b2bmarketing.net

B2B US Agencies

BENCHMARKING REPORT

2017



B2B Marketing

IN ASSOCIATION WITH

Circleresearch
The B2B experts

SPONSORED BY

gyro:

Contents

Introduction 05

01. League table 06

02. Current trends in agency activity 10

03. Agency comment 16

04. Agencies in detail 32

Comment: Circle Research 49

About 50

Introduction



Joel Harrison
Editor-in-chief
B2B Marketing

Picking the perfect partner

As a marketer, choosing a marketing agency can be one of the most critical decisions that you make. Get it right, and you'll have a creative partner who'll work seamlessly with you to grow your business, satisfy your customers and ultimately enhance your career. Get it wrong, and you risk compromising one or all of these things – and at considerable expense.

The choice, however, can be bewildering and sometimes overwhelming. How do you sift through the chaff and find the optimum partner for your needs?

That's where our *B2B US Agencies Benchmarking Report* comes in – it's designed to give you a quick but thorough overview of the key players in the B2B space, and therefore an easy means of shortcutting the selection process by identifying the agencies with the perfect mix of skills and expertise.

This is our first *Benchmarking Report* on US B2B agencies – we've offered a similar product in the UK for a decade, which is now the de facto guide to the B2B agency landscape. We're committed to growing the US report over the coming years so that it provides a similarly comprehensive picture of B2B shops across America.

I hope you enjoy this report, and that it delivers on our objective of increasing your options and allowing you to make a more informed and ultimately more successful choice!

For more information about this report, or to browse other recent publications, go to b2bmarketing.net/resources.

01

League table

Top 35 US B2B marcomms agencies

Top 35 US B2B marcomms agencies

Rank	Agency	Global GI in $m in latest financial year	% of GI from B2B work in latest financial year	Number of permanent staff currently	% year-on-year employee growth	GI in $m from B2B work	Ranking based on B2B GI
1	gyro*	88.8	80%	375	N/A	71.1	1
2	VSA Partners	74.3	80%	300	9%	59.5	2
3	Eric Mower + Associates	35	72%	192	-4%	25.2	4
4	Bader Rutter	34.7	78%	250	N/A	27	3
5	Yesler	N/D	99%	217	-2%	N/D	N/A
6	Siegel + Gale	N/D	N/D	180	13%	N/D	N/A
7	Stein IAS*	18	90%	60	36%	16.2	5
8	The Mx Group	13	100%	105	17%	13	6
9	Traction*	11	60%	50	11%	6.6	10
10	PJA Advertising and Marketing	11	50%	62	11%	5.5	14
11	Godfrey*	10.9	100%	90	3%	10.9	7
12	The Pedowitz Group	N/D	70%	50	4%	N/D	N/A
13	Roberts Communications*	7.9	74%	47	-10%	5.9	13
14	Chempetitive Group*	7.3	100%	47	15%	7.3	8
15	Nelson Schmidt	7.1	84%	54	-10%	6	12
16	Mobium	6.8	100%	32	10%	6.8	9
17	Slack and Company	6.5	100%	52	13%	6.5	11
18	nFusion	5.5	55%	10	-67%	3	20

This table uses gross income as the primary indicator for this league table. Gross income is calculated by deducting external media and production costs from the invoiced total. It includes income from all above-the-line and below-the-line activity. Where some agencies were unwilling to provide their financial data, we have used their headcount data to rank them.

Top 35 US B2B marcomms agencies

Rank	Agency	Global GI in $m in latest financial year	% of GI from B2B work in latest financial year	Number of permanent staff currently	% year-on-year employee growth	GI in $m from B2B work	Ranking based on B2B GI
19	BusinessOnline	N/D	N/D	39	8%	N/D	N/A
20	CBD Marketing	5.1	85%	38	3%	4.3	16
21	April Six*	4.4	100%	24	50%	4.4	15
22	Sandstorm	4.3	80%	28	12%	3.4	18
23	Schermer	3.9	100%	27	23%	3.9	17
24	TopRank Marketing	N/D	N/D	24	-8%	N/D	N/A
25	Littlefield Agency	3.7	55%	26	13%	2	22
26	BrandingBusiness*	3.3	100%	20	11%	3.3	19
27	David James Group*	2.1	100%	13	30%	2.1	21
28	ER Marketing	1.8	99%	19	27%	1.8	23
29	Juice Interactive	1.6	45%	13	63%	0.7	26
30	Red Caffeine Marketing + Technology*	1.5	100%	19	27%	1.5	24
31	Borenstein Group	N/D	N/D	15	0%	N/D	N/A
32	Boomm Marketing & Communications	N/D	N/D	10	11%	N/D	N/A
33	Bop Design	1.1	98%	9	50%	1.1	25
34	Yvonne Tocquigny Branding Group	N/D	100%	2	0%	N/D	N/A
35	Just Media	N/D	N/D	1	0%	N/D	N/A

All figures presented to one decimal place

* Financial verification not provided
N/D: Not disclosed



02

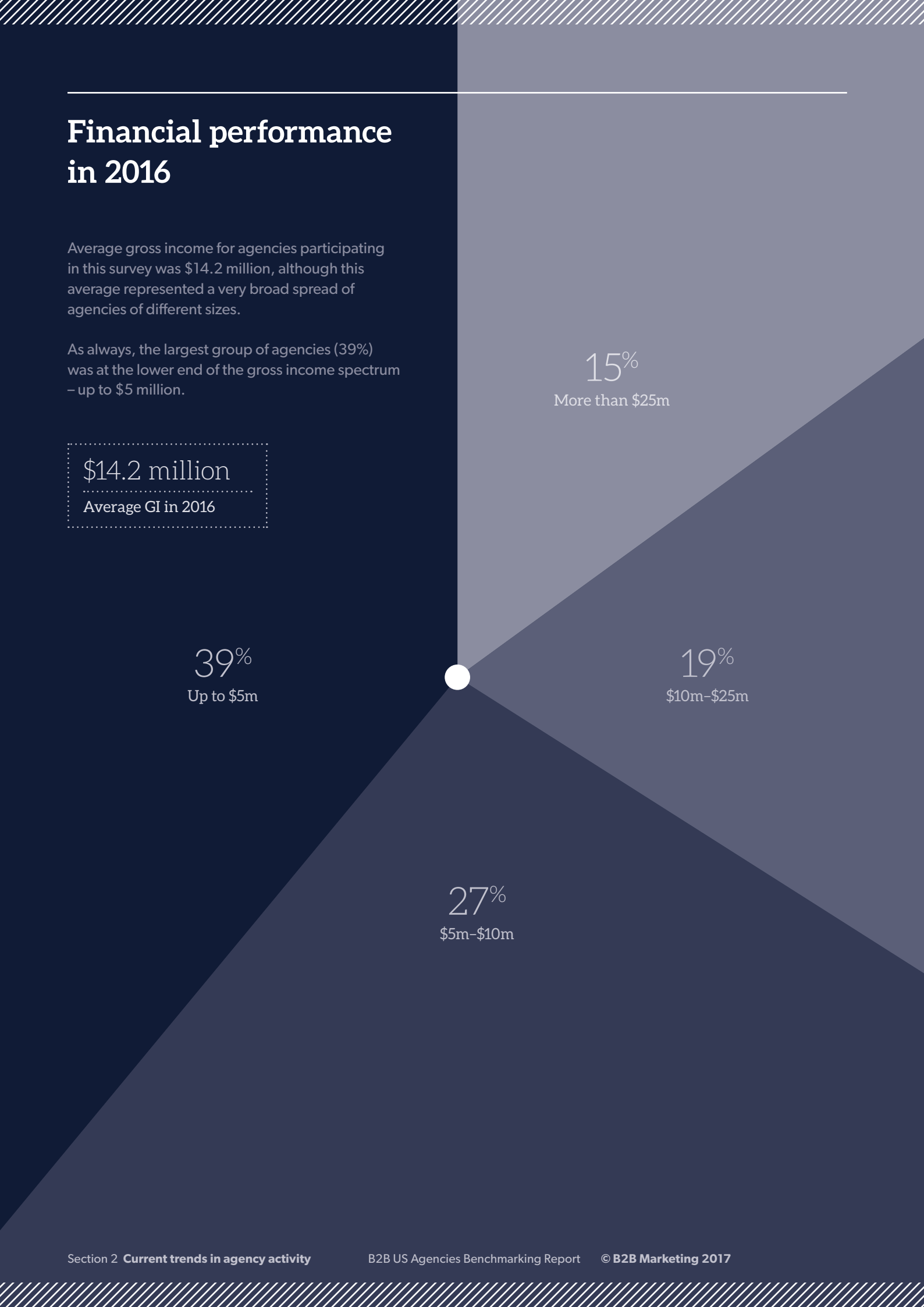
Current trends in agency activity

Financial performance in 2016

Average gross income for agencies participating in this survey was $14.2 million, although this average represented a very broad spread of agencies of different sizes.

As always, the largest group of agencies (39%) was at the lower end of the gross income spectrum – up to $5 million.

$14.2 million
Average GI in 2016



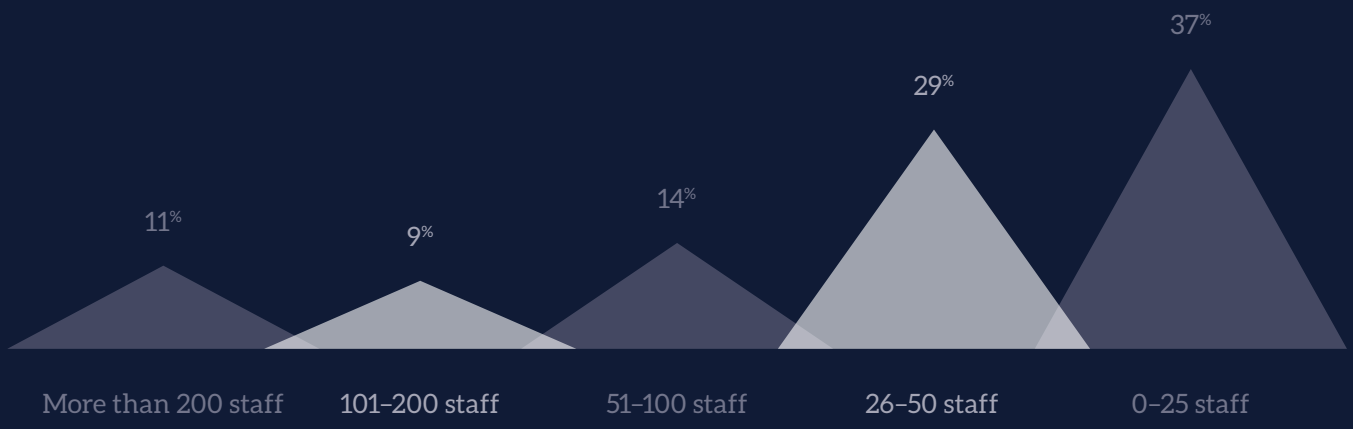
 © **B2B Marketing 2017**

Headcount

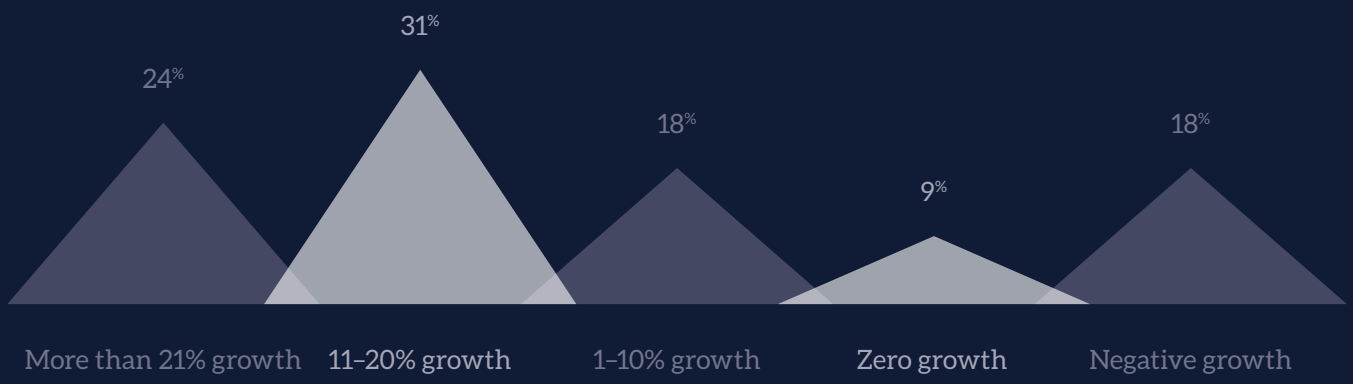
The B2B agency sector in the US is broad and diverse, with a range of companies of all different sizes. The average headcount for B2B shops was 71 staff, although the league table includes companies with fewer than five employees, and those with over 300.

Average headcount growth of B2B agencies surveyed was 11% – approximately a quarter of respondents grew by more than 20%, and a similar number reported zero or negative growth in the same period. Obviously headcount growth is not a direct or precise reflection of financial performance in this period, but it does broadly illustrate a trend.

Agency headcount



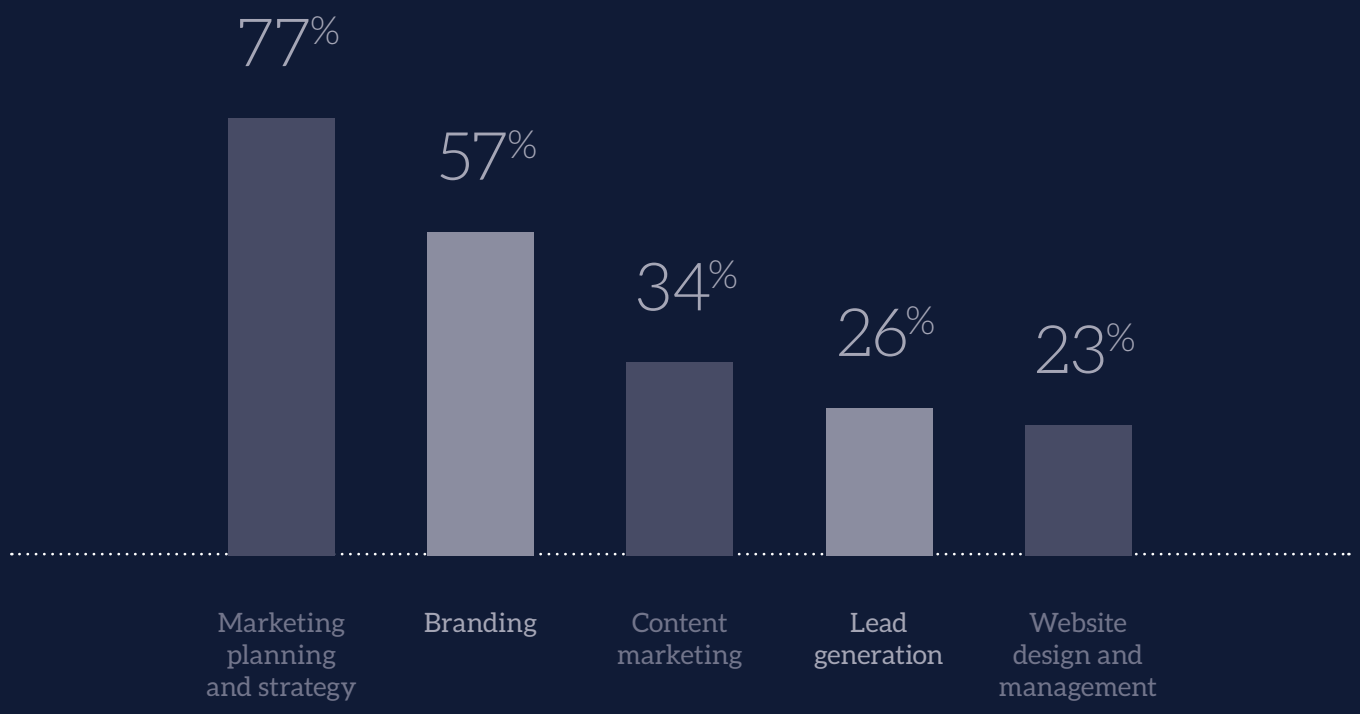
Headcount growth



Core skills and disciplines

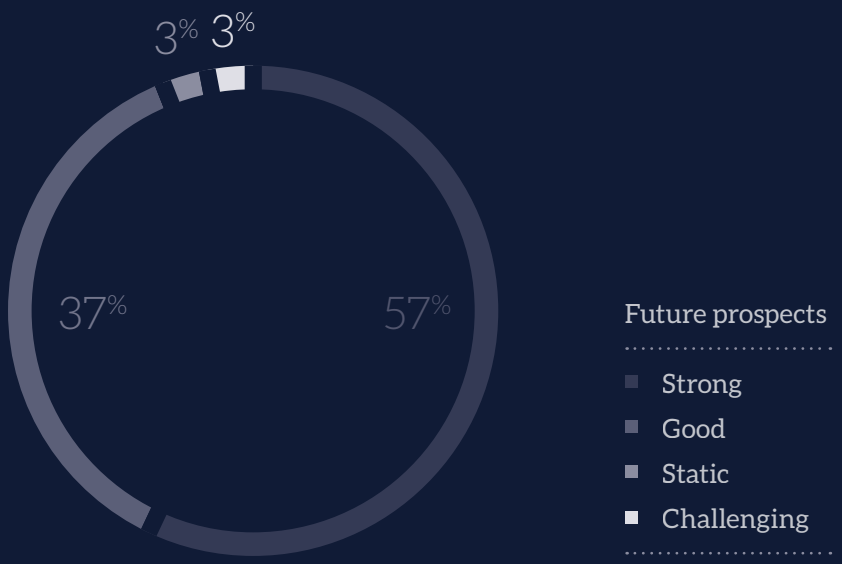
Surprisingly only 26% of agencies describe lead generation as one of their core services – despite the importance of this discipline in driving value for clients.

Instead, agencies are more focused on marketing planning and strategy, as well as branding.



Future prospects

B2B agencies are resoundingly positive when it comes to the future, with over 90% describing their prospects as either 'good' or 'strong'.



 © **B2B Marketing 2017**

Future trends

Q: What do you think will be the biggest B2B marketing trend in the next 12 months?

"Helping clients take advantage of advanced analytics to improve their digital brand experience for both clients and recruitment."

"Post-modern marketing. We see B2B beginning to move beyond the tech-centricity of modern marketing, and view this as the third major age of marketing. Post-modern marketing will be about the amazing and connected experiences brands can create in order to differentiate themselves."

"Deeper understanding of client customers and as a result, building far stronger personal and economic relationships between brands and both current and new customers."

"Marketing and sales alignment. The role of sales and marketing teams in B2B companies continues to evolve. There is no longer a clear-cut separation of responsibilities. Marketing is responsible for much more of the buyer's journey; sales has had to shift to a selling model that supports prospects who self-educate through digital and social channels. Because of these changes, marketing and sales teams are realizing they need to work together better more than ever before."

"Using data and analytics to connect marketing inputs with market outcomes to demonstrate actual ROI."

"Leveraging smarter data and more insightful content to accelerate revenue on tighter budgets."

"A better understanding how to use social and digital media to *pull* product through the channel to complement the traditional *push* strategies and tactics."

"The accelerating pace of marketplace complexity and industry innovations will require focused, thoughtful user-experience strategy across every facet of marketing, not just online communication but also service, pricing, and distribution."

"Marketers will realize the customer is in control. Through technology and social media, the customer has increasing power to avoid or actively block the advances of marketers. B2B marketers must adopt a more customer-centric approach. They must plan around people, not products."

"Sales and marketing integration via lead generation/nurturing, content marketing and inbound. Marketing and sales need to operate as an integrated, revenue-generating team, with the same objectives, messages and processes/systems."

"Expanded targeting capabilities, delivering more personalized content and more of a focus on improving the user experience."

03

Agency comment

PEOPLE POWERED, DATA DRIVEN



SAN DIEGO | BOSTON

businessol.com 866.333.1265

BusinessOnline
B2B Digital Marketing



Thad Kahlow
CEO
BusinessOnline

In a world of more, do less

Can you really have too much of a good thing? For many of us, the influx of data collection in B2B marketing is a concrete example of just that. In a recent informal study of more than 20 B2B companies, only 10% of marketers said they feel like they are 'getting data-driven marketing right'. So what is going wrong for the other 90%?

> "Data lets us spend less time, money and effort on the things that just don't cut it – and reach customers in more effective and engaging ways"

Marketers are overwhelmed by the sheer volume of data available, and many feel unable to effectively use that information to create programs that positively impact business goals. Between changes in customer behavior, new channels and platforms popping up daily, and competition appearing seemingly overnight, marketers need to find out what works best and scale that – while also trying to be everything and everywhere.

The key to doing less is understanding business data and moving from collection to analysis. Having the right insights from data available to the right business owners is imperative when creating a focused approach to marketing. We all know the value of data: it lets marketers prioritize their tasks and helps us uncover what is actually relevant to customers, not just what we think is relevant. Data lets us spend less time, money and effort on the things that just don't cut it – and reach customers in more effective and engaging ways.

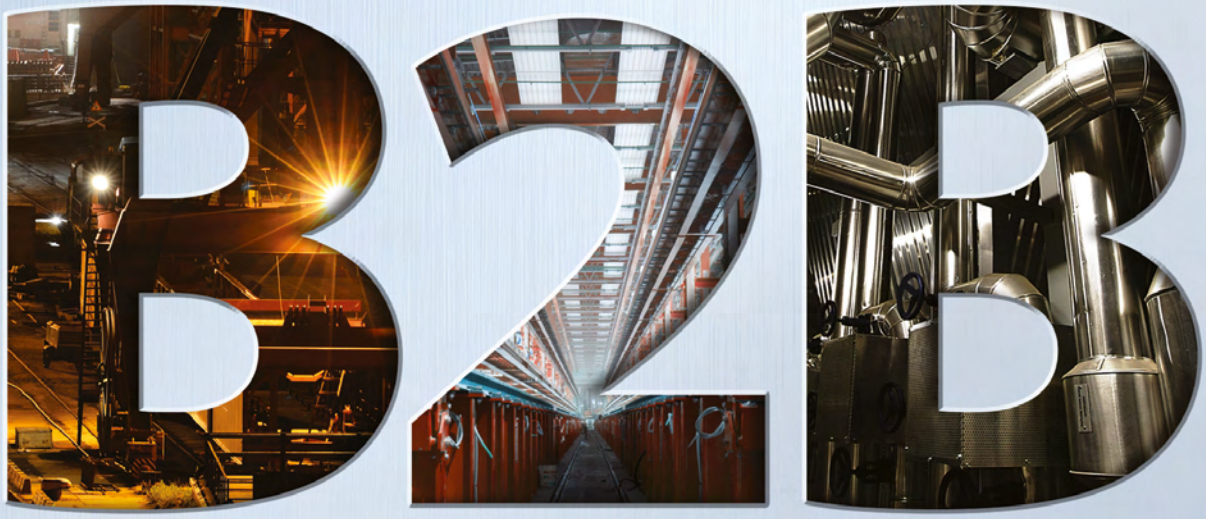
Even sophisticated and technically-savvy B2B companies often struggle to understand how marketing's efforts influence their sales pipeline to do less and focus on the highest return efforts. A Silicon Valley-based software company faced this very challenge. We analyzed their marketing and sales data to determine how marketing campaigns influence business outcomes. We were able to determine over 300% return from ad spends. We proved that over 30% of their sales opportunities were influenced by multiple marketing channels. As a result of this pilot, the company refocused their efforts, spending more on their top-performing channels and cutting the unprofitable ones.

In another example, a large home improvement brand sought to prove the hypothesis of the high impact of digital on in-store sales. They wanted to justify an increase to their digital marketing budget and expand their product rollout. We ran a deep analysis of their sales and marketing data, including profit margins and in-store point-of-sale data from their corporate data warehouse. We layered this with first and third-party marketing and demographics data. Our analysis helped the company run pilot campaigns in fewer, select target markets where demand was highest. Ultimately we were able to prove a 78% ROI during the test, which represented a lift of over 200% in quality leads versus pre-test.

The real challenge for most companies is finding the experts who can work with the technology and reveal the insights that lead to improved returns from marketing. Bringing in data experts often comes down to an expensive in-source versus outsource decision, along with significant software platform investments. Making an investment in analytics is often challenging for many B2B marketers focused on generating leads.

Understanding your customers can help you uncover what is truly impacting your pipeline. Aligning your marketing and sales effort is critical to success in the long, consultative B2B sales process. If a channel is working, and data proves its value, it may be time to be bold, and pass on what others may consider critical channels – doing less, but proving more positive business outcomes.

THE NEXT BIG THING IN B2B MARKETING IS



Industrial manufacturers deserve industrial-strength marketing.

It's time for business-inspired B2B.

GODFREY

www.godfrey.com/b2b-marketing



Melissa Zane
Senior vice president and director of creative
Godfrey

Bringing your brand to life with copy, art and technology

In the world of businesses selling to businesses, it's important to remember that buyers are people. It's why the most successful B2B brands display a lot of human attributes. They have a voice. They have a face. And they have a unique sense of purpose. It's this sort of humanity that makes a brand truly stand out in the marketplace. With that in mind, let's look at your how your copy, art and technology can help bring out the human side of your brand.

Copy gives your brand a compelling voice

Give your brand a voice that reflects its differential – the brand position. Make sure it gives the right impression to your customers. You want it to:

- Be credible
- Have a personality
- Tell a story
- Connect emotionally with people.

The last part is especially important. Consider how you want your customers to feel when they interact with your brand throughout the customer journey. Does your brand sound approachable? Does your brand listen and help solve your customers' challenges?

For instance, if your brand positioning is customer-centric, you'll want to use the magic word 'you' a lot in your brand messaging and communications.

Visuals create a unique face for your brand

You want visual content that complements your brand voice. Most of the same points apply, but keep in mind compelling visual content can greatly increase online engagement. Be sure your brand's visual identity is authentic to the brand and does a good job telling the story in each channel. Remember, you want to stop people in their tracks and make them pay attention. Strong words and visuals do that.

The communications programs of B2B companies are dominated by product art, and for good reason. But this sort of literal imagery limits your visual storytelling. When you limit yourself to product photography, you cannot get beyond features and benefits to introduce bigger solutions like applications expertise.

Better to capture the essence of the brand, portraying the advantages your customers will realize from working with your company.

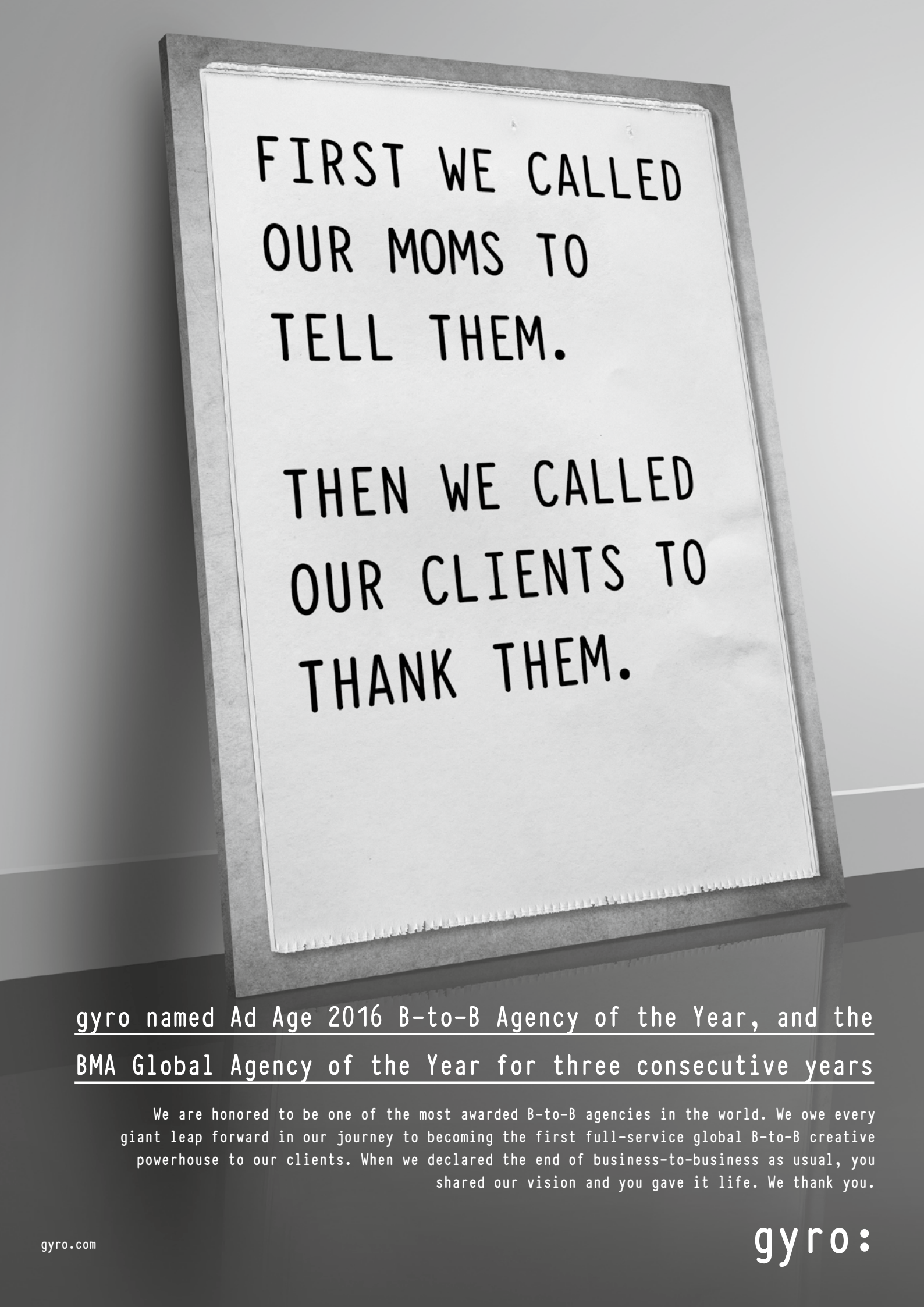
Technology embodies your brand's sense of purpose

Technology allows you to create individual experiences that help bring your customers into the brand story in a unique and memorable way. It can enable customers to engage with your brand whenever they want and help you collect valuable data to understand what's working and what's not. Your customers today are interacting with your brand in so many more places, and on many different devices. Technology can be used to make it easier for them to research, evaluate and actually conduct business with your brand.

A trade show is a great place to enhance your customers' experience with your brand by using technology. Have you ever stopped at a booth to experiment with virtual or augmented reality? Just think of how that experience gave you a real sense of interacting with the brand. The impact can be profound, and that's just one example. With technology, the potential brand experiences are endless.

No matter your value proposition, you should be looking for ways to advance that purpose through technology.

When you strategically and thoughtfully integrate copy, art and technology, your brand persona takes on new life, moving from an abstract idea to a true brand personality. That way you're reaching your market with a brand people can truly experience and enjoy getting to know – a living brand your customers can relate to.

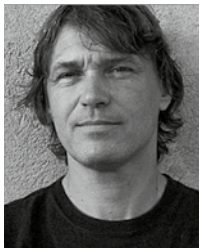


gyro named Ad Age 2016 B-to-B Agency of the Year, and the BMA Global Agency of the Year for three consecutive years

We are honored to be one of the most awarded B-to-B agencies in the world. We owe every giant leap forward in our journey to becoming the first full-service global B-to-B creative powerhouse to our clients. When we declared the end of business-to-business as usual, you shared our vision and you gave it life. We thank you.

gyro.com

gyro:



Christoph Becker
CEO & CCO
gyro

From the age of reason to the age of feeling

Deep at the core of who we are as humans, something has changed.

The US election and Brexit are among the most recent examples that have only made it more obvious, more undeniable. The fact is emotion is not only playing a larger role in how we make decisions, it is the ultimate driver of our actions.

Business leaders must take note and remember it is not the analytical mind driving decisions, but the emotional mind. It is different, powerful, terrifying and exciting all at the same time – because it is right there on the surface.

It's so shocking to some because we have for too long been led to believe that 'reason' is the true driver of decisions. There is comfort in that thought, especially in business. We clutch our numbers and data tightly in our arms, but our arms are empty because data in the absence of emotion is hollow.

We point to all of the touchpoints and the 'connections' we have with our customers. It's right there in our spreadsheets and on our dashboards, but it's all completely meaningless without human relevance.

To understand the human side is to understand we are in the age of feeling. For any decision, be it business, personal or political, our hearts must first be engaged and then our minds will follow. But emotion without precision is like a summer storm. It has an intense impact for a very short time.

The relevance side of the equation offers balance. Today's technology allows us to be more precise and relevant than ever before. But messages without emotion simply make people numb because we're all undergoing a constant, multi-channel assault.

> "For any decision, be it business, personal or political, our hearts must first be engaged and then our minds will follow"

That is why it's not just about accurately hitting a target; it's about creating a moment with your customer. That moment when they receive the right information at the right time and actually feel something. That spark – the ignition moment – is everything.

After this ignition moment, the rational side of the brain finds the validators needed to justify the decision. This is especially true in business where there is so much at risk professionally and personally. Too often, business marketers forget businesses don't make decisions, people do. And people are looking for a reason to believe.

You must dial up the soul of your business. Tell them what your business was born to do and how it is changing the world for the better. Show them the passionate, talented people driving it. Create a feeling about your business and, unlike just words, that feeling will transcend countries and cultures.

This is critical when connecting with today's decision makers, especially millennial leaders. They expect businesses to be responsible and purpose-driven. Give them a human reason to love you, not just a business reason, and the ignition moment will happen.

Striking this balance between feelings and precision is not only the future of business communications, it's the future of marketing and advertising as a whole.

The age of reason has passed. We are now living within one of the most visceral, passionate times in history. We cannot forget it and we cannot fear it. Instead we must embrace it, love it and work each day to truly ignite something humanly relevant.

a Laughlin Constable company

YOU DIDN'T GET INTO MARKETING JUST TO OPTIMIZE CPC AND GENERATE "LIKES."



mobium dot com

Mobium

Ready to take your business brand further?

Cost-per-click and CRMs are important, but it's time to operate at a higher level. To outsmart your competition. Create real brand value. Move your business forward in the face of constant change. Through integrated brand ideas, lead generation, analytics and measurement, and award-winning creative, we help you uncover what business customers truly value to make marketing a transformative force for your organization. And isn't that what you're here to do?

Is it time for a brand refresh? Visit mobium.com/decisiontime for your handy assessment tool.



Carrie Sabourin
Senior group account director
Mobium

Beyond the functional

You know that guy at the party, right? The one who only talks about himself, can't be bothered to ask questions about anyone else and just plows forward with his own personal agenda? No one likes that guy.

Yet that's how many B2B brands present themselves to their customers. Supplier-centric messages, like being employee-owned, based in the US (or conversely, global) or the inventor of such-and-such technology. Everyone has innovative solutions. But what does that even mean?

There is a huge opportunity to acquire new customers, deepen existing customer relationships and grow your business. It starts with a closer look at your brand.

At its core, great branding starts with a simple but powerful premise. Communicate the true value you offer B2B buyers, and clearly set your brand apart from buyers' other choices. That makes it much easier for them to choose you.

But be careful. After talking about themselves, the second mistake many B2B brands make is to talk solely about features and benefits. Features and benefits are important, but the challenge is that B2B buyers have trouble differentiating based on features and benefits alone. In fact, one recent study showed that only 14% of business buyers can discriminate between their brand options based solely on features and benefits.

Enter differentiation and emotional value. Finding a way to communicate both features and benefits and the emotional value you deliver your customers is the key to differentiation.

> "Talking about emotional value has a significantly more powerful effect on B2B purchase decisions than simply focusing on features and benefits"

Finding emotional value

Emotional value doesn't mean tears, puppies and rainbows. Instead, it's how your brand can help customers solve their day-to-day challenges or give them the ability to be a smarter, more productive professional. For example:

- Does your brand empower your buyers as professionals?
- Does it help them earn a seat in the board room… or at least secure a nice promotion?
- Does it reduce or simplify their workload so they can finally go home on time?
- Does it reflect positively on them as smart decision makers?

Whether you're selling industrial components or professional services, it's worth the effort to figure out these answers, because talking about emotional value has a significantly more powerful effect on B2B purchase decisions than simply focusing on features and benefits.

This is because business purchases are made by people – people who want to do a good job, are accountable to various stakeholders and want to be successful. So these decisions actually carry more weight than a consumer purchase. There's a lot more riding on it.

So how do you know if you should refresh your brand? You can find a handy decision tree at mobium.com/decisiontime to help you think it through.

The good news is that if you've done your homework to figure out what emotional value your brand delivers – and you communicate this value in unique and compelling ways – savvy B2B buyers are much more likely to pay a premium price. Because, ultimately, every business purchase is also a personal and emotional decision.

UNLEASH

YOUR INNER MODERN MARKETER

The modern marketer is inside you, yearning to break free and change things up. All you need is a partner to help make it happen. That's where we come in.

The Mx Group is one of Ad Age and Chief Marketer's top 50 B2B agencies, and we're here to help you achieve modern marketing greatness. Whether it's strategy, technology, content or operations, we'll be by your side every step of the way.

Let's win over the modern buyer — together.

The Mx Group

Know where you stand.
Take the assessment at
TheMxGroup.com/modernize



Suzanne Martin
CMO
The Mx Group

Ready to modernize your marketing? Here's the first step

Change. It's hard and intimidating. And as marketers we're facing what can feel like more than our fair share of it.

I know how it feels to work in a changing industry. As CMO of The Mx Group, my goal is the same as yours: to turn marketing investments into revenue. To generate leads, bring in sales and have a measurable impact on our company's success. That's my holy grail, and I know it's yours.

You're dealing with change every day. And you know the solution isn't as simple as buying the perfect marketing technology, turning it on and hoping for the best.

To keep up with our industry's changes, you have to modernize every part of your operations. Strategy, technology, lead management, data, reporting – all of it.

But breaking it down into categories doesn't really make the idea of change more manageable. You don't want me to say: 'improve your marketing strategy,' you want to know how – because you need to start modernizing right now.

Know your starting place

'Modern marketing' is a big concept, and getting started can feel overwhelming. First, find out where you stand.

I see so many marketers jump into modernizing their operations without ever evaluating where they are. I love that enthusiasm, but modern marketing isn't something you can achieve in a day; it's a journey. And you need to know where you are before you can get where you're going. To get the results you want from your modernization efforts, you have to know which areas you're struggling in and what you're doing well.

> "You need to know where you are before you can get where you're going"

And I mean 'know' not 'guess'. You probably have a gut feeling about where your operations need improvement, but for a change this important you're going to need more.

Small steps, big impact

Fortunately, there are plenty of frameworks you can draw on. At The Mx Group, for example, we follow SiriusDecisions' approach to modern marketing. Renowned for their research and insight into high-performance marketing, this firm studies marketing maturity holistically across the function. They share what a modernized marketing function should look like across different operational areas.

Identifying those gaps makes it easier to set specific, measurable goals for your modernization process. 'Improve lead management' is too broad to tackle, but a concrete goal like 'make sure sales and marketing share a definition of a qualified lead' is easier to accomplish.

While these small steps might not feel transformational by themselves, together they add up to something powerful. Together, they're the foundation of modern marketing.

What next?

If you're ready to find out where you are in your modern marketing journey, there's one more useful tool I recommend. We've created a marketing assessment based on SiriusDecisions' model. This simple online assessment evaluates your operations and gives you the personalized, concrete steps you can take to modernize.

We believe in this tool's power to get your modern marketing efforts on track. That's why if you use it, we won't even contact you right now – not unless you ask us to. Our goal isn't to get you in our database; it's to get you on the road to modern marketing. Check it out at themxgroup.com/modernize.

Modern marketing is a big change. But as with any big change, the way to achieve it is one step at a time.



We've always seen b-to-b for what it really is.

People communicating with ***people***.

Doesn't matter how.

When. Where. With what medium.

It's just two people talking.

Let's talk.

Slack + company

the shortest distance from b to b.™

slackandcompany.com | 312-970-5858



Gary Slack
Founder and chief experience officer
Slack and Company

Are B2C and B2B marketing converging? Hardly...

Barely a week goes by without someone saying the worlds of B2B and B2C marketing are converging – that there's no difference any more.

When I hear these statements, they're usually about how B2B and B2C marketers are using many of the same tools – websites, email, digital advertising, search marketing and social media.

But it's not the tools or how they're used that make B2B and B2C marketing fundamentally different, it's something else entirely – the buyers and the buying processes. And they remain as different as ever.

For all of the shaky 'convergence' claims to be true, nothing less than the following would be happening.

Boeing would buy jet engines for its airplanes on impulse. "Herb, I really liked the racing stripes on those Honda jet engines." Or: "Ralph, I really like the sound of those Rolls-Royce jet engines."

The military, police and fire departments would switch between radio brands on mere whims. "General, I think it would be hipper if Delta Force used iPhones." Or: "Chief, those Radio Shack field radios are a lot lighter."

Coca-Cola would add new ingredients to its sodas with little or no due diligence. "Marge, I don't know what this new ingredient is made of, but it sure tastes good." Or: "Fred, this stuff makes really big bubbles, so let's go with them."

The converse – consumers applying B2B buying behavior to everyday purchases – is equally implausible. "Honey, I've hired a couple of economists and purchasing agents to help me buy the best possible soap for us at the store today." Or: "Bro, we'll need at least a year to decide if we want to change from Bud to Miller for the Super Bowl."

> "In B2B buying, a bad purchase decision can have far more serious results"

Of course, if all of the above crisscrossed behavior were happening, pigs would be flying, too. Thankfully, it is not.

It's not that business buying is more rational than consumer buying. In fact, it may be wracked with more emotion – the fear of making a bad, stupid or even harmful purchase decision.

Making bad purchase decisions happens all the time in consumer buying. But bring home the wrong brand of soap, beer or soda, and at most you might get a roll of the eyes from your spouse.

In B2B buying, a bad purchase decision can have far more serious results – a demotion, a delayed promotion, a chewing out, a note in your file, the derision of co-workers – maybe even a pink slip.

That's why tier one suppliers, à la the IBM of old, are so lucky. "Nobody ever got fired for buying IBM," as the saying goes. As the 'safe bet' they get a pass a lot of the time, while lower-tier suppliers have to try harder.

But there can be a much more positive emotion involved in B2B buying, too – the pride of making a great buying decision and the resulting reputational value and career enhancement.

According to research by CEB, the personal value of making B2B buying decisions can be twice as great as the business value.

So, contrary to conventional wisdom, B2B buyers aren't automatons or robots. They're people too. With their careers and livelihoods at stake, risk-averse buyers simply need loads more convincing and months and maybe years to take a chance on another supplier or brand.

That's the formidable challenge and the extra fun involved in much of B2B marketing – and why it'll always be very different (until pigs fly).


WE ARE
alchemist
QUANTS
One or the other was a choice you could make in the Modern Marketing era. We are post that now. Be just a data genius or just a creative genius and obsolescence beckons. We must be predictive and artistic, intuitive and scientific, conjuring measurable experiences that are powerful and personal. We always were more than a job title, and more than ever we have to be. We are quantifiable and unquantifiable. Alchemist quants. Daredevil pragmatists. Free-spirit engineers. We are all that is modern, and we are moving into the beyond.
We are Stein IAS. The Post-Modern Marketing Agency.
Join us PostModernB2B.com
STEIN IAS
#PostModernB2B



Tom Stein
Chairman and chief client officer
Stein IAS

Is marketing shifting to a post-modern era?

Over the past decade or so, B2B brands and agencies have widely adopted moden marketing. Oracle describes this as "the paradigm of inbound marketing programs driven by digital channels, served by multiple touches, measured by sophisticated technologies – and where data analysis is king". While modern marketing has served us well, the adoption of its approaches and underlying technologies is nearly ubiquitous. So, we should continually challenge ourselves to think ahead: what's next?

As we all know, modern marketing is still a work in progress. We're still figuring it all out. We're still putting all the pieces together. We're making it work in the real world, and transforming our organisations (and careers) in the process. But even as we do this – and this is our culminating belief – we are turning another page.

We are moving now to the 'post-modern' phase of marketing.

Our belief at Stein IAS is that as B2B marketers have expanded their toolsets and increased their mastery of strategic insights and digital interactions, our confidence in what's possible – in what we can deliver – has grown by leaps and bounds. We're now seeing this confidence come bursting through in connected experiences that are powerfully emotional and intensely useful. In all the forms they take, these experiences deliver tremendous value to individuals and organisations. This is the essence of post-modern marketing.

That's not to say this new era is a rejection of modern marketing. Modern marketing is a good thing. It's a great thing. As an industry we've grown greatly as a result of it.

> "We should continually challenge ourselves to think ahead: what's next?"

Post-modern marketing is more a re-balancing. It carries forward the best of preceding eras into this new stage. We joke that it's 'Spock plus Kirk'. Pre-modern was emotional. Modern was rational. Post-modern is both. It's the foundational frameworks of data, segmentation, and implicit and explicit triggers, but painted with the brilliant brushstrokes of a renaissance in intuitive ideas and mind-blowing experiences.

Daniel Kahneman, a world-renowned psychologist and author who won a Nobel Prize for economic science, wrote: "We are not thinking machines. We are feeling machines that think."

As much as our agency values the technology-infused power of modern marketing, we think a new era is upon us. One in which the 'feeling machines' regain prominence, and come into balance with the 'thinking machines'. Intuition plus technology. Boldness and experimentation underpinned by data.

It's why, at Stein IAS, we've launched MiX, an acronym for Most Important Experiences. It's a first-of-its-kind initiative among B2B agencies to bring together cross-functional teams – including design, content, UX, programming and technology – in order to leverage existing and emerging technologies to create the breakthrough customer experiences.

Some say we're in the experience economy, where experience is the ultimate differentiator. Stein IAS agrees. And, through MiX, we're fundamentally evolving and re-imagining how we apply big, long ideas and connected experiences at every touchpoint in the buyer journey.

Indeed, to break through today, we need to be modern – and we need to be more. We need to call on the mad men and women within us, while equally tapping into the mad scientists we've all become. At once, we've got to be alchemists and quants. One or the other was a choice you could make in the modern marketing era. We are post that now.

We have entered a post-modern marketing era – and an exciting era it promises to be. Our big question is: who's ready to join us on the post-modern journey?



04

Agencies in detail

BusinessOnline

Date founded	1996
US address	701 B Street Suite 1000, San Diego, CA 92101
Website	businessol.com
Telephone	619-699-0767
Email	rachel.ready@businessol.com
Twitter	@BOLOptimized

About BusinessOnline

BusinessOnline is a performance-driven B2B digital marketing agency headquartered in San Diego, CA and Boston, MA.

We leverage data to gain deep insights about the specific needs of our clients' customers in each phase of their buying journey and align digital marketing activities to meet these needs. This approach builds strong relationships and improves marketing performance. We do what most marketers cannot: we close the sales and marketing loop and prove marketing's ROI and business value.

We believe the job of the modern-day B2B marketer has never been more important or complicated. By leveraging marketing technology to scale data-driven insights, we create breakthrough, customer-centric, integrated experiences.

Services offered

- ★ **Analytics and insights**
- ★ **Creative and campaigns**
- ★ **Marketing automation**
- ★ **Media management (PPC, retargeting, social and display advertising)**
- ★ **Organic search/SEO**
- ★ **Strategy and planning**

Sectors

Financial services

Industrial, manufacturing, engineering

IT and telecoms

Key clients

- ❖ **GE Oil & Gas**
- ❖ **Epicor**
- ❖ **Hewlett Packard Enterprise**
- ❖ **HP**
- ❖ **Honeywell**
- ❖ **Lithium Technologies**
- ❖ **TDS Telecommunications for Business**
- ❖ **Thermo Fisher Scientific**

 © **B2B Marketing 2017**

BusinessOnline
B2B Digital Marketing

Awards

Business Marketing Association B2 Awards 2015 Winner	Agency of the year – small (under $10 million)
Fortune Number 4	Top 10 great workplaces in advertising and marketing
Ad Age Number 36	Best places to work 2015
The Center for Generational Kinetics	75 best places to work for Millennials in America
San Diego Business Journal Number 4	Best places to work 2015
San Diego Business Journal	San Diego's Healthiest Companies 2015

Personnel

39

Number of permanent staff 2017

8 %

Employee growth

Accreditations

HubSpot Silver Certified Partner

Marketo Certified

Premier Google Partner (Search, Mobile, Video, Display)

Godfrey

Date founded	1947
US address	40 N. Christian Street, Lancaster, PA 17602
Website	godfrey.com
Telephone	717-393-3831
Email	info@godfrey.com
Twitter	@GodfreyB2B

About Godfrey

Industrial manufacturers deserve something different: marketing that's as rigorous and remarkable as they are. It's more than semantics. Real business-to-business companies need real B2B marketing. And that's what this agency is all about.

Godfrey is built for the global B2B space.

We run on a hard-earned core of industry knowledge. We perform best for a tough, international crowd. We love advancing clients' business objectives with heavy-duty ideas and blazing-fast technology. Because B2B is worth it.

B2B companies put the relief in our pain relievers, the seat belts in our vehicles and the floors beneath our feet. So we wear the distinction of B2B with pride.

This is our constant state of mind. Industry evangelism, manufacturer zeal – call it whatever you like. We like to call it FWD:B2B.

Services offered

- ★ Advertising
- ★ Branding
- ★ Content
- ★ Creative
- ★ Digital
- ★ PR
- ★ Research
- ★ Strategy

Sectors

Industrial, manufacturing, engineering

Innovation and science

Property and construction

Key clients

- ❖ Avantor
- ❖ Brooks Instrument
- ❖ JLG
- ❖ Johnson Controls
- ❖ Klüber Lubrication
- ❖ nora
- ❖ Solenis

 © B2B Marketing 2017

Awards

chiefmarketer.com B2B Top Shops	Top 50 B2B Marketing Agencies 2016
MarketingProfs Bright Bulb Awards 2015 Finalist	Large agency B2B campaign of the year
Summit Creative Awards 2015 Bronze	Documentary/feature
Worldwide Partners, Inc	Perfect Partner Award
Feedspot Number 43	Top 100 B2B Marketing Blogs for B2B Marketers

Personnel

90

Number of permanent staff 2017

3 %

Employee growth

Financial performance

$10,924,507

Gross income in latest financial year

100 %

Percentage of income from B2B activities

Accreditations

Google Certified Partner

Microsoft Certified Partner

Sitecore Certified Partner

gyro

Date founded	1981
US address	115 Broadway, 14th Floor, New York, NY 10006
Website	gyro.com
Telephone	212-915-2490
Email	kenneth.hein@gyro.com
Twitter	@gyro

About gyro

Our mission is to create ideas that are humanly relevant. We are 700 inspired minds across 16 offices in five countries, acting as one.

As more top brands look to the enterprise side of their business for growth, the business-to-business category has become the single fastest growing and most dynamic sector in all of advertising. This is the biggest moment to win by leveraging the total integration of creative, media, data and technological power.

gyro, united with all of Dentsu Aegis Network, is uniquely positioned to lead the reinvention of this space as it shifts from the tired concept of B2B to the highly compelling reality that marketing is about business-to-people.

Services offered

- ★ **Analytics**
- ★ **Content marketing**
- ★ **Creative**
- ★ **Data**
- ★ **Design**
- ★ **Healthcare**
- ★ **Media**
- ★ **Strategy**

Sectors

Industrial, manufacturing, engineering

IT and telecoms

Professional services

Key clients

- ❖ **Aflac**
- ❖ **Google**
- ❖ **Hewlett-Packard Enterprise**
- ❖ **HP Inc.**
- ❖ **John Deere**
- ❖ **Tate & Lyle**
- ❖ **USG**
- ❖ **Visa**

 © **B2B Marketing 2017**

gyro:

Awards

Business Marketing Association B2 Awards 2016 Winner	Agency of the year – large ($25 million and over)
D&AD Awards 2016 Wood Pencil	Sustainable packaging design
D&AD Impact Awards 2016 Wood Pencil	Humanitarian aid
Effie Awards 2016 Gold	Low budget
Effie Awards 2016 Bronze	Public communication
Communication Arts Winner	57th annual photography competition
American Advertising Awards 2016 Silver	Direct mail 3D/mixed
Enquirer Media	Top workplaces 2015

Personnel

375

Number of permanent staff 2017

Financial performance

$88,815,248

Gross income in latest financial year

80 %

Percentage of income from B2B activities

$71,052,198

Gross income from B2B activities

International operations

Location of additional global offices	Dubai, Hong Kong, London, Madrid, Manchester, Munich, Paris, Singapore, Sydney

Mobium

Date founded	1979
US address	200 South Michigan Avenue, 17th floor, Chicago, IL 60604
Website	mobium.com
Telephone	312-422-5942
Email	pmcauley@mobium.com
Twitter	@mobium

About Mobium

It's time for your brand to operate at a higher level. To outsmart your competition. Create real brand value. Move your business forward in the face of constant change.

Through integrated brand ideas, lead generation, analytics and measurement, and award-winning creative, we help you uncover what business customers truly value to make marketing a transformative force for your organization. And because disruptive and meaningful creative ideas must live across a widening marketing mix, we constantly evolve our technology and digital expertise to help inform our creative B2B problem solvers to develop ideas that are more targeted, cross-channel and results-minded.

Services offered

- ★ **Advertising**
- ★ **Brand creative development**
- ★ **Brand research**
- ★ **Brand strategy**
- ★ **Content marketing**
- ★ **Lead generation**
- ★ **Video production**
- ★ **Web development**

Sectors

Industrial, manufacturing, engineering

IT and telecoms

Professional services

Key clients

- ❖ **ASG Technologies**
- ❖ **Bemis Company**
- ❖ **CP Kelco**
- ❖ **IFF**
- ❖ **Johnson Controls**
- ❖ **Moog**
- ❖ **Stan Johnson Company**
- ❖ **UATP**

 © **B2B Marketing 2017**

Mobium

Awards

Business Marketing Association Tower Awards 2015 Gold	Digital advertising
Business Marketing Association Tower Awards 2015 Bronze	Websites
Business Marketing Association Tower Awards 2015 Bronze	Integrated marketing communications program

Accreditations

Adwords certification

APR

Kentico CMS certification

Personnel

32

Number of permanent staff 2017

10 %

Employee growth

Financial performance

$6,750,000

Gross income in latest financial year

100 %

Percentage of income from B2B activities

The Mx Group

Date founded	1989
US address	7020 High Grove Blvd., Burr Ridge, IL 60527
Website	themxgroup.com
Telephone	800-827-0170
Email	getstarted@themxgroup.com
Twitter	@MxGroup

About The Mx Group

The Mx Group is a demand generation and digital agency that empowers companies with the competitive edge of modern B2B marketing.

We integrate marketing strategy, technology, content, operations and sales optimization services to help companies attract, convert and retain customers. For more than 25 years, clients have trusted us to help turn their marketing investments into measurable revenue.

We offer a unique mix of services featuring demand generation, content and design, and digital development, including: market and program strategy; brand experience and messaging; demand generation and lead management; marketing technology outsourcing; sales and marketing operations; telemarketing; sales enablement; content and design; website design and development; mobile app and software development; video production; and social media marketing.

The Mx Group was named one of *Chief Marketer's* 2016 B2B Top Shops, and has been listed as a top B2B agency by *Ad Age* and *BtoB Magazine* since 2008. Located in the Chicago area, The Mx Group has been selected as one of the Best Places to Work in Illinois every year since 2014 and was named one of Chicago's Best and Brightest Companies to Work For in 2016.

Services offered

- ★ **Content and design, including video development**
- ★ **Demand generation and lead management**
- ★ **Market and program strategy**
- ★ **Marketing technology outsourcing**
- ★ **Mobile app and software development**
- ★ **Sales and marketing operations, sales enablement**
- ★ **Telemarketing**
- ★ **Website design and development**

Sectors

Business services

Industrial, manufacturing, engineering

Travel and hospitality

Key clients

- ❖ **Belden**
- ❖ **Cox Automotive**
- ❖ **Siemens**
- ❖ **Tempur Sealy**
- ❖ **US Tsubaki**
- ❖ **Zekelman Industries**

 © **B2B Marketing 2017**

The Mx Group

Awards

Marketo Revvie Awards 2016 Finalist	Partner of the year
Ad Age	Top 50 US B2B Agencies 2008–2016
chiefmarketer.com B2B Top Shops	Top 50 B2B Marketing Agencies 2016
Best Places to Work in Illinois	2014–2016
Chicago's Best and Brightest Companies to Work For	2016
Chicago Tribune	Top workplaces 2016

Accreditations

Marketo Certified Partner

Personnel

105

Number of permanent staff 2017

17 %

Employee growth

Financial performance

$13,000,000

Gross income in latest financial year

100 %

Percentage of income from B2B activities

Slack and Company

Date founded	1988
US address	233 N. Michigan Avenue, Suite 3050, Chicago, IL 60601
Website	slackandcompany.com
Telephone	312-970-5800
Email	gary.slack@slackandcompany.com
Twitter	@slackandcompany

About Slack and Company

Founded in 1988, Slack and Company is one of the world's first integrated marketing communications agencies and one of the very few that works exclusively with B2B marketers.

Operating globally through Worldwide Partners B2B Network, the large international network of some 30 like-minded independent B2B agencies, Slack works with large enterprise, middle market and SMB firms across multiple industries to build strong business brands and identify, pursue, close and grow profitable customers.

Our dual expertise in branding and demand generation work, a combination rarely seen in agencies, is one of our strongest differentiators. In both areas, we use tried-and-true marketing techniques plus the latest digital and marketing technologies to help our clients achieve predictable results in 'brand demand'. Our target audience experience spans many types of OEMs and distribution and ecommerce channels.

With a 4.7 rating on Glassdoor, our firm is able to hire and retain the best available B2B marketing talent and hold on to them for years, offering clients an unusual degree of client team stability. For these and other reasons, *Chief Marketer, Ad Age, BtoB Magazine* and the Business Marketing Association have many times named Slack one of the world's top B2B agencies.

Services offered

- ★ **Branding**
- ★ **Marketing planning**
- ★ **Marketing strategy**
- ★ **Revenue marketing**

Sectors

Industrial, manufacturing, engineering

Software

Property and construction

Key clients

- ❖ **Carlisle Interconnect Technologies**
- ❖ **Choice Hotels**
- ❖ **Dow Corning**
- ❖ **General Electric**
- ❖ **Ingredion**
- ❖ **Narrative Science**
- ❖ **PPG**
- ❖ **Society of Actuaries**

 © **B2B Marketing 2017**

Awards

chiefmarketer.com B2B Top Shops	Top 50 B2B Marketing Agencies 2017
Business Marketing Association B2 Awards 2016 Award of Excellence	Integrated trade show marketing program (under $100K)
Business Marketing Association B2 Awards 2015 Excellence Award	Sponsorship – business or social issue
Business Marketing Association Colorado Gold Key Awards 2015 Winner	Promotional product materials: printed materials
Business Marketing Association Chicago Tower Awards 2015 Gold	Sales enablement tools
Business Marketing Association Chicago Tower Awards 2015 Silver x4	Corporate communications; Digital advertising; Other digital marketing tools; Marketing activation

Personnel

52

Number of permanent staff 2017

13 %

Employee growth

Financial performance

$6,493,000

Gross income in latest financial year

100 %

Percentage of income from B2B activities

Accreditations

Certified Marketo Specialists

Certified Pardot Specialists

Certified Oracle Marketing Cloud B2B Master

Stein IAS

Date founded	1973
US address	432 Park Avenue South, 16th Floor, New York, NY 10016
Website	steinias.com
Telephone	212-213-1112
Email	tom.stein@steinias.com
Twitter	@SteinIAS

About Stein IAS

B2B is entering the age of post-modern marketing. Marketers need to re-emphasize inspiring, intuitive and connected brand experiences that more powerfully leverage the digital-social-mobile, technology and data-driven approaches that have been the focal point for the past 20 years. With a track record of continuous innovation over the past 40+ years, Stein IAS serves as strategic partner to tier one brands in order to do just that.

Stein IAS and its client partners are embracing marketing's evolution and pacing innovation. We're fusing bold brand experiences with advanced technology and data science to achieve differentiation, momentum and ROI. We do so by:

› Employing the world's most holistic system for B2B marketing – *Mi3* – that pulls a golden thread through the strategic Insights, digital Interactions and creative Inventions that deliver relevance and results

› Recognizing customer experience is core to post-modern marketing with *MiX* (Most Important Experiences) – a first-of-its-kind initiative focused on using emerging technologies to create more compelling B2B brand/customer experiences

› Managing complex data, technological and organizational requirements

› Providing seamless, scalable, global delivery of integrated marketing services and solutions

Stein IAS is one of the fastest-growing agencies for a reason. We are The Post-Modern Marketing Agency.

Services offered

- ★ **Advertising**
- ★ **Brand strategy**
- ★ **Content marketing**
- ★ **Digital marketing**
- ★ **Marketing planning/ strategy**
- ★ **PR**
- ★ **Social media marketing**
- ★ **Website design, development, management**

Sectors

Financial services

IT and telecoms

Pharmaceuticals

Key clients

- ❖ **ABB**
- ❖ **BP Castrol**
- ❖ **ETS**
- ❖ **HSBC**
- ❖ **Korn Ferry**
- ❖ **Merck**
- ❖ **NCR**
- ❖ **Republic Services**
- ❖ **Riverbed**
- ❖ **Western Union Business Solutions**

 © **B2B Marketing 2017**



Awards

BMA B2 Awards Winner	Agency of the year 2016, 2015
Ad Age A List	Agency to watch
The Drum Network Awards Highly commended	Agency of the year 2016
Content Marketing Awards Winner	Best content marketing multi-year program
The Drum MOMA Awards Winner	Best use of 3D/ augmented reality
BMA B2 Awards Award of excellence	Global brand strategy
BMA B2 Award Winner	Multi-channel lead gen, large enterprise
BMA Global ACE Awards Winners	Direct marketing; Print; Mobile marketing
PR Daily Content Marketing Awards Winner	Best content marketing strategy
CIPR PRide Awards Winner	Best science/technology campaign

Personnel

60

Number of permanent US-based staff (155 globally)

36 %

Employee growth

Financial performance

$18,000,000

Gross income in latest financial year

90 %

Percentage of income from B2B activities

$16,200,000

Gross income from B2B activities

International operations

Location of additional global offices	London, Paris, San Francisco, Shanghai

Enhancing the client/agency relationship



Andrew Dalglish
Director
Circle Research

When compiling the research for this year's report, we asked agencies to share their thoughts on agency life. Every day, thousands of agency folk diligently beaver away for the benefit of clients. Usually everything's hunky dory, but niggles and gripes can emerge. From an agency perspective, they give five pieces of advice to clients:

- **Brief well.** Precisely define the goal, provide relevant background information and be upfront about budget constraints.
- **Share a clear strategic vision to work towards.** If an agency understands the long-term goals of your business, they can ensure every piece of work builds towards the bigger picture. They also ask that they're allowed to work strategically and have a holistic view of the different marketing activities going on across the business.
- **Allow your agency the time it needs to produce good work.** Sadly, agencies aren't campaign machines that spit out award-winning work at the touch of a button.
- **Do what you can to manage internal stakeholders.** Involve those who need to sign off or input into the campaign early on rather than towards the end of the process. This will help avoid what one agency called 'seagull management' – a big bird flies in, makes a lot of noise, shits on everything and then flies away.
- **Push the boat out.** Agencies are itching to create something remarkable, but to do so they need clients to be less risk averse and more open to trying new things.

Agencies do recognise that, as a group, they're not perfect either. If clients were asked to list their frustrations, agencies expect that they'd be told to build a better understanding of the client's business – their market, goals and internal challenges.

They expect they'd also be told to be more transparent about where time is being spent and prove the value of their work by objectively measuring its impact.

Finally, they suspect that they'd be asked to address high levels of staff turnover and not to fill the account team with junior staff. After all, people are an agency's best assets – choose them wisely.

About

B2B Marketing

With hundreds of thousands of users across the US, UK and the globe, we are the leading trusted voice at the centre of the B2B marketing world.

B2B Marketing members are kept up to date with the latest strategies, insight and inspiration from the B2B marketing space through our dedicated online portal, including news, articles, interviews, blogs, case studies, primary research and analysis.

Become a B2B Marketing Premium member and get access to:

- B2B marketing-specific best practice guides worth over $3000.
- B2B industry benchmarking reports worth over $3000.
- New research, analysis, benchmarking reports and guides published every month.
- Five on-demand training courses worth over $800.

How to get started:

Go to b2bmarketing.net/join to set up your Premium membership.
Call us on +44 (0)20 7014 4920 if you'd like to discuss your specific business needs.

B2B Marketing

Circle Research

Circle Research uses market research to help clients solve business issues, grasp opportunities and develop competitive advantage. The average client engages Circle Research on more than four projects, and counting.

Here's why:

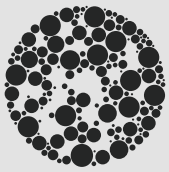
- The B2B market research experts – understanding your sector and seeing things others miss.
- Multi-award winning – benefit from extensive experience and best-in-class approach.
- Commercial acumen – receive commercially sound, engagingly presented recommendations that drive action.
- International – seamlessly covering your entire footprint.
- Delighted clients – you'll love the Circle experience.

Get in touch and let's talk about uncovering those Eureka! moments – insights that transform your view of the situation.

Call Andrew Dalglish, director at Circle on +44 (0)20 7960 3802 or email him at andrew.dalglish@circle-research.com

Circle research
The B2B experts

 © B2B Marketing 2017



B2B Marketing

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

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

b2bmarketing.net