anything from how a particular campaign has done to my favourite colour (although the majority of the questions are about our business!).

Jennifer: We use GoToMeeting a lot, and always turn on our webcams. It really helps to see other people's faces and add that extra level of engagement. As a global marketing leader, I'd say over-communicate as much as possible – send loads of emails, use your Slack channels and keep your Skype status and calendar up to date.

Stephanie: Totally agree with Jennifer. I think the value of a video call is underestimated. We tend to have rigour around planning and getting the invite right and encouraging people to arrive early in case there are any tech issues. We also have a wonderful executive assistant who helps out a lot.

Rob Gorby: I'm a big fan of video conferencing, but it can be tricky when you've got different accents involved. Make sure people are speaking clearly and slowly and try and bring everyone in on the conversation by putting people on the agenda in advance of the call.

GETTING THE MOST OUT OF YOUR TEAM

Sarah: Be clear with your leaders on why your team needs to come together face-to-face on a regular basis and build this into your budget when you're doing your annual planning.

Stephanie: We use all the tech you'd expect but there isn't a substitute for face-to-face so I travel a lot – at least once a quarter – and budget for the team to travel too. On my most

recent trip, for example, I brought one of our superstar campaign marketers with me, and it was great to see her meeting her EMEA colleagues; they've become friends and have bonded really well.

Rob: Last month my team met in Romania for a global team get-together, and it was excellent. We discussed work, yes, but we also did an assault course (great for team bonding!).

Stephanie: Building friendships and professional relationships is really important, so another thing we do at our meet-ups in San Francisco is volunteer at the local food bank. Packing rice and carrots together is a great way to bond!

Guillaume: The Salesforce culture is centred on 'ohana': the Hawaiian idea that family members are all responsible for one another wherever in the world we're based. That really helps us pull together as a team.

Corinne: To me, successful leadership on a global scale is all about giving as much autonomy to the different regional teams you're working with as possible – the challenge is letting them go while making sure they're working within controlled environments. And I truly believe that the best senior marketers have started to move away from a centralised model and instead see their regional teams almost like mini start-ups.

THE GLOBAL LEADERSHIP HIGHS AND LOWS

Sarah: Being in a global role gives you a fantastic understanding of other cultures. Plus, it's not bad to be standing on a deck in Florida or Cannes in March with the sun shining down on you and a glass of wine in hand.

Jennifer: What do I love about it? It opens my team's eyes to new ideas and ways of doing things, and it's also a pretty amazing boost for creativity.

Stephanie: The lows? Definitely time zones! And encouraging everyone to embrace our culture of experimentation while maintaining consistent branding and tone of voice. Essentially, though, because we're all about experimentation we encourage our teams to do whatever works in their territories. We want to stand out for the right reasons; we don't want to be that brand doing vanilla marketing that nobody shouts about.

Rob: On the data side, I occasionally find myself frustrated that information in another language is locked away and left in its own silo. This is where great communication comes in though. Oh, and it's always painful to reflect on how much time has been wasted with people on mute.

Jennifer: I'd agree with Stephanie: trying to fit projects and meetings around time zones can be a pain. And, of course, misunderstandings due to cultural differences.

OVERCOMING JET LAG

Rob: To be honest I never manage to swerve it – I get hit every time. When I travel to the US a bit of jet lag helps me get into the gym really early – and in the evening a glass of wine tends to help.

Jennifer: It depends on how far you're going and for how long. Generally, get into your new time zone for sleeping and eating as quickly as possible. Those are the big cues your body uses for deciding what time it is. If you're travelling west to east, and have trouble falling asleep at night, melatonin can also help.

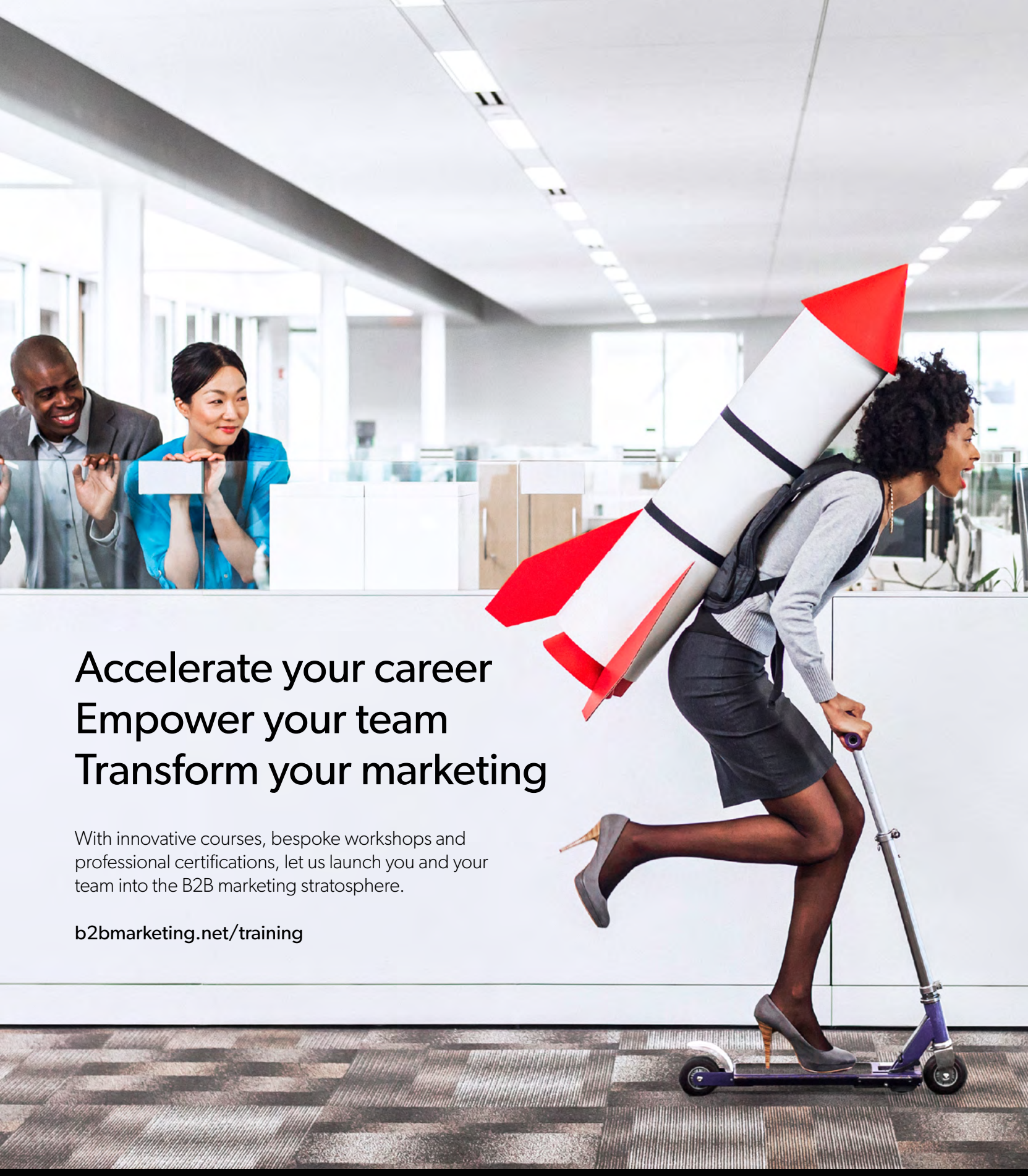
Sarah: Remember the basics: avoid alcohol, drink lots of water on the flight and reset your watch to the destination time as soon as you board.

Stephanie: I'd agree with Sarah: drink tonnes of water and try to stay awake until 10pm wherever possible. Avoid afternoon naps at all costs.

Guillaume: I'm not sure there is a secret. Good sleep, good food and exercise. I also go for 'micro-sleeps': I read a while back about sailors and how they manage to sleep when they're on solo cruises. Basically they micro-sleep. So when I travel I tend to sleep for a few hours (or even minutes) rather than a block of eight. It's taken years to master but it does work.

WORD TO THE WISE: NINE TOP TIPS FOR MARKETERS OVERSEEING GLOBAL TEAMS

1. Accept that different regions will always have different priorities.
2. Consider how visible your CEO is to the wider marketing team.
3. Plan meetings thoroughly before you put them in the calendar.
4. Don't just allow for cultural differences; prepare for them.
5. Make sure you have a handle on the hiring process in other regions.
6. Don't underestimate how useful platforms like WhatsApp can be for global communication.
7. Bear in mind that location swaps can be a great way of deepening collaboration and encouraging the cross-fertilisation of ideas.
8. Beware of language issues – and don't assume native speakers will always be the best communicators.
9. Let go: accepting that you don't have to control everything is the first step on the road to success.



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THE SALES AND MARKETING CONUNDRUM

The sales/marketing question is as old and predictable as the format of *University Challenge*. **Alex Clarke** finds out about the pros and cons of various structural options and asks what happens in organisations where marketing sits directly within the sales department



A MARKETER WHO SITS IN SALES

Louis Fernandes, director, demand generation, UKI, HPE, has a rather unique perspective, stemming from the fact that he sits within the sales department and earns commission like his colleagues in sales

In the previous model of our organisation I was measured in the same way as my sales colleagues… which means there's immediately a sense of credibility around what I'm trying to achieve. It also means that the metrics are tied back to business performance (revenue and margin), as opposed to more esoteric marketing metrics such as, say, page impressions, click-throughs or whitepaper downloads.

All I'm interested in… is sales-qualified pipeline, closed revenue and engagement margin, so I have skin in the same game as my front-line sales colleagues. Additionally, the demand generation campaigns that my team and I deliver are 100% relevant to the sales guys who are going to pursue the opportunities that we create – and I do mean opportunities, not leads; that's an important distinction.

If someone were to say my position was unusual… I'd urge them to try it and let me know how they're getting on after six months. Seriously, sitting within sales changes the way you work and the way you approach the campaign construction and execution. I'd also ask anyone who thought that it was strange when the last time was they went on a sales call and sat with a customer as part of a sales pursuit.

If you're not walking in your sales teams' shoes… you don't know what they're up against. Equally, if you're not at the biting end of customer engagement from time to time, you really don't know what's going through the customer's mind during the buying and purchase decision-making process.

I get paid based on the same metrics… as my sales colleagues, as well as the same incentive levels. It focuses one's mind.

We've run a number of campaigns over the past 12 months… where the level of sales-qualified pipeline has been far greater than other marketing-only led campaigns. The level of customer engagement has been much higher in the organisations that we've targeted (really c and c-1 levels), and the deal velocity through the pipeline has been markedly different – generally in the region of two times that of 'traditional' marketing campaign leads.

I'm very careful not to attach tags like marketing… to what it is that we do. I only ever talk about demand generation or sales campaigns. While that sounds like semantics, language is important. What the team and I are doing is perceived to be different to what marketing does, and as such, is seen to be owned by sales.

Ownership is massively important… because, as a sales executive, you suddenly feel like it's your initiative – a feeling that we've been at pains to try and cultivate through this process. It engenders that 'skin-in-the-game' feeling, which in turn creates internal engagement, helps drive campaign success, and gives what we do an even footing alongside the front-line sales guys.

Relates to Louis' role within HPE Enterprise Services, pre-divestiture

Ownership is massively important because it engenders that 'skin-in-the-game' feeling

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SALES AND MARKETING AS ONE

Straddling the divide between marketing and sales – and treating it as a single entity – is the way forward, argues Catherine Howard, UK&I marketing director, Atos

Sales and marketing is one function… at Atos UK&I. As marketing director, I'm a main stakeholder on our sales board, reporting to our senior VP for sales and marketing. By operating as one function, there isn't a sales marketing divide, which is really beneficial. We operate as one team, our targets and metrics are aligned, and our successes are shared.

A huge benefit… of this structure is that there's a real team culture built around driving growth for the organisation, with everyone clear about how they contribute, and able to see their achievements. The second benefit is that marketing is a key part of the organisation and is at the heart of delivering to all stages of the sales cycle, from driving awareness through

to demand generation, supporting existing pipeline and ultimately enabling closed sales. The third is the ability to be creative. What I mean by this is that by having a close sales and marketing relationship, you can run joint workshops to generate new ideas and take innovations forward together. It's fantastic to be a part of a function that's really adding business value to the organisation.

We all attend sales meetings every day... yet it's not a case of having formal meetings, but rather joint sessions that are adding value. In a bidding situation, everyone sits together throughout the day, with marketing a key part of client meetings as well as internal meetings. This way there's continuous two-way communication.

Sales would describe marketing's role as... building presence with clients and in the market, bringing new opportunities through working with sales, and delivering brave new creative. In effect, marketing supports sales across the whole cycle.



A TEAM OF TWO

With an inhouse team that only comprises two full-time salespeople, Kate Sinclair, director of business development and marketing, Lane Clark & Peacock, reflects on the challenges associated with external sales teams

We operate as one team... with two heads of department: myself looking after the marketing team and my colleague Charlie heading up the sales and sales support team, which comprises two full-time salespeople. However, as our business is a partnership we also have another 100 or so senior people directly responsible for selling and developing client relationships, so we all work closely with them to deliver results.

Working with such a large group of people responsible for selling is a huge challenge... as it means all their needs have to be met. Allocating marketing resources appropriately to the level of opportunity that exists (without discouraging people who are selling in more niche areas) is a continual balancing act. It can also be difficult to find enough opportunities for marketers to get in front of clients directly in order to really understand them.

A great example of success was our recent cross-selling campaign... which was essentially an internal marketing campaign designed to equip our partners and other colleagues with the skills and support they needed to increase cross-selling across the firm. Because we're an integrated team, we all worked together on the comms, skills training, publicity, digital tools and general cheerleading, and it resulted in our best quarter ever for this type of new business.

Sales would describe marketing's role as... building the firms' reputation and brand, supporting an effective sales process, and supporting go-to-market strategies for new products and services. We're working on ways to deliver leads in a more measurable way, and are developing our lead generation strategy hand-in-hand with our partners and sales team to ensure we deliver the quality of leads that they require.



Marketing is well served by listening to the instincts of those in sales. They are our customers too

THE TRADITIONAL APPROACH

The Pedowitz Group houses a more conventional sales/marketing structure. CMO and VP marketing strategy Kevin Joyce discusses the merits and drawbacks

We're a data-driven organisation... therefore we're tightly aligned with sales and are combined into one in terms of data and systems management, reporting, and analytics.

Sometimes we can be too sales-driven... which makes it hard to stay focused on the important, long-term initiatives for marketing. Working in a company where there are many brilliant marketing people, including the founders, has its challenges because everyone has an opinion and they don't always align!

Our VP of sales was once a VP of marketing... and hence understands the balancing act needed between the two functions. The way to overcome this challenge is to firstly produce tangible revenue results from marketing initiatives and then meet or beat marketing-sourced and -influenced revenue goals. After that, all other sins will be forgiven.

Sales came to marketing recently to create an email campaign... that targeted our partners with some very specific offers. We were sceptical at first, but worked closely with sales to create something that satisfied both parties, and it turned out to be a very successful programme. It proved that marketing is well served by listening to the instincts of those in sales. They're our customers too.





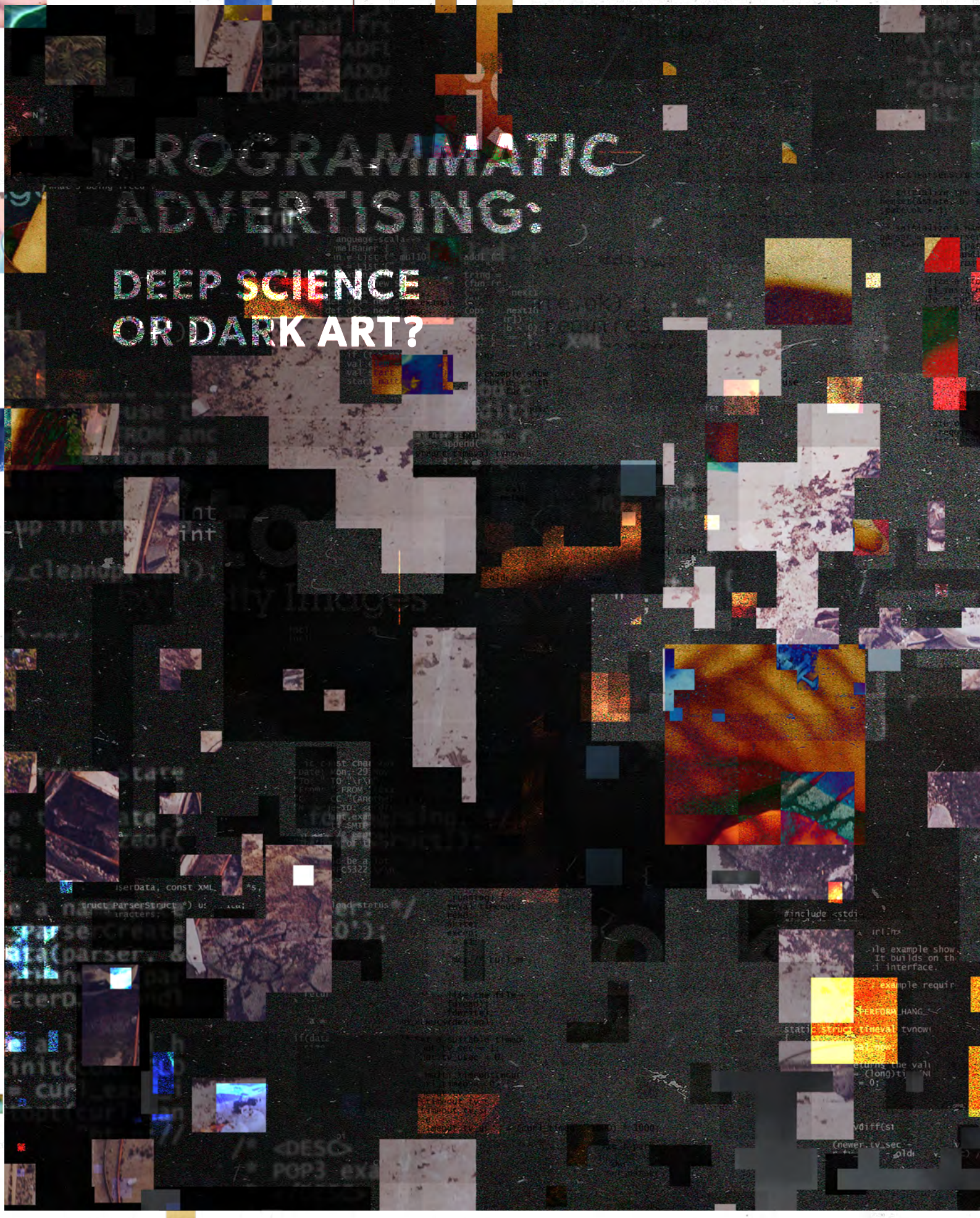
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PROGRAMMATIC
ADVERTISING:
DEEP SCIENCE
OR DARK ART?



Programmatic, once considered newfangled technological wizardry, has now been tainted (perhaps irrevocably). **Jess Pike** speaks to those on both sides of the fence to find out whether recent ethical questions spell the end for this new way of advertising

Unless you *purposefully* seek it out you won't necessarily come across anything untoward on the internet. Like slow-moving fish lurking on the riverbed, the stuff we don't want to see – the *bad stuff* – remains hidden beneath a thin layer of iridescent algae, barely visible to the naked eye. But lurking there all the same.

Programmatic advertising has changed all that: with its clever algorithms and technological know-how, it's brought the horrors of the deep right to the surface, giving big-budget brands around the world the fright of their lives.

The situation came to a head in February, when *The Times* revealed that household brands had been inadvertently bankrolling pornographers, Islamic extremists and white supremacists by advertising on their websites and videos. Then, in March, Coca-Cola, PepsiCo and Walmart pulled non-search ads from Google after *The Wall Street Journal* discovered that they were being shown alongside racist or anti-Semitic YouTube videos. Others soon followed, including HSBC, Havas Group, Lloyds, Marks & Spencer, Thomson Reuters and Dropbox.

Later that month Google held its hands up and took some of the flack by admitting that brand safety was a global problem and that "we need to do better". And in April it was reported that the company plans to introduce an ad-blocking feature in the Chrome web browser that will filter out certain ad types deemed to provide bad experiences for users. All of a sudden, the internet – purveyor of clever, shiny things like social media, ecommerce and video – was suddenly looking a whole lot less enticing.

A MORAL MAZE

Questions over extremist content are only part of the conversation: what about B2C brands whose adverts for alcohol or gambling sites pop up on the screens of addicts? What's the ethical stance there? How can brands be sure that this supposedly highly targeted, highly measurable approach to advertising meets ROI goals as well as moral standards? And how do customers feel about being pursued across the internet by brands that really don't interest them?

The world of programmatic is so close knit that it becomes tough as a buyer to figure out how it actually works

According to Rory Sutherland, vice chairman of Ogilvy & Mather Group, much of the murkiness stems from the algorithms themselves. "Algorithms are very good at optimising a specific thing, but they usually have no idea of the wider context in which they operate," he explains. "They thus might pursue something to a ridiculous degree where a human agent would give up. What concerns me is how programmatic might affect people with addictions. If a human being said: 'Let's advertise booze at AA meetings', any sane and decent person would view them with horror. But an algorithm doesn't have that sense."

A vision of dystopian society emerges, where our vices – however trivial – are preyed upon by algorithms looking to deliver financial returns. "In ethical terms, it's fairly nasty," says Rory. "You can envisage a world where everyone feels exposed and tempted by the thing they're most trying to avoid. There's a risk, I'd say, that algorithms become *too* good, and that's definitely a worry."

THE SCEPTICS

So what do marketers feel about recent headlines? "Using programmatic is something we'll consider for a few of our clients with really broad audiences, but I'm not a fan of it and it's not our go-to strategy," says Ebony Grimsley-Vaz, owner and creative director of Above Promotions. "You only have to watch videos on YouTube to see the lack of control in terms of where your products end up. Not enough technology has been created or implemented to give brands peace of mind, and in this day and age, a setback to a company's reputation means a quarter's loss or even more. You really have to evaluate if it's worth it in the long haul."

So the supposed lures of programmatic (wide reach, advanced targeting and increased measurability) haven't won over Ebony. And

Programmatic's currently seen as a dark art in the same way that search was 20 years ago

Justin Hartzman, co-founder and CEO of social media ad agency Needls.com, shares the same opinion. To him, the whole practice is pretty shady: if it's not a lack of clarity over cost (are you paying per click or per sign up?) it's unreliable analytics and – in some cases – disappointing outcomes. "We used to do programmatic but we stopped recently because of the cloudy nature of what's going on in the market," he explains. "When it comes to the major DSPs (demand-side platforms), the world of programmatic is so close knit that it becomes tough as a buyer to figure out how it actually works."

For Justin, the decision to pull budget from programmatic was a no-brainer: thousands of dollars were being eaten up in a matter of hours and the return just wasn't high enough. "For SMEs without decent budgets, programmatic isn't really an option. If you've got hundreds of thousands – or even millions – to play with, it's a different story," he says. "And then there's the question of click fraud – is the provider in question delivering real clicks? What's the measurability around that? And is your ad best suited to high-profile websites or more targeted and less noisy websites where there's more opportunity to be seen (and that cost significantly less)?"

For companies like Justin's, social has proven a more fruitful channel for lead generation and engagement. Concerns over click fraud – coupled with the dawn of a new age of ad and pop-up blockers – mean he remains unconvinced of programmatic's potential.

So it seems that the programmatic vision doesn't quite marry up with the reality: while some see it as synonymous with low-cost, laser-sharp targeting, others may take a little more convincing. "Ad space sold programmatically is usually the remnant, unsold inventory that doesn't command high prices," explains Craig Gooding, co-founder of Vibrant Media, an independent consultancy for martech and ad tech. "This is because it's not the same quality of that sold through the traditional inventory order process, where the most optimum advertising environments are achieved."

THE PROPONENTS

Someone who takes umbrage with Justin's views on programmatic's limitations for smaller brands is Neil Eatson, co-founder and CEO of Appraise Digital. "It's not about the money," he says. 'It's actually about the partner, tool, technology and data. If you understand the data you're working with,



programmatic's a natural bolt-on, but if you're just throwing money at it in the hope that it'll work it's a different story."

Neil does admit that a lack of transparency *has* had a negative impact – something that isn't helped by a limited understanding of programmatic on the part of some clients (which in turn isn't helped by the over-complication of the programmatic process by vendors and agencies). "Programmatic's currently seen as a dark art in the same way that search was 20 years ago, but the process itself isn't as complex as it first appears," he explains. "The fact that there are so many moving parts – and it's so fragmented – can be confusing, and what we need to do is demystify it."

Another fully paid-up programmatic proponent is Craig. For him, the main benefit is cost – and data, of course – which allows marketers to hone their ad buying around particular objectives. "Ad buyers and planners now need to assess more factors when selecting ad space, but they're able to predict the likely performance of ad space for certain campaigns, as well as evaluate it more effectively. The data is also starting to show that 'premium' providers of ad space don't necessarily deliver premium ad inventory for every single impression: some ads will have poor viewability, be served within irrelevant or even brand-damaging content, or be displayed to a totally irrelevant user. That's not 'premium'. Likewise, what a marketing manager may not initially perceive as a 'premium publisher' – maybe because it's a niche site – could well be delivering premium inventory."

Increased understanding of what a good ad inventory comprises has shifted perceptions around the purchasing decision: saying that an ad impression is 'premium' merely because it's been bought from a particular publisher no longer holds much weight.

PUTTING THE CUSTOMER FRONT OF MIND

And what about the consumers in all of this? Are we considering their needs? Or is this another case of 'channel first, customer second'? We all know, for instance, that re-targeting is a risky game: while on the one hand it can gently nudge the customer down the funnel, it can also really piss them off. "As consumers, we don't want to be 'stalked' by advertisers who track and monitor our digital footprint: it's creepy," says Katy Halewood, head of Maxus for Business at Maxus. "Particularly as it's often misplaced – after all, being served an ad for the exact pair of shoes you've just purchased doesn't quite hit the mark."

Rory Sutherland concurs, pointing out that programmatic approaches that are effective in the short term can ruffle serious feathers in the long term. "There's definitely a limit with re-targeting," he argues. "It obviously works – if someone looks for hotel rooms in Torquay, and are then served up an advert for a hotel in Torquay, it can encourage them to book. But if you've bought a children's book on Amazon for someone and then find that Amazon has infantilised your recommendations for the next month, you'll start to go deranged. There's a question of degree here: extrapolating short-term effect into long-term desirable."

But re-targeting – or the test and learn approach, as it might also be known – does allow dynamic messaging to be used to great effect, as Katy points out. "You can target by geo-location, IP or demographic, and



You've got to think about what works for the consumer rather than what works for you as a brand, and strike the right balance

then reap the benefits of personalisation. There's great opportunities for better and more effective ads, so long as the data is used carefully and adds value to the user."

THE CHOICE IS YOURS

So if the programmatic pros outweigh the cons (and many brands, despite the naysayers, do continue to invest), how do you go about selecting a provider? Many purport to offer the same benefits, so it's only until you get under the metaphorical hood that you're really able to differentiate. "Even then it might be a bit tricky," points out Alina Morkin, VP marketing at Voices.com. "One of the main things that determines their success is the effectiveness of their algorithm, but that's a bit of a black box because each is proprietary."

So what can you reasonably expect to judge them on? Well, first consider past successes and customer testimonials; then evaluate whether they'll be able to provide you with the metrics you need. Is the ramping-up period fast enough for you? When the algorithm's optimised, what's the anticipated click-through and subsequent conversion rate? "Ensure you have visibility into what's happening, and expectations around what you should be seeing and when," says Alina. "Check that the pixel being used doesn't have an impact on your site load times. (A pixel is a little snippet of code that's dropped onto a visitor's browser, so you can track whether they've viewed or clicked on an ad or message, and made a purcase.) And bear in mind the fact that the more specific your customer – and the less traffic you have currently from that type of person – the longer the ramp time (i.e. spend with little to show for it)."

It's also worth noting that buying ads in the open real-time bidding marketplaces, rather than the private marketplaces, is risky – and brands should consider investing in ad tech that incorporates brand safety, anti-fraud and contextual relevance functions to help counter some of the potential risks.

MAINTAINING BRAND INTEGRITY

Blacklisting – the process of putting together a list of domains on which you wouldn't want your advertising to appear – has now been cast aside in favour of whitelisting. Either way, it's not just the far-right extremist sites you need to be worried about. "We worked with one provider that had placement on some very reputable dating sites," says Alina. "Sure – some of our prospective clients might be present on those sites – but are they really going to be thinking about where they're going to find that perfect Spanish-accented voiceover for their project while on them? I'm going to say no. The inventory needs to be screened for that contextual element as well."

Deciding which sites make the cut will require a degree of pragmatism. Just because you're not an avid *Daily Mail* reader doesn't negate the fact that it's the most visited English language newspaper site in the world, for example. "The ethics question is really about brand safety," says Neil. "But you've got to think about what works for the consumer rather than what works for you as a brand, and strike the right balance. The *Daily Mail* comments section is populated with thousands of questionable remarks every day – but does this mean you wouldn't advertise there even if you knew it was where your customers were?"

PROGRAMMATIC IN A NUTSHELL: DEFINITIONS AND ACRONYMS EXPLAINED

Programmatic
Automated bidding on advertising inventory in real time for the opportunity to show an ad to a specific customer in a specific context.

Ad inventory
The amount of ad space a publisher has available to sell to an advertiser.

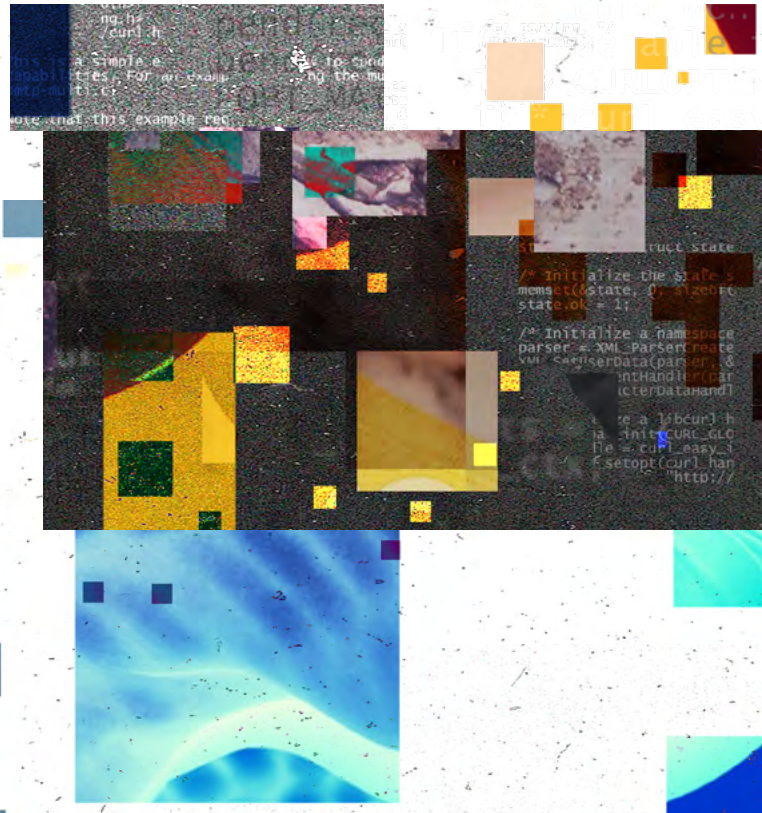
Demand-side platform (DSP)
A demand-side platform enables advertisers and agencies to automate the purchase of display, video, mobile and search ads.

Supply-side platform (SSP)
A supply-side platform is a software platform that enables publishers to automatically sell display, video, and mobile ad impressions, maximising the price they can charge.

Real-time bidding (RTB)
A means by which advertising inventory is bought and sold on a per-impression basis via programmatic instantaneous auction.

Targeting
Targeting allows relevant advertising to be served based on various different criteria.

Ad exchanges
Ad exchanges are auction-based, often automated, digital marketplaces that enable multiple parties including advertisers, publishers, ad networks, demand-side platforms and supply-side platforms to buy and sell display, video and mobile inventory.



SEIZING BACK CONTROL

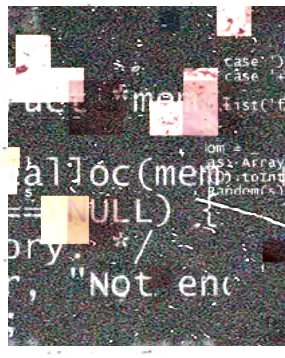
While some brands are unquestionably putting the brakes on programmatic spend, it's clear this method of advertising is here to stay. What might change – something a number of experts agree on – is ownership of the process; instead of using external agencies, many brands are looking to establish programmatic capabilities inhouse.

Real-time bidding (RTB) systems will also evolve, as Craig predicts: "RTB systems will introduce more unique and native formats than just banner ads; they're also enabling new campaign controls and criteria, as the ability to sell ad inventory on a viewable cost-per-mille basis shows. And the systems are starting to detail ad inventory's actual past performance so ad buyers can be far more calculated about the ad inventory they select for their campaigns – capabilities that are spurring organisations such as GroupM and Unilever to specify performance criteria for every single ad impression."

For Craig, clients look more willing now to compromise on the number of impressions bought and instead focus on guaranteeing premium viewability – a pretty seismic shift in approach. "And things like optimum page positions and combinations of targeting data are also becoming available to ad buyers through RTB systems," he says. "But when it comes to the efficiency of ad trading, more needs to be done to integrate the industry's established ad booking systems with automated platforms. There have been improvements, but more needs to happen."

Twelve months ago the digital futurists were predicting the dawn of a new age of programmatic television advertising: today the focus remains on transparency. But who's going to be pushing the debate forward and inciting action? According to Craig, it's down to brands, planners *and* buyers. "Rather than shrugging their shoulders about the problems – namely ads appearing in damaging environments, poor ad viewability or ads suffering bot fraud – they need to take action, and move budget away from platforms that don't deliver the quality of ad placement that's both ethical for their business and appropriate for their consumers. There are ads available programmatically that are highly focused on those issues, and it's up to brands to use them."

As consumers, we don't want to be 'stalked' by advertisers who track and monitor our digital footprint: it's creepy



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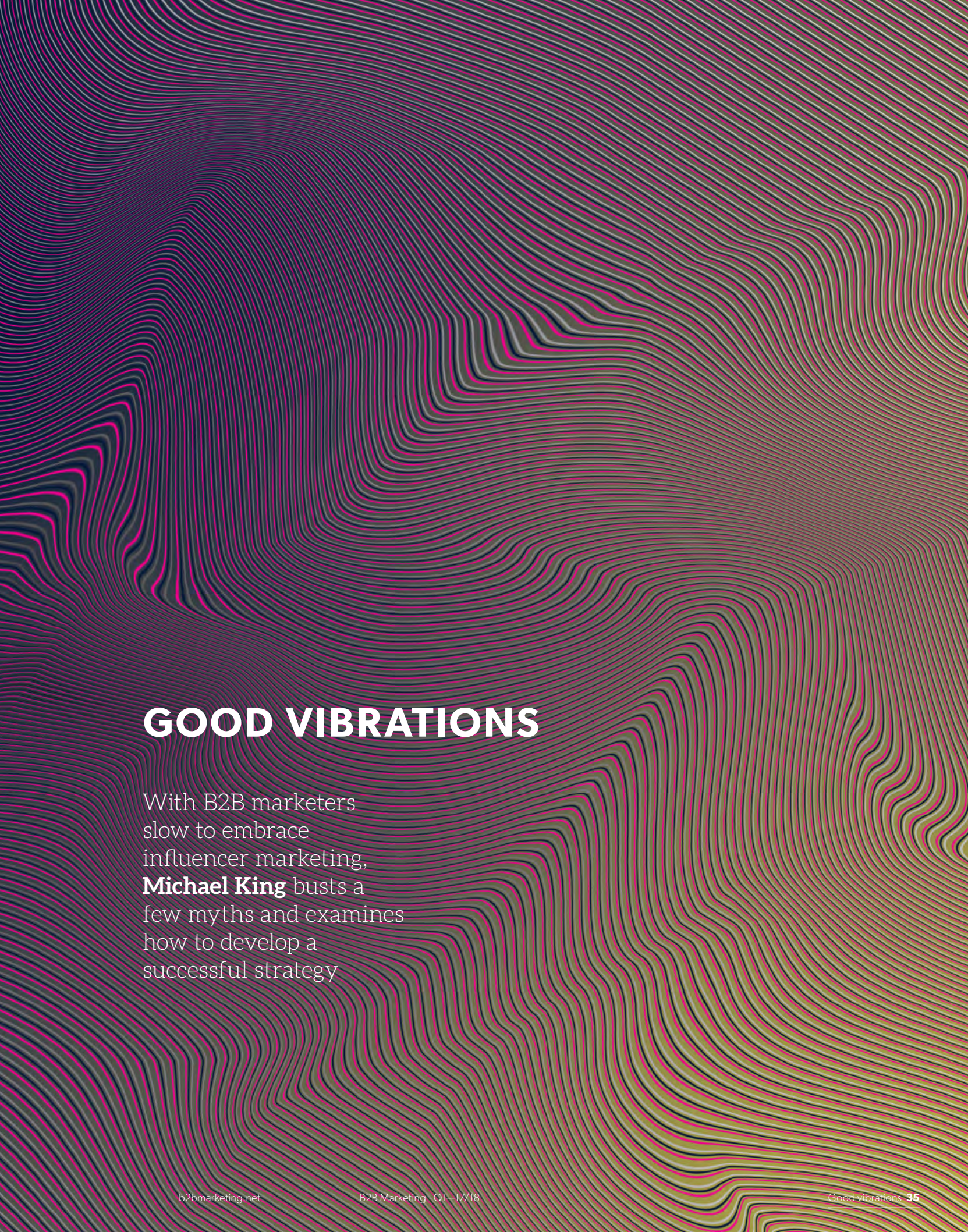
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GOOD VIBRATIONS

With B2B marketers slow to embrace influencer marketing, **Michael King** busts a few myths and examines how to develop a successful strategy

Are you of the (widely-held) opinion that influencer marketing is solely the preserve of B2C marketers? When you think of 'influencers', do you think of prepubescent vloggers being paid large sums to hawk their latest wares on Instagram and YouTube? What if you discovered that Oracle had reached more than 3800 Twitter users through influencer-led content and increased awareness around its conversation on the 'future of modern marketing'? Does that make you think again?

Influencer marketing is the process of tapping into the expertise of influential individuals to reach new audiences. And when rolled out in the right way, it can be very effective. But while some marketers recognise its value, few have been able to fathom how best to apply it to their own business objectives and emulate Oracle's success.

TACKLING THE MISCONCEPTIONS

What's causing this hesitation among marketers? One reason could be the misconceptions around where this strategy can be most effective: is it solely the preserve of our B2C counterparts? Absolutely not, says Nicolas Chabot, VP EMEA at influencer marketing management platform Traackr. "This isn't just a B2C playing field. And the most common misconception is that there aren't enough influencers in the B2B marketplace," he says. "The number of influencers varies widely from one vertical to another. But B2B audiences are actually much more engaged because content produced for specific verticals is seen as highly relevant, and thereby increases engagement. In that respect, influencers play a key role in building expertise and brand reputation."

It's undeniable that finding influencers can be a challenge. According to influencer marketing automation company TapInfluence, 68% of marketers struggle to identify the right people. "But I don't think there's an industry that *doesn't* have influencers," says Luke Brynley-Jones, MD, OST Marketing. "The challenge is refining them down to the ones that are most relevant to you and your customers. If you're in a broad industry without many topic segments then you might struggle a bit."

A useful tip for identifying relevant influencers is to track social media metrics, such as an individual's audience demographics, in order to find out if influencers reach an audience that's relevant to your brand. Philip Brown, head of influencer marketing at agency Come Round, says: "Engagement rates are a helpful tool for brands to see which influencers have an engaged audience – they can then cherry-pick a few to work more closely with over the long term. Another way is to use a social CRM system, which generates more insights around an influencer's social streams, biography, keywords, influential topics and who they influence."

Most companies think of influencer marketing as a transaction, but it's actually a way for brands to build long-term relationships with individual influencers

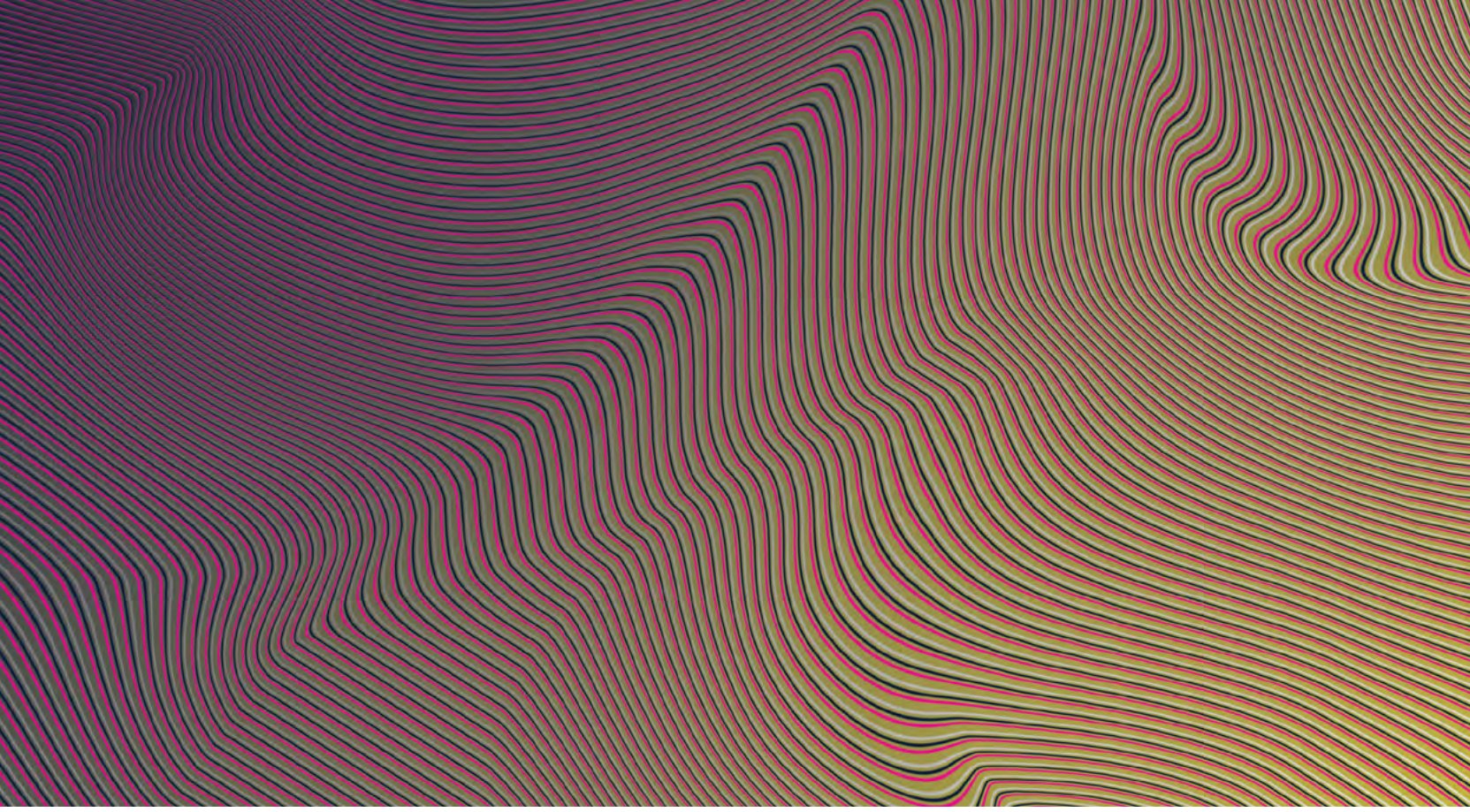
Marketers commonly believe that paying influencers a set fee to collaborate will initiate a good working relationship, but, as Nicolas explains, this isn't necessarily the case. "Most companies think of influencer marketing as a transaction, but it's actually a way for brands to build long-term relationships with individual influencers."

Where many brands fall short is when they lose sight of their objectives; setting clear goals will help to more clearly explain to influencers what's expected of them. For example, if a brand's aim is to increase Twitter followers through influencer-led content, this should be explained beforehand. Failing to identify goals makes it harder to roll out a clear plan, and influencers may become confused about what's expected of them. "Setting clear expectations for participants is a must," says Marissa Pick, director of social media at the CFA Institute. "Formalising any agreement – whether it's organic or paid participation – should be discussed ahead of any campaign launch. Make sure you clarify what you want from targeted influencers and how you're going to optimise their involvement."

DEVELOPING A STRATEGY

Having identified the relevant influencers, you should then establish how to reach out and connect with them. Collaborating on some form of written content that aligns your brand values with those of your influencers is one approach. "Marketers should be asking how they can tell a story that appeals to their audience, while aligning with both the brand and the influencer's brand and values," advises Lisa Toner, senior manager, content strategy, in HubSpot's sales division. "A true influencer won't be interested in pushing out sponsored content: what they really want is a valuable experience to offer their followers."

To find out what an influencer's audience values, ask them what they're passionate about. If they're interested in martech,



you could run a Twitter poll targeted at influencers that asks what brands can do to minimise martech spend, and ask the influencer to retweet. Or reply to a question posted by the influencer on social media. This will hopefully kick off the conversation.

For the relationship to be successful, brands also need to reward their influencers in one way or another. According to a TapInfluence survey, some 72% of influencers felt brands didn't offer adequate compensation. So how should they be rewarded?

"Reward doesn't mean payment," says Nicolas. "It means the collaboration should bring mutual benefit to both parties. In a B2B context, influencers can be executives in big organisations looking to raise their profile through to consultants looking to promote their expertise. Each has different expectations, and most are unwilling and unable to accept payment as a reward. A good way to reward influencers is to consistently involve them in projects relevant to them and their audience."

For example, if a targeted influencer is a strong public speaker on predictive analytics, invite them to speak at an event on the topic. This'll provide valuable networking opportunities and enable them to meet other senior thought leaders in the sector.

The final step is to evaluate the success of the relationship using metrics based on pre-established goals. "It's crucial to have metrics that are measurable to show that you're moving forward," explains Marissa. "This could be the amount of user-generated content, number of social mentions or uses of a hash tag. These metrics will be useful for showing senior management and internal stakeholders the value of rolling out an influencer marketing campaign."

Influencer marketing isn't a short-term strategy; building relationships with key influencers takes time. To successfully foster these relationships, it's worth maintaining social engagement between your brand and the influencer in question. Retweet, comment on, and like their content on a regular basis, and always show you care about their values before approaching them to collaborate.

Remember, whichever tactics you deploy, interactions with your influencers must be personal and well considered; without the personal touch, you risk losing a powerful advocate and brand champion before you've even realised their true potential.

Influencer marketing will be one of more than 60 topics discussed at Ignite 2017 on Thursday 22 June in London. Go to ***bit.ly/2q0e1jw*** *to book your place. Download our ultimate step-by-step guide to putting an influencer marketing programme in place at* ***bit.ly/2oMNs0y***

FIVE WAYS TO DEVELOP INFLUENCER RELATIONSHIPS

Oracle Marketing Cloud (OMC) rolled out a five-step influencer marketing programme focused on creating influencer-led content that would spark conversation with the wider community about the future of modern marketing – such a conversation was crucial for promoting awareness of full-stack marketing technology solutions. To achieve this, they:

1. Identified the top 25 influencers using experience, knowledge and online tools.
2. Engaged in conversation with the influencers via social media, and began to share and engage with their content on Twitter and LinkedIn groups.
3. Curated the list of influencers and selected the top 10.
4. Created content with influencers to aid the campaign.
5. Nurtured and built the relationships in view of future projects and campaigns.

Influencers made predictions about the future of modern marketing using quote cards, which were shared on social media by both OMC and their selected influencers, including TopRank Marketing's Lee Odden. This encouraged the wider community to respond and share their thoughts on the future of modern marketing. Influencers also re-shared materials posted by OMC, such as videos, images and an ebook.

The number of people reached (3800) and the number of slideshare impressions received via LinkedIn (10,000) proved the value of using influencer marketing in OMC's strategy – and it's something they'll be ramping up in future months in order to continue finding talking points that can be used as a basis for future campaigns.

HOW IBM SECURITY TURNED 56% OF ITS INFLUENCERS INTO ADVOCATES

When creating its own influencer programme, IBM Security targeted influencers in the following categories: consultants; end users (clients of IT security solutions); chief information security officers; heads of industry associations; government influencers; industry analysts; journalists; academia and solution providers (in some cases, competitors). The status of targeted influencers, a group that included Jane Frankland, CISO advisor, speaker, and champion for women in cyber security, was ranked on the following criteria:

- Market reach
- Frequency of impact
- Independence of impact
- Expertise
- Persuasiveness
- Thoroughness of involvement
- Peer group citations
- Online connectedness.

The programme's success was measured against two factors: advocacy of the IBM Security brand and level of contact with the influencer. At the start of the programme in June 2015, IBM could only class 5% of its top influencers as IBM Security advocates. By February 2017, that percentage had increased to 56% as a result of the introduction of a new management approach.

The system assigned appropriate business owners to each influencer, and IBM then decided on the method of communication and key messages it wanted to share with each influencer on a case-by-case basis. Much of IBM's success was down to human relationships: each influencer was assigned a relationship owner who was responsible for building and maintaining that relationship.

As well as being measured by the level of influencer contact, IBM's success was also measured through influencers' opinion of IBM Security (judged through retweeting of IBM content and interactions via social media). The resultant shift in market perception of the IBM Security brand was reflected through two accolades at the 2016 SC Magazine Europe Awards: Best Security Company and Best Mobile Security Solution.

Much of IBM's success was down to human relationships: each influencer was assigned a relationship owner

Influencer marketing isn't just a way to push content out to a wide audience. Working with influencers in specific verticals can be more effective because content is tailored to a target audience

THE 10 GOLDEN RULES OF INFLUENCER MARKETING

1. **Think about your audience.** This will determine the influencers you approach. Ask them for information about their followers to understand if they're relevant to your brand.
2. **Clarify your objectives.** Clear objectives will help you identify what you want to achieve and help you measure your success.
3. **Plan a long-term strategy.** The results of your programme will depend on how consistently your brand engages with influencers over the long term.
4. **Identify influencers using reach, resonance and relevance.** By using these three criteria, you'll ensure you're working with the influencers that have the biggest impact on your audience.
5. **Focus on being authentic.** Influencers want to know you're genuine, so have an idea of their needs and explain how collaborating with you will benefit them.
6. **Research the influencer before connecting.** What are they passionate about and what value can you offer?
7. **Warm up the relationship.** Connect with influencers by retweeting their content and commenting on their blog posts.
8. **Integrate influencer marketing into the wider business strategy.** It's important that the use of brand advocates and influencers sits within the wider brand strategy.
9. **Reward your influencers appropriately.** Don't necessarily offer monetary value, but tap into your influencer's personal objectives and reward them accordingly.
10. **Measure success through engagement.** Influencer marketing isn't just a way to push content out to a wide audience. Working with influencers in specific verticals can be more effective because content is tailored to a target audience.



Claire Mason

The rise of un-corporate communications

Companies that trade on their values will find it increasingly difficult to remain neutral in a polarised political environment, argues Claire Mason, CEO of Man Bites Dog

The separation of business and politics has long been considered sacrosanct. While companies lobby to influence industry and legislative issues, at a macro policy level they generally aspire to be nonpartisan.

Why? Because political bias can alienate employees and customers alike, and in extreme cases can affect the favourability of the regulatory environment and a company's licence to operate. What's more, an outspoken opinion can set an expectation that lasts a lifetime in the digital age.

Against this context of political neutrality, we've seen the rise of corporate values. These principles have become as entrenched as a corporate religion, a code that governs behaviour, culture and the norms by which companies operate.

Values generate followers and attract customers and talent, with employees accepting lower salaries or fewer benefits in exchange for a brand they identify with. But organisations that profit from their values will pay a high price if they fall short on their promises. It's no surprise that businesses have remained conspicuously nonpartisan for years, but with political ideologies becoming increasingly polarised, the question is whether or not it's possible, or even desirable, to remain apolitical?

We're witnessing a shift towards 'un-corporate communications' where leaders are willing to speak out to protect their brand's core values. In the US we've seen a backlash against President Trump's 'travel ban'. Tech giants have become a 'digital resistance', defending not just the free movement of labour they need to operate, but the liberal democratic values their employees align with. Across the pond, Brexit may have been the first political issue to coax leaders off the fence in decades. Such actions are undeniably political and deeply aligned to the values of the companies involved.

We're now entering uncharted territory. In this polarised political environment, remaining in the neutral zone is almost impossible for companies that trade on their values as an intrinsic part of their operating model. Leaders need to decide where their company stands on the most critical issues, and identify the lines that cannot be crossed.

The days of corporate neutrality are numbered – it's time for companies to stand up and be counted.



Andrew Dalglish

Driving home the importance of customer service

Whether incumbent supplier or challenger, data suggests investment in customer experience is key to winning – and retaining – contracts, says Andrew Dalglish, director of Circle Research

A recent survey has revealed important lessons about the B2B buying process. Once the need is triggered, the average buyer immediately has five potential suppliers in mind. What's more, the vast majority (86%) start out with a clear preference for one of these suppliers – and most (94%) end up buying from them. That means that in around eight out of 10 cases, the winner has been preordained and the sale is theirs to lose.

This preferred supplier is often the incumbent. If that's you, then most of the hard work is already done, but don't get complacent. To retain that advantage, it's essential you invest in customer experience, as 61% of B2B buyers say poor service from their incumbent would heavily influence the likelihood of buying from them again. Poor customer service will also reduce your chances of winning business with prospects too. Some 41% of B2B buyers who are unhappy with customer service will talk negatively about the offending supplier. Prospective suppliers can take advantage of these lapses by providing an alternative offering. B2B buyers suggest three complementary ways of doing it. Some 68% advise reaching out through face-to-face channels, 51% suggest advertising in trade media, and 47% recommend sharing content through whitepapers, webinars and supplier magazines.

You also need to ensure buyers can find you. Invest in SEO/PPC (39% of buyers find suppliers online), and invest in building referral networks (34% ask professional advisers to recommend suppliers and 33% consult with peers).

Of course, you need to persuade prospective customers that you're the best choice. Other than price, two 'hard' factors are critical – product quality and after-sales service (17% and 14% of buyers respectively say these are the most important drivers of choice for them). Four 'softer' factors also have a very important role – brand reputation and trust (21%), personal relationships (7%), perceived ease of doing business (5%), and the way you engage with them during the sales process (5%).

While the buying process will differ between markets, the above is certainly food for thought. How well does your strategy fit with this blueprint?



Paul Cash

Making the ordinary extraordinary

Brands can learn from the best teachers by using emotional storytelling to connect with their customers, says Rooster Punk's CEO Paul Cash

Remember that great teacher you had at school? The one who influenced you and who still makes an impact on your life today?

The secret to great teaching is simple: it's about making personal connections with students through storytelling. The most gifted teachers have an ability to weave narrative into people's lives, to captivate classrooms by making the ordinary significant. This is something brands can learn from – telling inspiring stories reflects and reinforces your proposition and helps customers remember and understand your value.

Emotional storytelling is a progressive marketing strategy that enables brands to grow revenue and retain customers, because a story that embodies human truths and challenges presents an experience that resonates with customers. It allows brands to create a shortcut to show how they relate to who we are by telling the world the reason their business exists, why they developed their product or service, and why they do what they do for their audience.

A brand story is more than just the 'about us' page on your website. It's the feeling your brand gives customers during their experience of 'you'. When a brand connects with its customers' emotions, the return on that connection is priceless.

We recently did some work for a condom brand that's looking to get more women to buy condoms and take charge of their sexuality. Male investors didn't get it, so we helped the brand turn it into a story of empowerment. The difference in how the story was received was phenomenal.

Another client, Workshare, approached us to reposition its Transact product. We were seeing junior employees spending a tremendous amount of time gathering legal documents, which was an ineffective use of their talent. So we presented a story that showed legal firms they could close cases faster with fewer errors by freeing up the most talented people in the business and embracing collaboration.

Storytelling is channel-agnostic and people-centric. Remember that, and fit everything you do into your broader narrative, and you'll motivate change and encourage more purchases – the desired outcome of any B2B story.



Catherine Howard

Which team structure is right for you?

As businesses consider the many variations of organisational model, Catherine Howard, UK&I marketing director at Atos, wonders whether there really is a correct approach

Since Atos won B2B Marketing Team of the Year in 2016, I've been involved in many discussions around the approach and model organisations should take with their marketing teams.

Research conducted by ISBA, Oliver and Future Thinking showed 62% of organisations are shifting towards stronger relationships with fewer suppliers, and about 40% have or are considering in-house or onsite agencies. I concur with these findings, but is there a right approach to take? To help, I've summarised the benefits of each approach:

- **In-house agencies:** These are departments within your organisation typically responsible for marcomms-related deliverables. They offer deep institutional knowledge, and understand your brand, clients and the industry in which you operate. They tend to be transparent, efficient and more cost-effective because they utilise internal resources, and they also take full ownership of projects from start to finish.
- **Onsite agencies:** These are dedicated teams of people who sit alongside your own team. They provide a quick turnaround on creative briefs, are agile and provide real-time responses. They bring in best practice from other industries, and provide cost efficiencies, collaboration and enhanced skillsets. And because they're contracted like an external agency, there's no issues around additional team headcount.
- **External agencies:** These are organisations that provide a service and work with your own team. They can handle complex and technical programmes and campaigns across multiple channels, and provide a dedicated expert service in specialist areas.

Our approach has been to combine all three models, although we've become increasingly selective about the external agencies we work with – looking for those who offer something new, differentiated or niche and who are responsive to our needs.

Personally, I don't believe there's a right or wrong approach, but B2B marketers should be open to new ideas. So why not give one (or all) of the above a try?

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Neoworks
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Industry expertise: Automotive, industrial, manufacturing, engineering, leisure and entertainment, professional services, retail and wholesale
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EMAIL MARKETING

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INFORMATION SERVICES

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Bluprint
Services: Customer insight, data analytics, demand generation, digital marketing, marketing automation, marketing services and technology
Industry expertise: Business services, financial services, industrial, manufacturing, engineering, IT, telecoms, media, publishing, marketing, professional services
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dotmailer
Services: Digital marketing, email marketing, marcomms, marketing automation, marketing services, technology
Industry expertise: Automotive, business services, health and beauty, media, publishing, marketing, public sector, retail and wholesale
b2bmarketing.net/dotmailer

EPiServer
Services: Digital marketing, ecommerce, mobile, marketing automation, web analytics
Industry expertise: Media and publishing, retail and wholesale, leisure and entertainment, financial services, automotive
b2bmarketing.net/episerver

Marketo
Services: Marketing automation, social media
Industry expertise: Marketing, media, pharmaceuticals, publishing, IT, telecoms
b2bmarketing.net/marketo

Oracle Marketing Cloud
Services: Marketing automation
Industry expertise: Financial services, leisure and entertainment, media, publishing, marketing
b2bmarketing.net/oracle-eloqua

Silverpop, an IBM Company
Services: Marketing automation
Industry expertise: Business services, financial services, leisure and entertainment, media, publishing and marketing, retail and wholesale
b2bmarketing.net/silverpop

MARKETING SERVICES AND TECHNOLOGY

Adobe Marketing Cloud
Services: Digital marketing, ecommerce, email marketing, marketing services, technology, web analytics
Industry expertise: IT, telecoms, media, publishing, marketing
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Research Now

Services: Market research, marketing services and technology
Industry expertise: Business services, health and beauty, leisure and entertainment, media, professional services
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ONLINE VIDEO

Skeleton

Services: Advertising, content marketing, digital marketing, lead generation, marcomms, online video
Industry expertise: Financial services, health and beauty, IT, telecoms, pharmaceuticals, public sector, retail and wholesale
b2bmarketing.net/skeleton

WorkCast

Services: Demand generation, digital marketing, lead generation, marcomms, marketing services, technology, online video
Industry expertise: IT, telecoms, media, publishing, marketing
b2bmarketing.net/workcast

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Mexia Communications

Services: Content marketing, event and exhibition services, marcomms, PR, social media services
Industry expertise: Business services, health and beauty, IT, telecoms, media, publishing, marketing, property and construction
b2bmarketing.net/mexia-communications

Skout

Services: Branding, content marketing, copywriting, customer insight, demand generation, digital marketing, inbound marketing, marketing communications, PR, social media, web design, website development
Industry expertise: Business services, financial services, industrial, manufacturing, engineering, IT, telecoms, media, publishing, marketing, professional services, public sector, retail and wholesale
b2bmarketing.net/skout

Speed Communications

Services: PR, content marketing, marcomms, social media
Industry expertise: Automotive, business services, financial services, industrial, manufacturing and engineering, professional services, public sector
b2bmarketing.net/speed-communications

TELEMARKETING

GCL Direct

Services: Data cleansing, demand generation, direct marketing, lead generation, list brokers, telemarketing
Industry expertise: Business services, IT, telecoms, media, publishing, marketing
b2bmarketing.net/gcl-direct

Lingo Telemarketing

Services: Appointment setting, business development, demand generation, lead generation, telemarketing
Industry expertise: IT, telecoms, media, publishing, pharmaceuticals, professional services, property and construction
b2bmarketing.net/lingo-telemarketing

MarketMakers

Services: Appointment setting, business development, data cleansing, lead generation, market research, telemarketing
Industry expertise: Automotive, business services, financial services, industrial, manufacturing, engineering, IT, telecoms, professional services
b2bmarketing.net/marketmakers

WEB ANALYTICS

Google

Services: Marketing services, technology, online video, web analytics
Industry expertise: Business services, financial services, marketing, media, professional services, publishing
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‘GEEKING-OUT’ WITH THE CULT OF WEBINARS IN SAN FRANCISCO



Until recently, I didn’t think there was much to say about webinars that hadn’t already been said. But having sat through a day-and-a-half of presentations from zealots at the aptly named Webinar World, it looks like I was wrong...

Joel Harrison is editor-in-chief and co-founder of B2B Marketing, and is an evangelist, advocate and all-round enthusiast for all things B2B. As well as speaking around the world on business marketing issues, Joel is also responsible for the development of B2B Marketing’s training and events activities

I have Joe Hyland, CMO of ON24, to blame/thank for a recent and abrupt about-face of opinion. About two months ago, he invited me to attend its first ever conference – a ‘webinar geek-out’, as he called it. I must confess that at least part of the draw was that it was taking place in San Francisco, one of my favourite cities in the world, which also just happens to be home of the martech industry, thus giving me a great opportunity to get a flavour of what’s happening on the ground, and what’s coming next.

If that wasn’t enough, I also wanted to get insight into how we might get more value out of our own webinar channel, and make it a more valuable part of our content offering. All in all, it seemed like a no-brainer.

Jet-lag notwithstanding, the event absolutely delivered. I’ve been to a few customer conferences run by tech brands before, but never in as dedicated or committed way as this (generally I can’t wait to get out the door). More particularly, I’ve never attended as an actual user of the tech being discussed, which took my engagement to an entirely new level.

I was overwhelmed by the enthusiasm and borderline obsessiveness that speakers and attendees alike showed for both the delivery channel in general, and the ON24 platform itself – at times, it felt more like the meeting of a religious cult than a (slightly geeky) tech platform. And that resonated with me, because it reinforces one of the findings in our recent *High Growth* report: that hugely successful companies must sell a mission not a product. There was definitely a shared mission at Webinar World, and I think had chief content officer (and apparent cult leader) Mark Bornstein asked the audience to dive into the San Francisco Bay and swim to Alcatraz, they probably would have done just that.

I left the event with a host of ideas to improve our webinar activities, making them more compelling from a customer perspective and more relevant from a business one. But perhaps more importantly, I also left with a head full of wider content and business ideas – I find conferences really are the best way to stimulate new thinking.

Far from confirming webinars as a slightly tired marketing channel that has had its day, I’m eager to get cracking implementing these ideas, and challenging marketers to maximise their returns. Of all the things I learned, the following stand out in particular:

- A good webinar must remove the friction from every stage of the buyer journey. It’s about creating answers, not assets.
- Don’t get bogged down in detail – recognise the short attention spans of buyers, and keep webinars short and simple.
- Don’t define webinar success as a completed form – it’s engagement that counts in terms of driving action and/or conversion.
- Great engagement with a webinar is more important than a word-perfect presentation – resist your control-freak tendencies.
- Give viewers the option to binge on content following the webinar by providing links to relevant assets on the landing page.
- The goal of sales must be intelligent outreach – more: ‘I can see you’ve looked at our pricing strategy – how do we measure up?’ than: ‘Can I send you a whitepaper?’
- Why wait until the webinar has happened before you follow up? You can engage with registrants people before it’s even taken place.

All in all, a thoroughly useful couple of days spent ‘geeking out’ that confirmed my suspicion we’re only scratching the surface in terms of the potential of our own webinar programme. And yes, I am aware I may have been slightly brainwashed.

My congratulations to Joe Hyland and team – it’s clear they surprised themselves in terms of how successful this event was, so well done to all concerned for having the courage to try it and the determination to make it a success. See you at the next one.


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Episode 2: Effectively targeting SMEs

In this episode of B2B TV, True co-founders, Richard and Cos, discuss some key considerations for targeting SMEs.

If you have a B2B marketing topic you'd like to discuss as a studio guest, contact us at **b2btv@trueagency.com** or call **+44 (0) 2079522120**



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