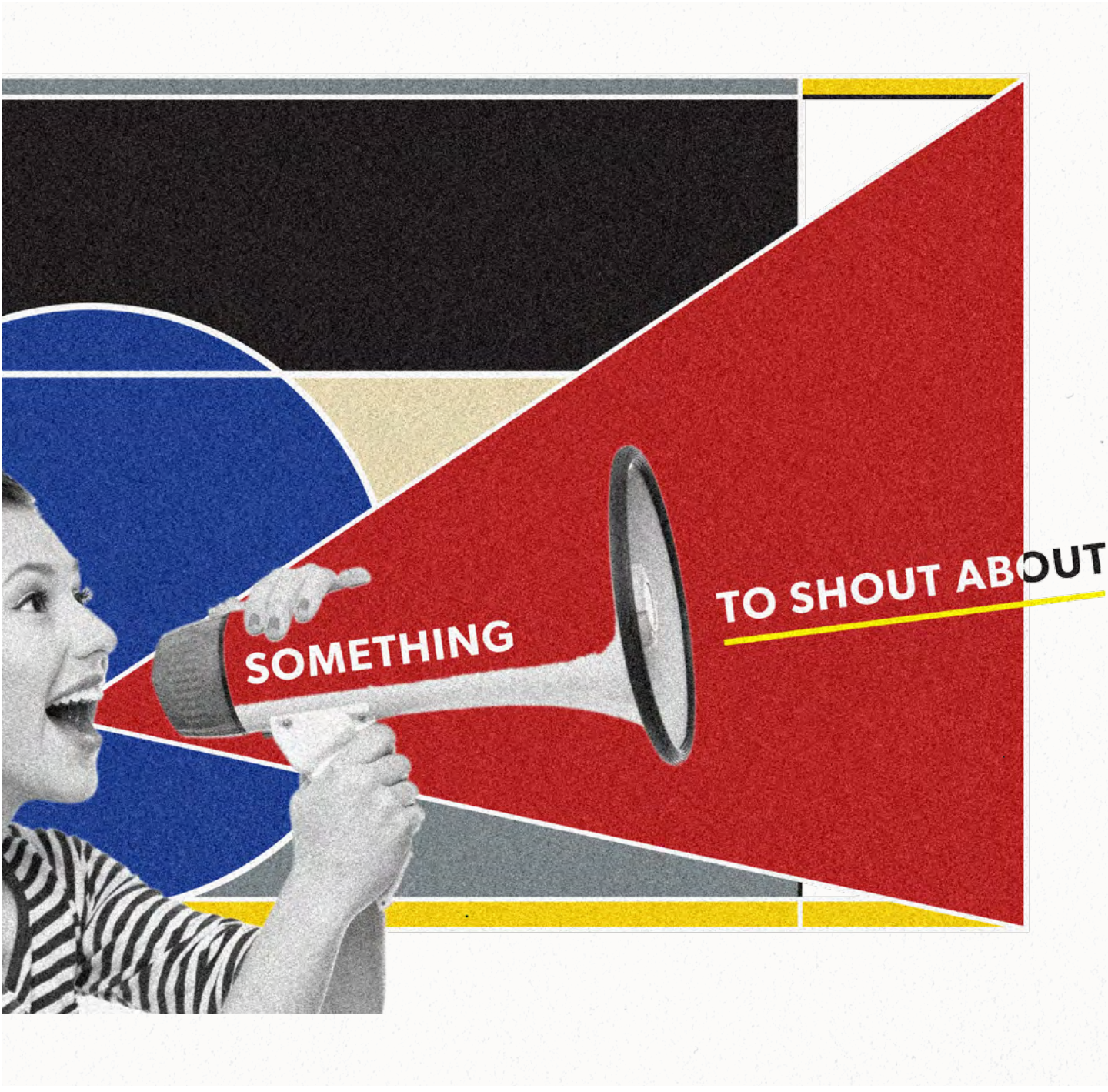
Q2 — 17/18

B2B MARKETING



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Freeze,
fight or
flight?
YOUR SURVIVAL DEPENDS
ON HOW YOU RESPOND

Political, economic and cultural instability, technological change and disruption have created a perfect storm for business. Most CEOs don't have the answers. They're frozen – paralysed by fear.

At this year's B2B Ignite, gyro's keynote explored how to master fear to ignite business creativity. The nature of leadership has to change. We have to change who we talk to and how we talk to them – target personality types, not titles. And we need to marry feelings and precision to do it.

For a copy of our keynote; our "Only Human" report; or to register for our new gyro/Bloomberg research on targeting by emotion, don't be afraid to get in touch. B2Bignite@gyro.com

gyro: IGNITE SOMETHING

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This issue's columnists get to grips with everything from the rise of the machine marketer and dwindling research budgets, to impressing at job interviews and the importance of a master data strategy

Summer celebrations

With competition fierce, it was somewhat fitting that the backdrop for celebrations at our inaugural People Awards was Ignite 2017, where we weren't short on either alcoholic beverages or general good cheer.

If you missed out – and boy, did you miss out – we've got it covered in our six-page round-up, which also features the lowdown on Ignite highlights (my personal faves included Doug Kessler's keynote on what it takes to defy marketing conventions and James Koons' informative yet light-hearted – yes, really – take on the GDPR).

Ignite 2017 hopefully demonstrated our commitment to CX (raspberry mojito sorbet, anyone?), but we're well aware that few brands can claim to have CX and UX completely nailed, particularly when it comes to their online presence. For this reason, we've spoken to a number of experts to find out what it takes to create and maintain a stellar website.

Elsewhere, we find out whether the grass is greener agency- or client-side, explore what it takes to create customer advocates, and share some of your favourite book recommendations ahead of the summer break – while there's nothing wrong with *Fifty Shades of Grey*, sometimes you want something that offers just a little more in the way of professional inspiration. And if that's the case, we've got you covered.

This is my last issue at B2B Marketing – I've loved meeting so many of you and immersing myself in your fascinating world over the past 16 months. Keep in touch and have a wonderful summer!

Jess Pike
Head of content, *B2B Marketing*

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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

Designer
Nicola Stephens

Printing
Buxton Press Ltd

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At a recent roundtable held in association with LinkedIn, Jess Pike discovered the biggest demand gen bugbears out there – and, crucially, how to overcome them



Nicola Anderson

Mastering the interview process

Finding the right candidate's all about chemistry, says Nicola Anderson, VP marketing at GoCardless. And it's a two-way street: if one party's not feeling it, it's probably a sign that something isn't right

Hiring is much like the modern-day internet dating scene. It starts with research and outreach, is followed by an online conversation, and too often ends with a disappointing face-to-face meeting.

It's worth it though, when you have that magic moment and know you've found the right person. But why is it that someone that looked great on paper just didn't convert in real life? Reflecting back on the many interviews I've been a part of, there are three things that stand out time and time again.

1. Do your research. One of my favourite interview questions is: "How did you prepare for this interview?" It gives me great insight into how interested the candidate really is. Are they just looking for a job, or is this a role and company they're passionate about? Have they thought about our target audience as well as the type of culture we offer? And are they genuine? Being supposedly fascinated by fintech but unable to name a single company in the sector is never a good start.

2. Be honest. If you don't know the answer to a question, say so. An interviewer can see through a bluffed answer immediately, so it's better to be upfront and follow up with an answer afterwards. One of my best hires wasn't aware of one of our major competitors but sent over a detailed analysis following the interview. An offer followed shortly afterwards.

3. Look for roles outside your comfort zone. If you have all the answers it's probably the wrong role, so make sure you're interviewing for opportunities that will push you. It's scary (I once almost pulled out of one interview with a serious case of 'imposter syndrome') but you should be looking for a role you'll grow into, not one you can already do.

Most importantly, remember an interview is as much about deciding whether the position is right for you as it is for the interviewer to determine your fitness for the role. Ask questions about the culture and always ensure you meet some of the team – you need to ensure that the chemistry is there for you too.



Andrew Dalglish

Wake up and smell the coffee

With a recent survey showing that research spend by B2B brands is dwindling, Andrew Dalglish, director of Circle Research, argues that it suggests something of a missed opportunity

In it's latest report on the state of the market research industry, trade body ESOMAR estimates that just 4% of research spend is on B2B studies. That's shockingly low. I took a sample of 400 companies which represent the UK business landscape:

- The 100 companies on the FTSE 100 Index
- 50 random companies picked from the FTSE All Share Index
- The 100 companies on the #AIM100 index
- 50 companies from the Grant Thornton Fast Track Index
- 100 companies randomly picked from Companies House.

This reveals that 45% of UK companies operate in B2B markets (and many more have some B2B component to what they do). Yet despite this, B2B accounts for less than a 20th of total market research spend. So why is this?

First off, the data may be distorting the true picture a little. The 4% figure relates to the percentage of market research spend, not market research projects. As B2B research requires smaller sample sizes than B2C studies, this tends to make them less expensive, which means that the proportion of B2B research projects may actually be greater than 4%.

But in my experience, market research is less common in B2B markets and three cultural reasons seem to underpin this. One, B2B purchases are seen as 'rational', which can lead to the mind set that 'it's obvious what customers want, so we don't need to ask'. Two, B2B companies are often 'engineering'-led. This can lead to a 'build it and they will come' mentality and an internal focus. And three, in B2B markets customer numbers are limited and relationships with sales teams close. This can lead to assumption ('I know my customer'), subjectivity ('I'll ask them next time we speak') and protectiveness ('That's my customer'), none of which are conducive to conducting objective market research.

Disappointingly, it seems that these attitudes are becoming more entrenched. The 4% spend on B2B research reported has halved from the 8% recorded in the previous year. It's time that B2B companies woke up to the importance of listening to their customers and invested in market research.



Rishi Dave

Introducing master data: The new king

When a sale involves 5.4 people, having data on each individual and how they like to be communicated to is key. Rishi Dave, CMO at Dun & Bradstreet, outlines the importance of a master data strategy

We all know B2B buyers interact differently with brands in this digitally driven world. In fact, SiriusDecisions just updated its long-standing Demand Waterfall to focus on demand units (or buying groups) within an organisation and the complexities of working with buying groups in the modern world. According to CEB, brands must sell to 5.4 people at their targeted companies to make the sale, and each one of those customers has many channels with which to interact with the brand. How do brands identify which companies to target, who the buying groups are within those companies, and how to connect with them off and online in an integrated way?

Marketers need clean, integrated, and structured data to do this and this data needs to flow through the company across groups in order to architect the right experience for the customer. Marketers often fixate on the 'cool' stuff like AI or a myriad of martech solutions, but they should spend as much (if not more) energy on their core data quality and structure, and determine how to surface the insights from that data to the right systems and people who can act on it in real time.

Marketers shouldn't outsource their data strategy completely to IT. If I had to advise a marketing organisation to invest in one thing next year, it would be master data and a master data strategy that enables them to clean and structure their data using industry-standard universal identifiers (like a D-U-N-S number) so that all departments and systems across their organisation can use it.

The universal identifier not only links all the data, but also connects to IP addresses, mobile IDs, and other identifiers to facilitate targeting online and offline in an integrated way. Having that unified, 360-degree view of the customer with an industry-standard identifier is the only way to create the customised, connected experience that modern-day customers expect.



Ricky Abbott

Welcome to the age of the 'machine marketer'

Martech appears to be taking over. Ricky Abbott, marketing and strategy director at Pulse Comms, asks how will creativity survive in this new binary world?

Is everyone in B2B marketing turning into a robot? Strange question I know, but remember the good ol' days when content was king? It's almost a distant memory – and when we see a great B2B campaign we now rejoice! But nowadays 'brand marketers' seem rare. Even the term 'digital marketer' is a bit old hat. We're now entering the age of 'machine marketers'.

I recently attended B2B Marketing Ignite, and the first thing that struck me was the lack of agency booths. It was nearly all martech platforms, who also hosted many of the breakout sessions. Tech seems to be taking over and almost every meeting I attend is a pissing contest on who is the most martech-savvy. This may seem a bit hypocritical since I think martech is great, but the question remains – how much of a machine-based marketer are you? How much do your decisions rely on data, analytics, AI, algorithms, or machine learning? How can creativity survive in a world of ones and zeros?

It's a tough balancing act. How do you sift through the martech noise? How do you know where to prioritise?

Proof of concept. If they're as good as they say, providers should be willing to set up proofs of concept. Interrogate their findings and ask how their systems work. There are some suspect platforms that will say things like 'well, it's all very complicated to explain'.

Need/relevance. We're all suckers for lovely dashboards and visualisations, but do you need them? Do they complement your programmes, and are you set up to use them?

Creativity/content. Most martech platforms I've seen are so focused on data/intelligence, they totally forget about content. Customers don't care about the data you used, they just see the message. The best 'machine marketers' use creativity alongside data to make their programmes sing.

Don't be afraid to look stupid. Being a machine marketer isn't always the answer. Know your skills. Surround yourself with people that have skills you don't and ask the right questions. It'll make you the best machine marketer you can be.

IS THE GRASS GREENER ON THE OTHER SIDE?



From marketing agency to client-side

Gemma Telford, EMEA partner marketing manager at Palo Alto Networks, made the leap to client-side after setting up and, ultimately, selling her own marketing agency

You did what many marketers dream about and set up your own marketing agency: why did you decide to sell up and move client-side?

I set up my agency after leaving another agency role back in 2013, and it grew really quickly! We received some GrowthAccelerator funding in year one and were nominated for 'Agency of the Year' at the B2B Marketing Awards 2012. The problem was that I'd set up the agency on my own and with no financial backing. So there were some things I lacked – mainly experience in running a business – and deep pockets. So, when my biggest client suddenly took all the work inhouse without telling me, it really hurt us financially. I took the decision to quit and get a 'proper job' where I had peers and where 100% of everything wasn't down to me alone.

Do you have any regrets about selling your agency?

I can't regret any of it because it taught me so much in lots of ways, but I definitely have a few more grey hairs than I used to! I found running my own agency exhilarating and exciting, and it taught me so much. But on the downside, it was lonely, it could be very stressful at times, and I wasn't good enough at mastering some of the processes involved. Having said that, I'm still so glad I did it. I know there are people in my team who I gave a chance to and have gone on to do great things, and that gives me a warm glow inside.

Aside from the loneliness, what was the worst thing about running your own agency?

It has to be clients that don't treat you with enough respect. Some think you should be grateful for the work and should be at their beck and call, but I'm not interested in working like that. If it's not a partnership with respect for both sides, you won't get the best from your agency.

However, the best thing is the freedom to choose who you work with and which projects you do. If a client doesn't pay, or doesn't respect the effort you put in, you can choose to sack them… which is quite refreshing!

And now you're on the other side of the fence, what's the best thing about working client-side?

The good thing about being client-side is knowing the money is coming in every month. But it does mean people who've never worked for themselves don't appreciate that monetary security, which I think makes them more complacent – they 'settle' more easily. Another benefit is that I'm now part of a team of peers, which is something I definitely missed when working for myself.

How did you find the transition overall?

I'm lucky enough to mainly work from home, so I still operate in a fairly self-contained way. However, I do miss the team around me, the jokes and humour in the office, and the coffee and cakes! I'm probably more productive now, and do go into the London office pretty regularly, but I don't get quite the same feeling of ownership and shared success that you get from being surrounded by a team you recruited and helped develop.

What did your move from agency to client-side teach you about B2B marketing?

Working for an agency, you're always under pressure to perform. You have to work harder at building your relationships. You have to always be selling. You also need to keep up to date with the latest techniques, approaches and make sure you're always relevant and at the cutting edge. It keeps you sharp. Client-side the pressures are different but often more to do with workload. However, it's been good seeing things from the other side of the fence!

How has the move changed the way you work?

It's refreshing to know the marketing you're delivering is having an impact at the coalface. Agency-side, even with the best intentions, the laser focus on ROI can often be missing – and I've also seen agencies focusing too much on the 'fluffier' elements of branding and messaging, and losing sight of the fact that no matter how gorgeous the font, people will always be more interested in results.

Apart from the coffee and cakes, is there anything else you miss about working in an agency environment?

Bizarrely, I miss the lost opportunities. If I saw the potential to do something better or differently when I was running my agency, I could just do it or change it straightaway. Now, I might have to bite my tongue or accept that I can't make an immediate change – I can only make suggestions. I don't miss the sleepless nights though.

Alex Clarke quizzes two senior marketers, one who's moved agency to client-side, and the other vice versa, to find out whether life is better on the other side of the fence



From client-side to marketing agency

Heather Barnett, associate director at The Marketing Practice, previously plied her trade as head of marketing at B2B education software company RM Results.

Tell me a little about your time in client-side marketing.

As head of marketing at RM Results (part of RM Education), I was involved in setting up and delivering the marketing strategy for the company to sell software and services into exam boards in the UK and around the world. When I joined, there wasn't a marketing plan, or even any dedicated marketing staff – and over the four years I was there I grew the department to a team of three with an annual budget five times bigger than what was allocated to me in the first year.

With such an impressive track record, what prompted your move to agency land?

I'd been in my previous role for around four years and felt I'd done all I could there. I was about to start looking for another client-side role when someone I knew from The Marketing Practice (TMP) suggested I come in for an interview. I'd never thought about working for an agency, but when I read the associate director job description, I realised it was pretty similar to my current head of marketing role – only I'd be doing it from the outside rather than the inside, and with bigger clients.

You mention that you'd never considered working for an agency. Why do you think this was?

I hadn't thought of working for an agency because I didn't think there was a role I'd be interested in doing. I'd worked with smaller agencies than TMP that didn't have an equivalent associate director position, and I always thought account management was mainly client relationship and project management. However, at TMP, the associate director owns the client brief – you're responsible for understanding the marketing challenge and leading the strategy, which is the bit I love.

And what do you enjoy least about working agency-side?

The worst thing is not being able to call the shots. In my client-side role I had the final say, but in an agency – no matter how strongly you feel about something – the final decision sits with your client, and you just have to do the best job you can of putting your case forward.

On the other hand, being in an agency surrounded by other B2B marketing fanatics or getting positive feedback from a client is a great feeling. But actually, when I think about it, the absolute best thing is the same as it was client-side – seeing tangible results (e.g. leads) from work that you and your team have produced.

And what did you hate the most in your client-side role?

The worst thing about client-side marketing is that 90% of the company probably don't really get what marketing does and certainly aren't interested in it, which often means there's not a lot of scope for best practice sharing.

What did you find most difficult about the transition?

It was a really steep learning curve! I went from being the most senior marketer at my company to finding I was surrounded by B2B marketing boffins – it was like going from primary to secondary school. I had to learn to work more collaboratively and use that combined brainpower to my advantage.

The absolute best thing is the same as it was client-side – seeing tangible results from work that you and your team have produced.

How do you approach things differently now?

At an agency, chances are whatever your campaign or programme, someone will have run something similar in the past. There's a corporate memory you can draw on, so it makes you work in a much more collaborative way. Agency marketers have honed their methodologies over the years – demand generation programmes here are run like military campaigns, and involve a level of detail and coordination that I've never come across before.

And finally, is there anything you miss about working in a client-side environment?

Getting to boss agencies around, of course…

IT'S ALL ABOUT THE PEOPLE...

Our inaugural People Awards served as a fitting curtain call to the year's biggest B2B marketing event, Ignite 2017. **Alex Clarke** talks to the winners, and grills those who submitted entries on their behalf to find out what it takes to triumph on the night

Newcomer of the year

Kate Searight, marketing executive, Convertr Media

Over the past six months, Kate – who's only 24 – has increased Convertr's social following by 37%, boosted social engagement by 1217%, organised three agency breakfast roundtables with senior-level representatives and achieved a 70% surge in web leads through optimised forms. Here's what Sandra McDill, CMO at Convertr Media, had to say about Kate's win

Would you agree that the B2B marketing industry is poor at recognising and encouraging young talent?

I would, yes. I think most of the awards in the sector focus on senior leaders or specific teams, which of course is important, but misses an opportunity to celebrate younger talent. This is especially important when you consider that B2B marketers are underrepresented in mainstream awards. It's the reason I jumped on the B2B Marketing People Awards when I saw the newcomer category.

It's incredibly important for the industry to attract bright and ambitious talent into B2B at an entry level. This is ultimately how we will grow as an industry.

Why did you decide to enter Kate in the People Awards?

Having worked in marketing for 12 years, I've seen a lot of new people enter into the industry, but I was incredibly impressed with how quickly Kate threw herself into the B2B sector and started executing her marketing ideas to grow the business. When I saw the B2B Marketing People Awards, it was a no-brainer to enter her.

How did Kate surpass your expectations?

Kate goes above and beyond, from coming in early to reading up on industry press to attending networking events in the evening to broaden her knowledge and relationships. She is a great example of someone who has hit the ground running in a role, not waiting six months to make her mark. The range of tasks she has undertaken is incredible, especially those outside her comfort zone.

How has the office reacted to Kate's triumph?

Everyone in the office is incredibly proud. Kate's been involved in so many aspects of the company and engages with every team, so they all knew she could win. It has spurred on other individuals to think about what awards they could enter this year, which I think is especially important for their personal development.



Winner's comment: Kate Searight

I felt elated and genuinely surprised; I knew who I was shortlisted alongside and there was some really brilliant talent from the B2B world there. I was also really excited for the team who were there alongside me (their faces were priceless).

On a personal level, it's an affirmation of how much potential the B2B space has for development, especially when you're young and ambitious to learn. Having come from an agency background, moving into a tech business felt like a big move; so not only does it set a tone for what's to come in the future, it's also incredibly rewarding to have a moment where all that past experience, and all the personal and professional chances you've taken, have paid off.

Marketer of the year

Cara O'nions, marketing and customer insight director, Vocalink

Marketer of the year… the award everyone wants to snag. For this one, the judges were not only looking for excellent work at all stages of campaign planning, but also for insight into how they embrace new opportunities and tackle any challenges that present themselves along the way. Here's why Siobhán Ford, senior brand manager at Vocalink, decided to enter eventual winner Cara O'nions

She joined Vocalink in 2013 as director of marketing and customer insight

Cara has a unique talent for growing businesses internationally through a deep understanding of what customers really want and need. She brings that human touch that is all too often absent from this industry.

She established a B2B marketing centre of excellence within the walls of Vocalink

Every interaction with Cara is a learning experience. She's built a team that respects and admires her, and wants to do her proud in the work that we produce. We were cheering her on when we submitted her name for the B2B People Awards and the pride within the group was palpable when we heard that she had taken home the prize.

She transformed Vocalink's approach to customer engagement

From research to responsible business initiatives, Cara has been instrumental in ensuring that people's needs are at the heart of our work by devising a marketing strategy that puts a huge focus on generating insightful thought leadership content for all of our audiences.

She implemented the latest marketing techniques

Through the company's CONNECT platform, Cara established a clear digital strategy and built an in-house design capability that has allowed her to support tactical campaigns at speed.

She supported the continuing professional development of her team

Cara enhances our skills at every opportunity and provides us with the support we need to deliver exceptional results.



Winner's comment: Cara O'nions

I was truly delighted to be named as the B2B marketer of the year and given the quality of the shortlisted nominees, I was honoured to be in such great company! Being recognised for my contribution to B2B marketing is fantastic, but this is really an award for the marketing and customer insight team at Vocalink. I'm lucky that I get to work with a phenomenal set of individuals and their passion, talent and enthusiasm makes my job a real joy.

Cara has been instrumental in ensuring that people's needs are at the heart of our work



Outstanding contribution to B2B marketing

Alan Brandwood, finance director, Stein IAS

After almost 37 years of service, Alan Brandwood, finance director at Stein IAS, is drawing close to hanging up his proverbial B2B boots. Sue Torr, production/ traffic assistant at Stein IAS, explains why winning the 'Outstanding contribution to B2B marketing' award is a perfect send off

Alan's been in B2B for as long as B2B has existed, and he's been a driver of positive change during all that time. He was a pioneer of many of the company's marketing techniques that we still take for granted today, and he's truly passionate about B2B marketing.

Business awards are a no-brainer

The People Awards is such a great idea because it celebrates achievement in our particular discipline of B2B, which we're really proud to work in. Trying to win awards is a big part of our agency culture and B2B Marketing's award schemes are well-known, well-publicised, and the ceremonies are always top class. Alan will retire soon, so what better way to celebrate his career and contribution?

A legend in the B2B industry

Hollywood has the Oscars, football has the World Player of the Year. Recognising and celebrating individual success is good for everybody involved. Awards like this make us all feel we have something special to aim for, it makes B2B a better industry to work in. We already knew Alan was a legend but we're happy this has been made official. There's always an extra buzz in the office when we win a big award. We all feel like winners.



Winner's comment: Alan Brandwood

I was both surprised and honoured to win this award. To be frank, I never actually believed that an accountant could win it.

In the very early days of B2B marketing I was fortunate enough to get the opportunity to build something different with IAS Dataserve, supported by a group of clients like ABB, SKF, TAC, Micromass, etc. I still regard this period as one where I achieved my greatest successes.



We already knew Alan was a legend but we're happy this has been made official





The winning team (l-r): Aliénor Basile, Kirsty Topping, Laura Scampini, Ellie Mickleburgh, director of marketing and design, JLT Group (award presenter), Joe Edwards, Vanessa Muff, Shannon Richardson, Danny Parker, Georgia Pantazis and Charlotte James

Marketing team of the year

Sage

While recognising individual talent is an important aspect of the People Awards, celebrating team success carries equal weight. Kirsty Topping, global campaign lead at 'Marketing team of the year' winner Sage, discusses their award-winning entry

What inspired you to enter the Sage team into the B2B Marketing People Awards?

We were all familiar with B2B Marketing and came across the People Awards online. We're a really close-knit team, and we've been on a real journey over the past year, so we felt it was a good opportunity to get recognition for all of our hard work.

Why do you think it's important to enter business awards?

In the world of marketing, and especially B2B marketing, the pace is so fast that we don't often take the time to step back and reflect on our successes. By nature, we're highly critical – always looking at what can be done better, how we can improve next time. So it's really important to recognise where we've been as a team, and our wins – no matter how big or small. It creates positive morale for the team and also helps to raise the profile of our work internally as well as in the marketing world.

How has the atmosphere changed in the office since your People Awards triumph?

We're a pretty upbeat team as it goes, but the buzz from the award win has really lasted. We're going into planning for our FY18, so the energy has really helped.

How much will Joe (the team's former director), now he's moved to FIBA Media, be missed?

Joe has been an integral part of building the team, our culture and success. It wouldn't have been the same without him there. We're all really going to miss him on the team. He had a real way to bring us all together – both as colleagues and friends.

Winner's comment: Kirsty Topping

To receive a People Award was a great feeling – we were hopeful, but really surprised when we were announced as the winners. We were on a high all evening! We celebrated with champagne at a bar nearby, followed by dinner and spent the rest of the evening in a karaoke bar!

The award-winning Sage team (according to former director of global campaign development, Joe Edwards)

Kirsty	The geek
Danny	The northern monkey
Ness	The raver (music nut)
Shannon	Miss twisted (dark TV series habits)
Laura	The passionate one
Georgia	The mum
Ali	The cheeky one
Sarah	Miss 'on it like a car bonnet' (so diligent and fast)
Charlotte	The geezer (a total football fan and behaves more like one of the lads)

The judges endorsed the need for B2B brands and marketers to try new things – which my teammates and I have been doing at BLP



Creative team/ individual of the year

Brian Macreadie, head of brand and campaign management, BLP

Professional services is an industry often chastised as being too closeted, with the big firms reticent to share success stories – a creativity inhibitor if we ever saw one. Brian Macreadie, head of brand and campaign management at BLP – and also winner of 'Creative team/individual of the year' – perfectly demonstrates the merits of breathing new life into thought leadership through BLP's 'heist movies' and his 'B2B The Movie' series

B2B The Movie: The Marketrix

Plot summary:

In this movie, our marketing heroine – Cleo – can't quite shake the feeling that something is wrong at the very heart of B2B marketing. Some of the claims and advice being given by experts feel just too good to be true. It plays heavily on Cleo's mind, until she meets a wise marketing mentor, Mo Pheus, who opens Cleo's eyes to the truth…

The polished, growth-hacking world around her is all an illusion. Cleo, in actual fact, lives in a ravaged wasteland where much of marketing-kind has been captured – their minds imprisoned within an artificial reality known as The Marketrix. A false reality where cult-like absolutists claim their way is the only way to marketing success…

A world where digital marketing experts (aka 'agents') say digital marketing is the only way forward, and that programmatic methodologies, AI and bots will lead the future. A world where content marketing agents argue that content marketing is the only way, and that traditional marketing is dead. A world where experiential agents say experiential is the answer, where account-based marketing agents say ABM is the answer and where direct marketing agents say DM is the best way.

Faced with the choice of taking a blue pill and staying in the blinkered wonderland of The Marketrix, or taking the red pill to discover how the marketing world truly is, Cleo chooses Mo's red pill, setting off down an uncertain path where agents fear to tread.

As anxiety mounts, Cleo fears she has made the wrong choice. But wait… Unexpectedly, far from a desolate, dystopian wilderness, the real marketing world is glorious. It's a world free from absolutist delusion. It's a place where a mix of marketing tactics work. A realm where marketers use the right tactic for the right job – both modern and 'traditional'. A world where big data is good and unadulterated human creativity is also good. A place where integrated marketing reigns supreme, where experimentation is the only true way to discover what works, where product development and product promotion receive equal attention, and where both short-term promotion and long-term brand building get equal attention. A world of hard work, but where Cleo the B2B marketer is better-placed to sell more, to more people, at optimal prices. Not just now – but sustainably.



Winner's comment: Brian Macreadie

I can't really remember how I felt when my name was called – it's a bit of a blur. I think I did a little whelp, and quite a few high fives. It's all very embarrassing for a gentleman of my age, but I was pretty chuffed, and at least I didn't pull out a moonwalk on stage.

Of course, I'm pretty proud of the award, and my youngest son has already taken it to 'show and tell' at his junior school. But what I genuinely think is more important is that the judges endorsed the need for B2B brands and marketers to try new things – which I've been trying to do outside of work hours with the BMC and other creative communities – and which my teammates and I have been doing at BLP.

Client relationship manager of the year

Gemma Roalf, B2B marketing account director, Really B2B

Keeping clients happy can reap some big rewards for agencies. Chris Manns, strategy and planning director at Really B2B, explains why 'Client relationship manager of the year' winner Gemma Roalf has gone above and beyond her remit

Gemma has risen through our agency's ranks... consistently delivering great results for her clients. Her clients have nothing but great things to say about her and her team and she was my first choice for entering into the People Awards.

She was up against some really distinguished... and seasoned client services managers who've achieved great things, but she fully deserved the award based on her campaign results, client feedback and her 100% client retention rate.

An agency isn't an agency without its people... so it's incredibly important to enter business awards. Winning will always have a great impact in any agency, but it's especially important that individual standout performance is recognised within the industry.

Gemma's win has had a really positive impact on the office... and everyone feels incredibly proud to be working in an agency that has the UK's best client relationship manager within it.

After the ceremony... we went for dinner and drinks to celebrate. Gemma was greeted with rapturous applause the following day and was treated to champagne from the board. Everyone is incredibly pleased for her.



Winner's comment: Gemma Roalf

I was honestly stunned when my name was called, as I was genuinely excited just to have been nominated (a cliché, I know!).

It's an amazing personal achievement for me, having grown from an account executive fresh out of university, to an account director in just four years. To then be recognised by the industry was something I would never have expected to happen. I can't wait to see what's next!

B2B Marketing IGNITE 2017

Who attended?

- 1000 marketers
- 25 different countries – from Bulgaria to Belgium and Sweden to South Africa.
- 314 marketing managers; 225 heads of marketing; 184 marketing directors.
- 39 sponsors from a range of agency and client-side brands.

What was on offer?

- 8 content streams, covering everything from insight to experience and acceleration to engagement.
- 71 speakers from across the globe.
- More than 60 sessions on pretty much every B2B marketing topic imaginable.
- 5 keynotes from the biggest headline speakers in B2B marketing, including Doug Kessler, Lee Odden and Carla Johnson.

Headline sponsor

gyro:

Stream sponsors

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SUMMER READS: *MAKE ME FEEL FINE*

As marketers across the land turn their collective gaze to sunnier climes, **Jess Pike** speaks to a number of voracious bookworms about their favourite reads. Which business title had them hooked from the get-go and which added most value in terms of CPD?



RACHAEL HEDGES
Digital PR and communications manager, Wiley

START WITH WHY: HOW GREAT LEADERS INSPIRE EVERYONE TO TAKE ACTION
by Simon Sinek (9-780-24195-822-3, £9.99)

Start With Why is a foundation read. Your 'why' should be at the core of your business and should drive your marketing, and thinking about it really changed the way we communicate at Wiley. The overarching element in communicating your brand and inspiring a loyal consumer base is knowing why you're in business in the first place. If you know why you're in business and can communicate your reason for being in business authentically and with passion, consumers will align with your values and become loyal to your brand. "People don't buy what you do, they buy why you do it," says Sinek – which is exactly right.

Why do you get out of bed each morning? Why did you get into this business in the first place? Why are you passionate about it? Your business started with passion about something remarkable – so make sure you're connected to your 'why': communicate that, empower your people to do the same, and watch your consumers align themselves with your brand as a result.



IAN BENNISON
Marketing operations director, TMF Group

THE EVERYTHING STORE: JEFF BEZOS AND THE AGE OF AMAZON
by Brad Stone (978-0-5521-678-33, £9.99)

I found this book totally fascinating in terms of seeing how the drive of a single individual fundamentally changed how the world shopped. Every decision at Amazon was based on the customer; if it didn't deliver value to the customer, the strategy was either dropped or changed. The empty seat in the boardroom for the customer is a terrific idea, and something we could all learn from.

Plus, the book highlights the fact you can challenge the norm and change it if you're determined enough and you take people with you (whether that's your leaders, employees, investors or customer advocates). It's a great read for anybody who's passionate about the customer, and provides a fascinating insight into the drive and commitment needed to take on large established businesses with new technology – and emerge victorious.



JOE BOLGER
MD, Intellexo

THE PYRAMID PRINCIPLE: LOGIC IN WRITING AND THINKING
by Barbara Minto (978-0-27371-015-6, £9.99)

Ten years ago I started a new job, and on my first day my new boss told me to find and read a copy of Barbara Minto's *The Pyramid Principle*. I duly did so and 10 years later I'm still grateful for the recommendation.

The Pyramid Principle is a guide to thinking and communicating in a logical way. That might sound a bit dry, but practically, it's very useful. How do you structure a presentation for the CEO (or anybody else for that matter)? How do you make your emails succinct but comprehensive? How do you respond when your boss asks you in passing how a project's going?

Minto's book runs through an approach that can help you in all of these situations, and for me, that's one of its main draws. The concept's relatively straightforward and easy to apply, and once you get it, it's simply a case of reminding yourself to apply it. I also like the fact that it's not just theory. Minto was a consultant at McKinsey & Co, and devised this approach for her work. New recruits to the firm (and others) are taught to use her approach, so it's spread from assignment to assignment, as the company's teams consult with some of the world's most powerful business leaders.

The book makes you think about how you can communicate what you want to communicate with clarity; it makes you think about the different options you have and to think creatively too. There are plenty of books that claim to help you create good presentations, but this one really does stand out for me.



TOM RYAN
Salesforce certified Pardot consultant

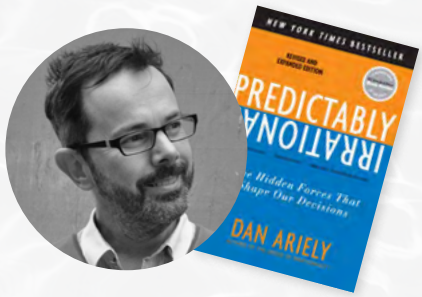
CONTAGIOUS: WHY THINGS CATCH ON
by Jonah Berger (978-1-47111-170-9, £8.99)

Contagious is a must-read for marketers wanting to better engage their audiences, giving as it does an insight into why things go viral and the formula you can apply to your marketing to see ideas and themes gain traction in the marketplace. By learning, understanding and applying Jonah's principles, you'll be able to confidently convey messages that resonate with your target audience.

Besides being a great book on social science, it's also changed my entire mindset when it comes to communicating with people about your business. Now, before I post something on social media, build an email campaign or write copy, I always think of Jonah's STEPPS principles to see which I want to apply.

In a nutshell, there are: Social currency (information that makes us look good in front of our peers); Triggers (something easy to remember about a product or service that helps keep you front of mind); Emotion (provoking a feeling that urges the reader to react in a particular way); Public (making sure your content is built to show and built to grow); Practical value (ensuring your content is relevant and useful to the reader); and Stories (taking your reader on a journey with you and sharing your experiences and company culture). I've applied three of these principles to this review: see if you can guess which ones!

There are plenty of books that *claim* to help you create good presentations, but this one really does stand out for me



MIKE WESTON
Co-founder and joint MD, Radiate B2B

PREDICTABLY IRRATIONAL: THE HIDDEN FORCES THAT SHAPE OUR DECISIONS
by Dan Ariely (978-0-00725-653-2, £8.99)

I *loved* this book. In it, Dan Ariely draws on 20 years of research projects that touch every part of how we frame our decisions, along the way debunking conventional economic analysis that assumes people make decisions on a rational basis. There's a wealth of stories in here covering everything from beer in the college bar, to whether the Coke/Pepsi brand is more important than the actual taste of the drink itself (spoiler alert: yes it is!). As marketers, we really need to understand what makes people tick. This book provides rare insight into that question, and I think it's a must-read.



ADAM HARPER
Relationship marketing manager, B2B Marketing

THE 12 POWERS OF A MARKETING LEADER: HOW TO SUCCEED BY BUILDING CUSTOMER AND COMPANY VALUE
by Thomas Barta and Patrick Barwise (978-1-25983-471-4, £23.99)

The 12 Powers of a Marketing Leader is a must-read for CMOs or senior marketers with their eyes on the CMO role. It really is a leadership manual for marketers, and practically breaks down the 12 things all leaders must do to improve the performance and standing of marketing within their business (and drive their own careers forward as a result).

The key point I've taken from this book is that us marketers need to be more commercially savvy and have a better understanding of the challenges impacting our CEOs. This added clarity and purpose truly helps the busy marketer figure out which activities should take priority and which can be ignored on a day-to-day basis, and how to solve business challenges using marketing, rather than just solving marketing challenges.



FABRIZIO CONRADO
MD, London Financial Studies

THE TIPPING POINT: HOW LITTLE THINGS CAN MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE
by Malcolm Gladwell (978-0-34911-346-3, £9.99)

The Tipping Point is a highly creative approach to creating change. In it, Gladwell (who writes in a really engaging, informative way) turns a negative into a positive by looking at how epidemics come to be and what we can learn from that process in order to create positive change – in this case, bringing a new idea, product or service to market.

One of the key ideas in the book – the Law of the Few – goes right to the core of what strategy's about: limited resources organised in the right way are all it takes to reach the so-called 'tipping point'. For Gladwell, you need three kinds of people to fire up an idea: connectors, mavens (information specialists) and salesmen (persuaders). He also presents numerous social experiments that provide vivid insights into how our society (and people) really work, which is the essence of what every marketer needs to understand.



VANESSA MEYER
CMO of Loop54

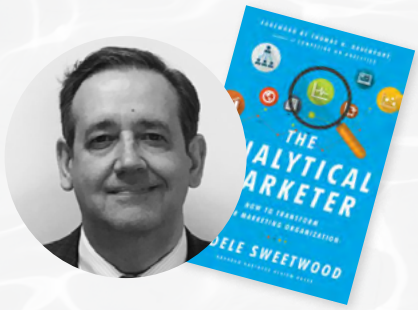
HOW ADAM SMITH CAN CHANGE YOUR LIFE: AN UNEXPECTED GUIDE TO HUMAN NATURE AND HAPPINESS
by Russ Roberts (9-780-24100-320-6, £9.99)

As a marketer, this is one of my favourite books. In it, Russ Roberts examines Adam Smith's less well-known but equally powerful masterpiece *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*. Rather than falling asleep reading Smith's original 18th century, 358-page tome, you can read Roberts' modern-day interpretation.

The marketing discipline is rooted in a mix of traditional economic theory, psychology, philosophy and what we now call behavioural economics, and this is exactly what *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* is all about. Although Adam Smith is well known for his rather dark interpretation of market behaviour, this book speaks more to the irrational nature of human beings, something marketers are always trying to measure, predict and interpret in order to increase the demand for their goods and services. The book deals with issues beyond the pursuit of utility maximisation, touching upon what motivates us as people to make decisions ,which are often in contrast to what traditional economic theory would suggest.

Smith's most famous book (*The Wealth of Nations*) talks of the invisible hand – the rules of the market that seek to find the optimal balance between supply and demand by letting buyers and sellers freely pursue their own self-interest. But he questions whether this is really the best way to explain how people behave. As marketplace participants, Smith says people can act with decency and virtue even when it's in conflict with their own self-interest.

In *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, Smith tells us to seek wisdom and virtue, and to behave as if an impartial spectator is watching. He says to use the idea of an impartial spectator to know yourself and avoid the seductions of money and fame, for they will never satisfy you. Fundamentally, this book isn't only a guide to building a great marketing strategy; it's also a guide to life.



IAN BENNISON
Marketing operations director, TMF Group

THE ANALYTICAL MARKETER
by Adele Sweetwood (978-1-62527-845-6, £23.00)

This book, written by the head of global marketing at SAS, describes a realisation that analytics are driving big changes not only in the execution of marketing but also in how teams are organised, staffed, led and run. The book makes you think about every element of a marketing team and how analytics could and should drive the decision-making process.

It also highlights the fact that many marketers won't adapt to the digital era and that you have to be prepared to think about the new skills marketers will need going forward. A key takeaway for me was the fact that data really is gold and that companies that don't embrace analytics will fall behind in an ever-changing, data-led world.



LUCY LOMAS
Director, Luma Marketing

OVERSUBSCRIBED: HOW TO GET PEOPLE LINING UP TO DO BUSINESS WITH YOU
by Daniel Priestley (978-0-85708-619-8, £12.99)

When I feel like I'm losing direction I always return to this book – in fact, I've lent it to so many people (lots of whom have kept it) that I'm currently on my fifth copy. What it does is show you how to build a business and a brand that people flock to, and reminds me that my branding is absolutely right for my business. We don't need to appeal to everyone – Luma's about doing good marketing for good clients – and if we're calmly confident in our offer, those good clients will come to us. It's nearly two years since we launched, and Daniel's philosophy still works for us: we don't need to appeal to everyone, just the people who are right for us. As he says: "Rather than catering to the market, build your own market."

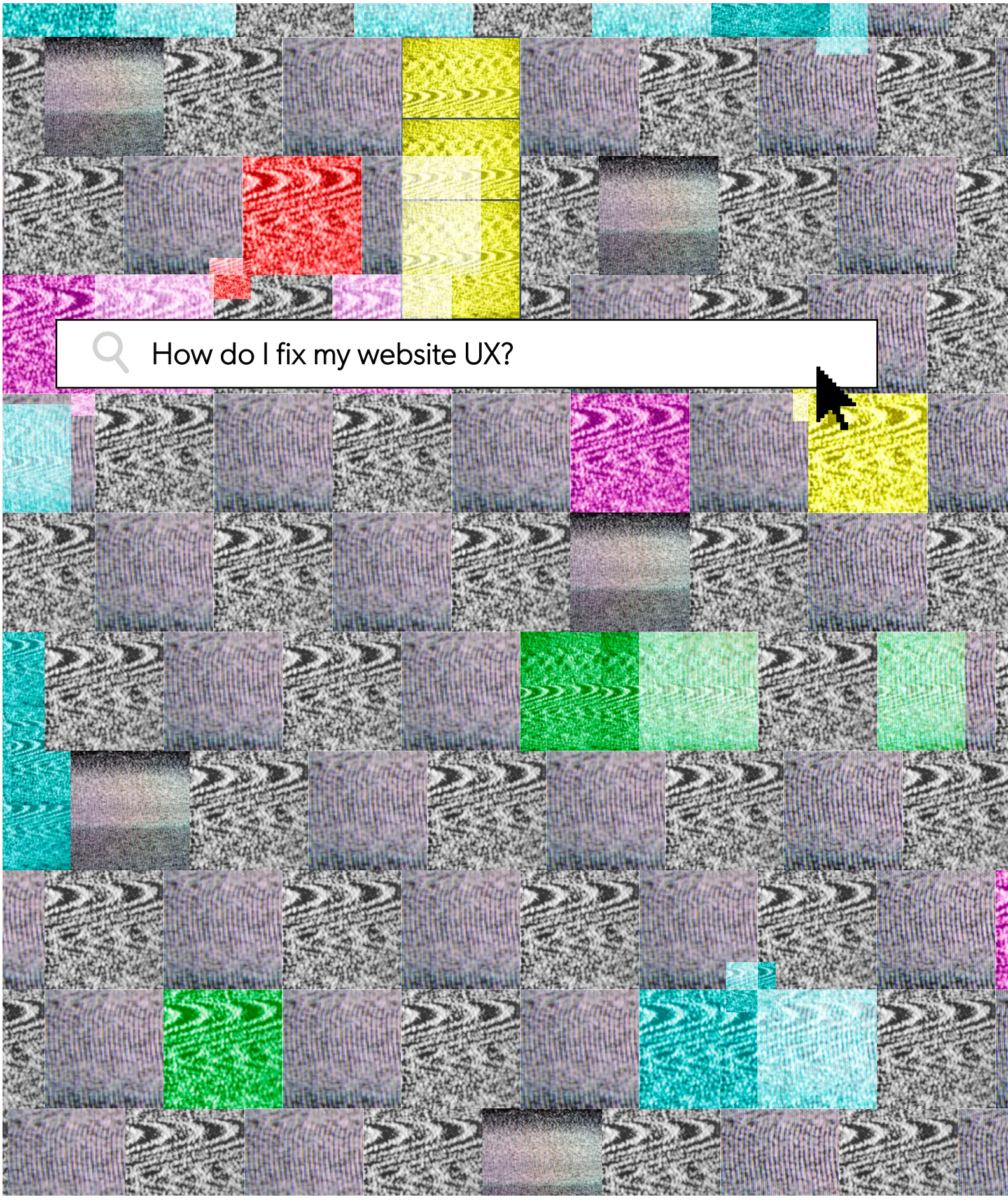
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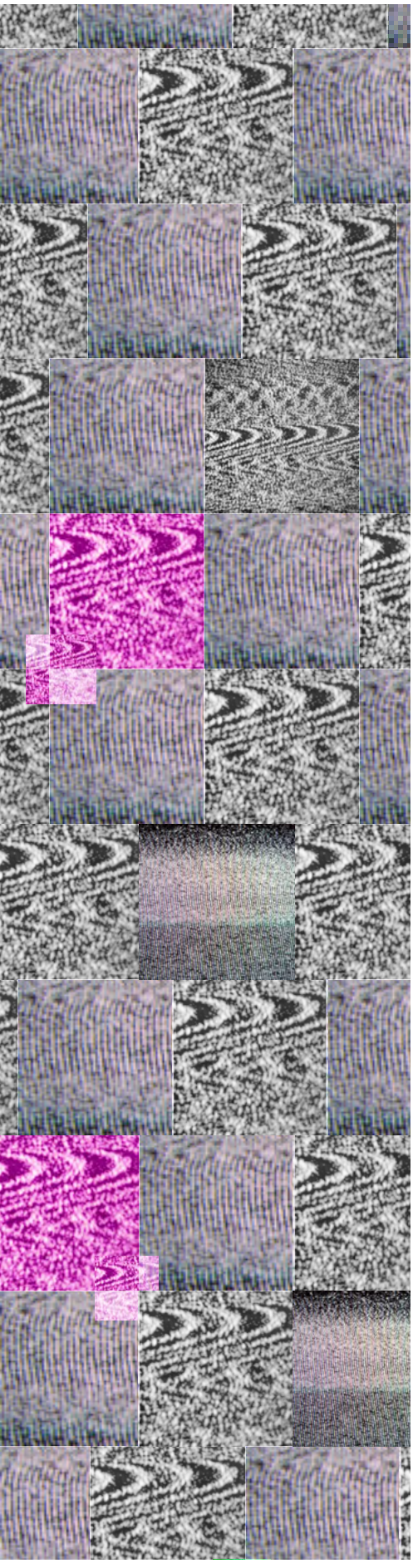
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How do I fix my website UX?



Whether it's low dwell times, dwindling conversions or poor usability, websites can cause serious headaches for marketers. **Jess Pike** speaks to the experts to find out where brands are going wrong – and what they can do to improve that all-important user experience

The world might be full of technological wonders (think Tinder, Alexa and the marvels of artificial intelligence) but technology – a signifier of mankind's advancement and cerebral sophistication – also brings with it its fair share of challenges. And nowhere is this more evident than the world wide web.

How often do you find yourself clicking through countless web pages in a fruitless quest for an email address? Or a price? Or a line or two about what the brand in question actually does? After failing to find what we're looking for, we clued-up consumers can feel about as digitally empowered as Amazon tribesmen, pining for the good old days of Yellow Pages and Teletext.

So where are brands going wrong? Which traps do they tend to fall into? Is it a case of overly complex user journeys, unclear CTAs or unreadable blocks of copy? Is it, as our hunch suggests, that websites are too commonly built around nice-looking creative and dinky templates, with little emphasis on actual user experience (UX)? If so, the problem's evident: without any consideration of UX, everything from site architecture to visual design and usability is going to suffer. Ignore it at your peril.

So in order to find out what you need to prioritise and how UX plays a part at every turn, we've spoken to a host of web dev, agency and client-side experts. And here are their top tips.

RUN A SITE AUDIT

For web wizard Matt Oxley, co-founder and creative director of DotLabel, it's important to gather insight from your stakeholders on what they really think of your website. Does it help them achieve their goals? What are their main frustrations? Do they find themselves bombarded with whitepapers that they're never going to bother to read? "The outcome of an audit like this will be to help you identify whether the site has lost its focus over the years," explains Matt. "Identify and prioritise the important changes and look to re-focus the website and remove the clutter. The quick wins should be manageable by your internal teams (assuming your website sits on a usable CMS)."

RUN REGULAR USABILITY TESTS

Don't assume that just because your team knows how to complete a specific task on your website, it'll be obvious to your users too. According to Peter Reid, CEO

of MSQ Partners, this is an area where B2B brands lag behind their B2C counterparts. "Usability audits can combine eye-tracking and neuroscience techniques to measure how well customers are engaging with all aspects of their sites, where customer journeys are working well and where they're falling down and when customers are falling out," he says. "This not only identifies opportunities for improvement – different content, more interactive features – but also allows for testing of multiple 'solutions' to see which solves the problem most effectively."

START A/B TESTING

By leveraging an A/B testing methodology you'll garner definitive answers to your usability questions, as Rishi Dave, Dun & Bradstreet's CMO, well knows. "We were noticing a significant number of errors from users trying to conduct a company search on our website," he says. "Based on the data, we believed that if we took them through the process one step at a time, rather than asking them to fill out a single form, we'd call attention to the missing data and eliminate the errors. So, when a user clicked the 'Company Search' button on the website, 50% received experience A (single form) while the other half received experience B (one step at a time)."

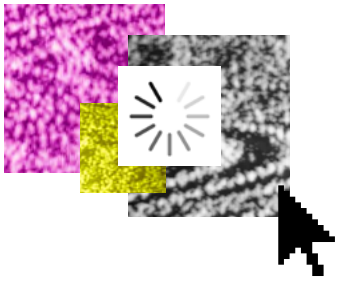
The results were positive: Rishi's team managed to eliminate the missing data errors customers were seeing, and increased the number of revenue-producing company searches by an impressive 12%.

DON'T ASSUME USERS HAVE TIME ON THEIR HANDS

Hard-working decision-makers aren't likely to be idly scrolling through websites, so make their journey as seamlessly intuitive as possible. "If you don't visually engage them instantly and offer them a clear path to find what they want, they'll leave quickly," says KPMG Small Business Accounting's head of marketing, Dan Roche.

THINK ABOUT THE USER'S NEEDS

Underpinning any good marketing effort is a deep understanding of your customer – their needs, their frustrations, their painpoints and their expectations. "With knowledge of the different user types, their goals and the tasks they undertake, a website can consider the relevant user journeys and be optimised to help ensure a good, easy experience," says Matt.



GET TAGGING

Clever tagging – which you can do using Google Tag Manager – makes for consistent, seamless user journeys. "What it is, for those who don't know, is tagging content to solutions you provide, people who are related to that piece of content, as well as relevant case studies," says Kate Sinclair, partner, business development and marketing at LCP. "If, for example, the user comes into the site on one of our team's 'expert' pages, the same tagging works to give them a clear path through to the services that expert can provide, and the case studies and publications they've been involved in. Previously, this was all done manually – now it's automated, which has greatly enhanced UX."

MAP THE CUSTOMER JOURNEY

Building full, omnichannel customer journey maps through the entire lifetime is a must. "And this covers everything from first engagements to lead capture, purchase, post-purchase, product use, customer advocacy and renewal," says marketing consultant James Raffo. "With a good information architect and experience designer, the resulting customer experience will flow."

CHALLENGE YOURSELF TO REDUCE THE NUMBER OF PAGES ON YOUR SITE BY 50%

This is one that trips up many brands: content overload. Self-confessed content marketing nerd and Velocity co-founder Doug Kessler talks about the "content marketing deluge", which he urges us all to avoid at all costs. "Users expect a much more curated experience than in the past," says Kate, "and if you don't provide it they'll go elsewhere. When we recently redesigned our website, we worked hard to challenge ourselves and



pare back content, as well as providing excellent search tools and contact options to minimise drop-off."

THINK CAREFULLY ABOUT WORDING, PARTICULARLY WITH CTAS

If you wouldn't say it in real life (or IRL, as the kids would say), then don't use it on your website. Flo Bejgu, marketing director at Inbox Translation, takes umbrage with brands that use the word 'submit'. "When was the last time you woke up feeling like you really wanted to submit something?" he asks. "Exactly! Never. So why not use a word that actually explains what will happen when the user clicks on that button? If it's a quote form, how about: 'Get a quote'? If it's a contact form, what about: 'Send a message'?"

AVOID POP-UPS ON MOBILE PAGES

It goes without saying that every brand must pay attention to their site's usability for mobile users, but it's not just about text size and scrolling options. Pop-ups should be avoided at all costs, as Robert Brandl, founder and director of EmailToolTester.com, points out – these can dominate the screen, be difficult to close and ultimately send the user clicking off elsewhere.

SPEED UP PAGE LOADING TIMES

Poor loading times are one of the main reasons site visitors bounce out of your site, but there are lots of remedies for this, including compressing images through free tools like TinyPNG.com. "You can also use a Content Delivering Network (CDN), compress the site's code and remove large files like videos," says Robert. "Another benefit? You'll also climb Google's search rankings as a result."

MAKE THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN FRONT-END AND BACK-END DEVELOPMENT

Unless you have deep technical knowledge within your team, it's usually best to outsource any back-end, technical changes to your website. "But it's really important to retain control of front-end changes inhouse – such as creating new forms and templates," explains Dan. "This allows changes to campaigns to be made rapidly and cost effectively, which helps to improve results incrementally."

TAKE ADVANTAGE OF INSIGHT-GATHERING TOOLS LIKE HOTJAR AND USABILLA

Hotjar provides you with a heat map showing where visitors are clicking (or trying to click), allowing you to see where you can make changes to your page design in order to improve UX. For Simon Wissink, business development and strategic partner consultant at Sigma Usabilia's a super helpful tool for task-based testing: "It allows you to boost the quality and quantity of feedback you receive, and view, analyse and export real-time feedback."

CHECK FOR BROKEN LINKS

According to Ahrefs, only 2% of pages in top 10 Google rankings contain broken links (on average). "Links break all the time and this is okay," says Flo. "But what's not okay is not addressing the issue. It creates a poor user experience that can easily be corrected with a (free) tool like Xenu. Or if

you're lucky and you're using WordPress, Broken Link Checker will do the trick for you in no time."

DON'T PUT TOO MUCH EMPHASIS ON PRODUCTS AND FEATURES

A common mistake brands make is placing too much emphasis on products and product features, rather than telling and showing potential customers how your products or services solve their specific problem or reveal a new opportunity. "That said, it's also important to recognise that some people do arrive at your website quite well informed and are seeking deeper detail on a particular product," says James. "The way I like to see this solved is through offering both routes: 'Solutions' and 'Products'. You can then surface the most relevant content and experience progressively based on the customer's profile and behaviour."

DON'T ONLY USE .PDF DOCUMENTS

Web surfers, to use the parlance of our forefathers' times, don't tend to hang around. "Having that important case study on the website is fine, as long as users have the possibility to check it out in .html format," says Flo. "Sure, having it as a .pdf is good if they want to download it and go through it later. But what about those who want to read it right there right then? Most visitors want to access the content without the hassle of downloading a file and then opening it in an external programme. The solution: make it available both as .pdf and .html."

WEB ANALYTICS AREN'T ENOUGH ON THEIR OWN

For James, all brands should be looking to use enterprise-grade analytics across all digital touchpoints – not just websites, but mobile apps, email and social too. These include the pricier options (IBM Watson Analytics) as well as the more affordable (App Annie for mobile apps, which is free, and Sprinklr for social media). "And when it comes to measurement, make sure you're identifying clear marketing and website objectives and definitive KPIs, with a path to your core sources of revenue or cost efficiency," he says. "We used a value tree to understand the most important value drivers and their associated KPIs. Then be sure you can measure your KPIs with analytics tools."

There's nothing more grating than a lengthy sign-up form, which will put off even the keenest of prospects; try and reduce the number of fields to an absolute minimum

DON'T GO GAGA FOR GATED CONTENT

There's nothing more grating than a lengthy sign-up form, which will put off even the keenest of prospects; try and reduce the number of fields to an absolute minimum (do you really need to ask for first name and surname or will one singular field do?), and share enough of a teaser of whatever's being gated. Flo also tells us that tools like Clearbit can really help gather all the details needed.

ALWAYS PLUMP FOR INCLUSIVE DESIGN

Accessibility, or inclusive design as we like to call it, means making sites usable by everyone, irrespective of auditory, cognitive, physical, speech or visual impairment. "There are lots of ways to do this," Simon explains. "Use good descriptive ALT text for all images so visually-impaired users with screen readers can understand what images convey, add legible subtitles to video content, and make sure web pages appear and operate in predictable ways. And remember: inclusive design doesn't just benefit those with impairments; it helps improve the user experience for everyone."

DON'T FORGET TO DRIVE TRAFFIC TOWARDS YOUR SITE

It goes without saying that although some visitors will land at your site organically, others will need more of a push in the right direction. Investing in PR and SEO is vital, but also remember that if the final destination (your website) isn't up to scratch, all other efforts are essentially wasted.

NURTURE IT!

Your website needs to live and breathe and evolve in response to your changing customers. "This process should never end," says Will Morris, managing partner at Alchemy Digital, "because your business model and your website will change all the time. When the market you operate in changes, you need to be partnered with a web team who can work with you to react to that. Don't leave your website alone."

B2B BRANDS THAT HAVE GOT THEIR WEBSITES SPOT ON

HubSpot

To improve its homepage conversion, Hubspot used a variety of UX techniques to ensure user experience matched expectations. "These included raw data analysis, user testing, stakeholder and customer interviews as well as unsolicited feedback to ensure user experience matched expectations," explains Matt. "So while the website may not win any awards for spectacular visual design, the fact it serves its purpose and increases conversions would qualify it as being one of the best."

RS Components

These guys won a marketing award for their website's user-centric approach back in 2016. With millions of web visitors, its poor site search and product information was frustrating customers and significantly hindering sales, but by applying a UX approach they invested in significant user research, including customer feedback, online surveys and internal forums to identify the key issues that were affecting site performance. "The results for the site were exceeding their financial target by 42% in the first year and conversion growth year-on-year at a 4.5 year high," says Matt. "Their customer feedback also echoed the success of the financial results with positive feedback on the new features and functionality of the site."

Salesforce

Salesforce is a great example of a company that totally gets the need for content and the link to its overall brand promise. "It has an internal team dedicated to telling stories around customer success," says Peter. "It's not just about selling its product, but focusing on driving the B2B community, with its significant blog output."

InVision

This site's built around telling stories and articulating how better design is achieved through collaboration. "It uses a lot of video case study material to show, not tell," says Peter. "Given the product is aimed at the design and UX community the production value is always high."

HOW KPMG'S WEBSITE REDESIGN LED TO A 400% WEEK-ON-WEEK UPLIFT IN QUALITY INBOUND LEADS

Dan Roche, head of marketing at KPMG Small Business Accounting, is – quite rightly – pretty proud of his brand's newly-updated website, which saw his team walk away with 'Best website' at last year's B2B Marketing Awards.

The gold trophy serves as a well-deserved pat on the back for a job well done, and sits proudly in Dan's team's trophy cabinet. So how did they do it and what tips does he have for other web-focused marketers?

"Back in 2015 we carried out some research that showed British small business owners believed KPMG was too expensive, too detached and had very little interest in working with them – which gave us cause for concern," explains Dan. "And the website redesign came about as a direct result of this."

So, with an urgent need to change perceptions, Dan and his team set about drawing up a website strategy. It involved:

- Implementing striking visuals of small business owners at work to make it clear that the service was for them.
- Communicating through narrative and stories the fact that KPMG helps improve business performance while making business leaders' lives easier.
- Providing downloadable content and an abundance of resources.
- Offering up client stories (via video, case studies and pop quizzes).
- A highly visual and easy-to-grasp pricing model.

"The site was all about positioning, establishing credibility, and then converting visits to leads," says Dan. "And the figures now speak for themselves: the new website has been pivotal in converting interest in KPMG's new offering to a 400% week-on-week uplift in inbound quality leads, which delivered a 120% week-on-week increase in sales."


SOMETHING



Does getting your customers to do your marketing for you sound too good to be true? **Danielle Howe** finds out how clever B2B brands are stepping back and letting their customers do the hard work for them

As humans, we're hardwired to trust other humans over faceless corporations and brands. And let's be honest, marketing isn't renowned for its honesty and transparency (although it's actually a certain American president who's taken this year's prize for bending the truth). So who can your prospects really trust, if it's not your brand and all that content you've worked so hard to produce?

The answer is startlingly simple: your own customers. Not only can they be a trusted source of recommendations and referrals, but they can also be an invaluable source of feedback for product development. Anneke Langhorst, marketing manager at Bynder, nicely sums up why customer advocacy is so critical: "Today, customer references are more important than ever. People don't rely on what brands tell them; they rely on what a brands' clients tell them."

The immediate rewards of nurturing customer advocates are clear: get your customers to do your marketing and sales for you, and they'll be more persuasive than your best piece of content marketing or your most convincing sales person. And to add to this, an advocate is more likely to be loyal themselves; after all, if they're prepared to recommend you to their peers, they're unlikely to go looking elsewhere.

TIME TO ADD TO YOUR TECH STACK?

Let's not kid ourselves – customer advocacy is nothing new. But it's one of the many old-school B2B marketing techniques experiencing a resurgence right now. And why might this be? Yet again, the answer lies with technology. Eagle-eyed tech entrepreneurs have seen an opportunity

and grasped it with both hands; companies including Influitive, Advocately, Promoto and Zuberance (among others) have all developed ways for brands to build customer advocacy programmes and advocate communities, with much of the focus on gamification.

And B2B brands themselves are also realising how much potential revenue they're leaving on the table by failing to cultivate customer advocates. A case in point is what happened at fintech giant Finastra (formerly Misys), as CMO Martin Häring explains. "After tracking the reasons why sales weren't able to close deals, we recognised we were losing hundreds of millions of dollars just because we didn't have customer references." says Martin. "And if you explain, in numbers, how much you're losing as a result of a lack of customer advocacy, it'll certainly lead to raised eyebrows from the CEO."

FROM LOYALTY TO ADVOCACY AND BACK AGAIN

Retaining customers is one thing, but encouraging them to shout about you is quite another. So what's the real difference between loyalty and advocacy? As Fraser Stark, VP EMEA at Influitive, puts it: "Loyalty is providing incentives and motivation to your customers so they keep spending money with you. Advocacy is about providing motivation and incentives to your customers to help you find your next set of customers and grow your business."

Jamie Mackenzie, director of marketing at Sodexo Benefits and Rewards UK, believes many businesses are failing to focus enough on loyalty, let alone advocacy: "A number of B2B brands struggle to achieve good levels of customer loyalty, which is the first step. Once customers are loyal, you're in a great position to turn them into advocates, but there's still more focus on acquisition over retention in B2B."

But while paying more attention to retention – and pushing advocacy – is commendable, it's important not to fall into the trap of focusing on these in isolation. Martin believes that driving loyalty should be part of a much bigger conversation within the business. "I think advocacy is the output of really good loyalty," he says. "But many companies are looking at both of these in a very isolated way. Advocacy should be the last element of a much longer cycle – it's the outcome of a good user experience, not the starting point."

If you explain, in numbers, how much you're losing as a result of a lack of customer advocacy, it'll certainly lead to raised eyebrows from the CEO

PUSHING THE RIGHT BUTTONS

The fact that you'll need to provide your customers with an exceptional experience in order to turn them into advocates almost goes without saying. You can't expect them to rave about you if they're not satisfied with the product or service you're providing. But what is it that drives a satisfied customer to recommend your business? Adrian McCallum, senior director at Kantar Millward Brown Corporate, believes it relates to the reason why advocacy is so valuable in B2B. "True advocacy is worth much more within B2B because there's more at stake. People risk their professional credibility when they make a recommendation, so it's rarely done flippantly."

So why bother, when there's so much at stake? Platforms like Influitive have found that gamification is an effective way of driving advocacy, as it pushes particular psychological buttons. "Our platform has things that make it fun and push psychological buttons that people have, for example the desire to belong to a group, in order to drive behaviour," explains Fraser. "Every activity carried out by an advocate earns them points, which can later be exchanged for anything from Amazon gift cards to charitable donations."

Dig a little deeper, however, and it's clear that rewarding customers in this way won't be enough on its own to drive customer advocacy. Martin feels strongly that loyalty and advocacy have to go beyond quick rewards. "Money will not drive customer centricity. It's not what customer centricity is about – it's about trust, integrity, experience, leveraging ideas and driving innovation together."

Anneke echoes Martin's thoughts: "Customers become advocates because they feel that someone listens to them, understands them, and tries everything to support them. By doing this you can build up a trustful and close relationship. If you help them, they'll be more than happy to support you."

CREATING A CUSTOMER COMMUNITY

The shape advocacy can take ranges from the most basic (think testimonials) to vibrant customer communities that provide valuable feedback to the organisation.



The key to unlocking an even more powerful customer community is by focusing on those who aren't (yet) your biggest fans

"In many cases, a company's efforts to organise and drive advocacy are minimal," says Fraser. "There's a 'spectrum' of activity when it comes to advocacy: some of it just happens, then you can facilitate it in simple ways, and then you can create an organised community. Eventually this community can have visibility over the entire organisation, and can help to solve strategic problems, until the customers are at the centre of everything you do."

And it's the brands that have created these organic, two-way advocate communities that are proving the most successful. Forget about Amazon vouchers and branded swag; from the customer/advocate's perspective, being part of a community not only allows them to find out how their peers are using your service or product, but also provides them with the opportunity to provide feedback on what they appreciate or feel could be improved, in the knowledge that their voice will be heard and taken into account.

DON'T IGNORE YOUR DETRACTORS

So, how do you begin to create your own customer community full of advocates singing your praises? Step number one is to speak – and listen – to them. "It sounds really simple, but it's effective – talk and listen to your customers," says Jamie. "If a B2B customer can see you're listening and evolving the service for them, not only will they be loyal, but they'll also become advocates."

And never forget your detractors. The key to unlocking an even more powerful customer community is by focusing on those who aren't (yet) your biggest fans. "Without any official channels to converse with you, customers tend to complain," according to Fraser. "But you can give your less satisfied customers more voice within your company. By inviting someone who's perhaps not the happiest customer into your advocacy programme, you can have an open dialogue about why they're not happy, and help them on the path to becoming a satisfied customer."

So there we have it. You've almost certainly got customers who love you and what you do, and it's time to start thinking about how you can get them to sing your praises. Just remember: successful advocacy is built on exceptional customer experiences and two-way conversations. Start listening to your customers and they'll no doubt be ready to return the favour – and you'll be able to put your feet up in no time.

THREE STEPS TO CREATING YOUR OWN ADVOCATE COMMUNITY

Do a quick search of #HagerGang on Twitter and you'll see how powerful Hager's customer community really is. This supplier of products and services for electrical installations founded the community when one of its customers coined the phrase on Twitter, and it's now blossomed into an award-winning community that has helped to recover stolen goods and put customers in touch with Hager products in their area. We spoke to content marketing executive David Evans to find out his tips on how to create your own advocate community.

1. **Have conversations with your customers**

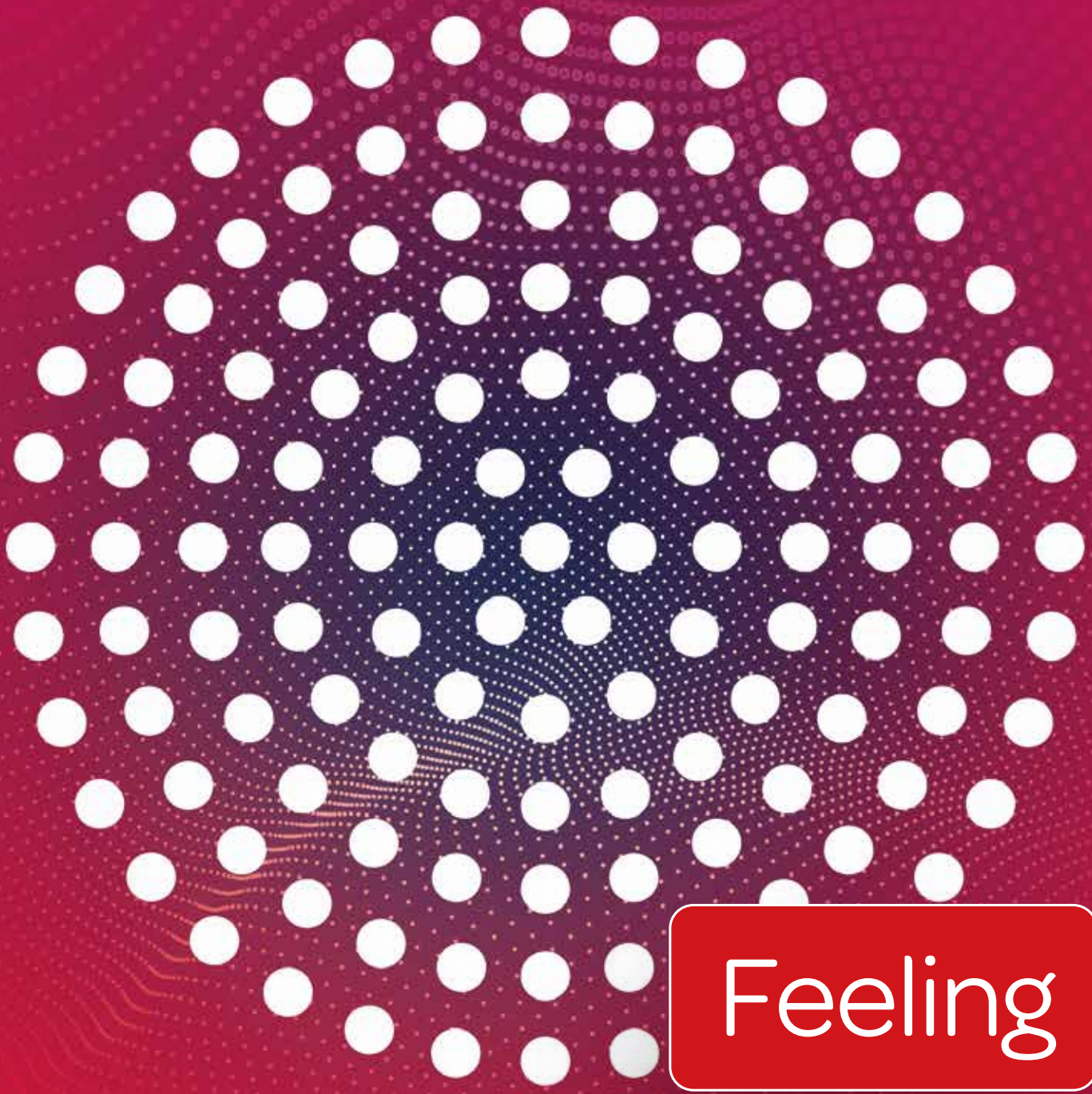
   Speak to them about what drives them, their challenges and ambitions, and shape your content around that. Show how you can relate, understand and empathise.

2. **Think about who's sharing your content**

   You might have customer advocates without realising it. Look through your data and see who's sharing your content, who's replying to your tweets and who's opening your newsletters. These customers are already promoting your work; it's time to find out who they are and introduce them to your community.

3. **Be an advocate**

   A great way of getting your customers engaged with your community is by being an advocate of theirs. Ask them to write a piece for your website or even a review of one of your products. Promote their skills and knowledge to your audience. In turn, these advocates will continue to shout out about your business.



Feeling beats thinking



The rise of Post-Modern Marketing and what it means for you

You always sensed that the emotional factor in decision making was strong, but have you thought about what that means for B2B marketing today? Technology and data are combining with a resurgence in bold, inspiring creative experiences to drive a new, post-modern era. For an inside perspective on this extraordinary transformation, get chapter one of 'Paradox: Feeling Machines and the Rise Post-Modern Marketing' now.

steinias.com/thinking

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#PostModernB2B



I WANT TO HOLD YOUR HAND

The coaching and mentoring process can have some unexpected benefits. **Michael King** does some digging to find out how both approaches have delivered big results for agency and client-side marketers alike



MENTOR: KATRYNA TURNER
Board member, Business Marketing Club

AN EXTERNAL MENTOR FOCUSED ON THE FUTURE

As a BMC board member, Katryna has played a key role in setting up its mentoring scheme. Here, she provides details of her specific partnership with her mentee, Tamasin Manwaring, head of MBD and practice management, litigation, arbitration and employment at Hogan Lovells

The idea behind our mentoring programme at the BMC is… for mentors to share their marketing experiences with mentees. We want mentees to prepare for difficult situations and be comfortable taking calculated risks.

Tamasin and I first met 10 years ago when I hired her to work in my team at Ernst & Young… and at that time, Tamasin was very new to marketing. I became a mentor to help her with all the basic skills she needed to deliver projects in a partnership. We ran marketing initiatives to help EY move from auditing to consulting for large telecoms companies and also worked together at global law firm Freshfields, running large-scale campaigns. We've also worked on strategic planning, objective setting and delivering tactical marketing projects.

Our mentorship was external and this worked for me because… the distance puts a lot more onus on Tamasin to describe an issue very clearly to me. Time away from day-to-day work and talking something through has sometimes been enough to throw up an answer, even before I've actually said anything.

A mentorship is essential for overall professional development… and even better if you can work with more than one mentor at different stages of your career because it gives you the opportunity to address different challenges as your career progresses. When I first started working with Tamasin, I helped her draft press releases and as she took on more responsibility I helped her to persuade internal clients to do things differently.

With Tamasin, mentoring has taken on a broad meaning… because over the years we've talked about work, career aspirations, training and work/life balance. We know each other well and trust each other.

My advice for mentees looking to find a mentor is… to be thoughtful about what you want advice about – and to be as specific as possible. Also, be ready to do the heavy lifting in terms of sorting out times and places to meet.

Time out away from day-to-day work and talking something through has sometimes been enough to throw up an answer, even before I've said anything



MENTEE: TAMASIN MANWARING
Head of MBD and practice management, litigation, arbitration and employment, Hogan Lovells

A MENTEE LOOKING TO BROADEN HER SKILLS

Here, Tamasin discusses how her mentoring partnership worked, the unexpected benefits, and her advice for other marketers wanting to find a mentor

The opportunity to be mentored arose… when Katryna and I worked together at EY. It was my first job in a dedicated marketing role and Katryna helped me develop my marketing skills, and most importantly, realise the value of taking ownership of my career and professional development.

Having an external mentor means… their views aren't influenced by other personalities or organisational dynamics. And for the mentee, it's an opportunity to hear about how things are done in other businesses or sectors.

My mentorship has had some unexpected benefits… and I feel we've become great friends. Being mentored has also helped me develop my leadership and team-building skills. I find that organisations with strong mentoring programmes have better cultures because when teams can see their leaders are committed to investing in the development of talented employees, they can see that the firm values its people.

When looking for a mentor, it has to be someone… you respect, trust and most importantly, who wants to mentor. There's no point in having someone who wants to tick a box on their appraisal; it needs to be a mutually beneficial relationship.



COACH: STEPHANIE MORGAN
Director of learning solutions, Bray Leino Learning

A LEADER WITH AN EDGE

Stephanie became a coach to support people with their personal and professional development. Here, she tells us how coaching was a natural next step for her, and how it's helped develop her wider team

Coaching is part of my internal leadership role... and I worked closely with Bray Leino Learning's head of marketing Rachel Matthews internally to help her develop within her remote management role.

Coaching is deeply rewarding because... so many relationships in life are transactional, and it's good to have a deeper relationship and really get to know someone. Listening is a key skill in coaching and it took me quite a long time to master the ability to listen to what's actually said (and what's not being said) to hear the real themes emerge.

There are lots of coaching models you can use... I used the 'Grow' method in the beginning, but I find my approach is more intuitive now. The 'G' in the GROW model stands for 'grow', which is establishing outcomes and objectives. The 'r' stands for 'realities', which is about understanding the situation and its causes. This is followed by 'options', where the coach and coachee begin to generate solutions to problems. And the final stage is 'way forward' or 'will', which is about agreeing on a course of action and committing to the said action.

I do adopt a mentoring approach with some people... and you sometimes need to check what they want to achieve to know what the best option is, but coaching works when the other person is able to explore different perspectives and find a solution to their own problems. For example, if they're struggling with dissatisfied customers, I'll ask them what they think they could do about it and they usually have some ideas. I always keep front of mind that they do know what to do, and it's my job to help them discover or uncover those ideas.

Sometimes you have to explain your coachee's behaviour... which may involve telling them they say one thing yet do another, and asking them if there's a specific reason for this. Rachel said she would delegate more often, but didn't follow through initially as she kept thinking: 'I'll talk it through with the team when I go to the office', as opposed to organising a call or Skype meeting to discuss how best to delegate tasks.

Personally, coaching has made me consider being coached myself... and I'd say the skills required are the fundamental skills of any leader. If you can't ask good questions and listen without judging your coachee's answers, you'll always have more superficial relationships.

If you're serious about being a coach... then ractical development is the best place to start, but there's lots of information online to help you get an idea of what's involved. I'd recommend aspiring coaches read *Time to Think: Listening to Ignite the Human Mind* by Nancy Kline, as it provides useful advice about developing listening skills, asking great questions and giving the other person the space and time to think.

It took me quite a long time to master the ability to really listen, not just to what's actually said, but what's not said, and to hear the real themes emerge



COACHEE: RACHEL MATTHEWS
Head of marketing, Bray Leino Learning

A LESSON IN REMOTE MANAGEMENT

Rachel's coaching opportunity came about as a result of not having any remote management experience, despite having managed marketing teams internally in the past. Here, she tells us how Stephanie was able to help her provide stability when managing a remote team

I opted for coaching as opposed to mentoring because... I wanted to be able to solve problems myself; I learn so much better this way. I'm independent and like to overcome challenges, but I'm also self-aware enough to know that I certainly don't know the answers to every question or problem.

My specific coaching experience was internal... which works well because it allows me to expand my professional development with someone who understands and experiences the challenges I face on a daily basis.

When looking for a coach, it's important to look for... someone you can trust. There are moments when you'll have made the wrong decision and will have to deal with the consequences – and having someone you can trust, with both your feelings and decision-making, is key.

I opted for coaching as opposed to mentoring because I wanted to be able to solve problems myself; I learn so much better this way

The experience has enabled me to challenge people... in a much more confident way. Mentoring has also helped me to get my point across with much more conviction.



MENTOR: NICOLA PESTELL
Agency director, Really B2B

FILLING AN EDUCATIONAL GAP

Really B2B has always had a professional training programme in place but realised that the next generation needed more than just professional skills – they needed to improve their interpersonal skills. This led to the idea of internal mentoring. Nicola discusses her process

This internal mentorship came about… as a result of wanting to provide an opportunity for our employees to learn from some of their most experienced and knowledgeable colleagues. We realised that we were great at providing an induction programme and 'on the job' training but we were missing out on something crucial, which was helping the team achieve their goals both personally and professionally.

As part of our induction process, we identify employees… who could benefit from mentoring. The most success we have is with our account executives, who are often fresh to the working environment and looking to establish their professional and personal goals.

I'd recommend becoming a mentor, simply because… it's not just about 'on the job' training anymore; it's about life skills. Mentoring not only helps with employee engagement but makes a big difference to employee retention. For example, our mindset of not wanting to be seen as just an 'employer' means that our employees become more engaged with the business because they know that we're investing in their future.

My advice for people wanting to become a mentor is… to remember that not everyone can visualise their goals immediately – it can take time, so patience is vital. When working with Jessica, I'd have to give her the space she needed to speak up in meetings, as well as avoid becoming frustrated if she wasn't making consistent progress. People need time to develop at their own pace.

Mentoring not only helps with employee engagement but it makes a big difference to employee retention



MENTEE: JESSICA COOPER
Marketing technology specialist, Really B2B

A LESSON ON HOW TO BE BOLD

Jessica struggled with a lack of self-confidence at work as a result of low self-esteem. Here, she discusses how the mentorship helped her tackle this problem, as well as other aspects mentees should consider when selecting a mentor

Internal mentoring sessions were arranged to… help me identify why I felt 'low' in confidence and how we could improve it – as well as the impact this had on achieving my personal goals.

My mentor helped me face the current issues I had with my confidence… as I often found it difficult to be in situations that would require me to participate with colleagues, especially in meetings. Nicola supported me as I worked through my goals and explored how increasing my confidence would allow me to be more assertive and express my ideas more clearly.

Personally, I've always over-thought the littlest things… and the sessions with Nicola helped me realise I didn't need to be like that. It also helped me map out my personal goals.

My advice for people looking for a mentor is… to work with someone who has experience dealing with the problems that are relevant to your situation. Working with someone who understands your personal issues – whether that's low self-confidence or poor time management – will help to build a stronger working relationship.

WHAT'S MISSING FROM YOUR DEMAND GENERATION MASTERPLAN?

At a recent roundtable held in association with LinkedIn, **Jess Pike** discovered the biggest demand gen bugbears out there – and, crucially, how to overcome them



How much simpler would life be if the much-talked-about funnel was a giant flume, down which prospects could slide, Borrower-like, until they reached the watery depths below? Minimal effort from marketing (a little nudge over the top should do it) and your fun-loving prospects would be hurtling happily into a tranquil pool of advocacy and retention.

Sadly, the reality of the funnel is quite different, and the various challenges surrounding demand generation are as complex and multifarious as ever. So how can you ensure your demand gen approach is as effective as possible from the top of the funnel right down to the sharp end? Here are the key findings from a recent roundtable, held in association with LinkedIn.



What works for one prospect won't necessarily work for another

Direct mail might be pooh-poohed for being outdated and unoriginal in some circles, but it's proven to work well in others. We may even be witnessing the post-modern revival of the calendar as a physical piece of DM – collateral that some customers (believe it or not) really value.

Admittedly, lots of brands rely on (and increasingly invest in) their digital channels, but marketers should resist making assumptions about what'll work on each channel: one attendee presumed that a piece of thought leadership content would be better received on one channel, and that a career advice tips article would work best on another; the opposite was found to be true. This, in turn, underscores the importance of rigorous A/B testing (even when the intuitive 'right' answer seems self-evident to everyone involved).

So what can you do?

Consider thinking outside the box with the channels you're using. If you're not getting anywhere with email, look at whether a piece of clever DM or a printed version of a whitepaper executive summary could do a better job of boosting brand awareness.

It's not about channels; it's about overall marketing objectives and target demographics

One thing every attendee agreed on is that too many marketers focus myopically on individual channels without looking at the wider campaign picture. Knowing what your message will look like on Instagram means very little if you're unsure how Instagram fits into your campaign as a whole.

So what can you do?

Take a holistic approach and make sure you're dedicating enough time to campaign planning and persona-building. Can everyone in your team sum up your marketing strategy in one sentence? Are they all aware of the wider drivers of the business? This will help ensure campaigns are tied to business objectives rather than channels.

Knowing what your message will look like on Instagram means very little if you're unsure how Instagram fits into your campaign as a whole

Working out what you need to do at different price points is a perennial struggle

At lower price points, the focus is often on engaging your customers online and pushing them towards an online purchase (thus freeing up your sales team to focus on prospects with a greater propensity to spend). Post-purchase, the focus is likely to be cross-sell, up-sell, and retention, particularly for brands operating in the SaaS space – but during both phases, marketers will generally opt for scalable online channels – such as email – to grow their accounts. Reducing the amount of human (salesperson or otherwise) time spent interacting with the customer is often the aim.

At higher price points, it's all about making the big sale (which often takes time) and creating demand for second and third purchases – the golden goose of cross-selling. With account-based

What so many marketers forget is that you need to be providing content for current customers as much as prospects





marketing, there's definitely a requirement for a wider education piece around how lengthy the process can be: as one attendee pointed out, making a key account sale in her business can take anything from a year to 18 months. There's also the question of proving the influence that marketing has in the context of ABM; too often a strong-willed salesperson will lay claim to a win despite the fact marketing has been interacting and engaging with the account for many months.

When it comes to ABM, it's also worth remembering that external factors will always influence your marketing efforts. Say you work for a large enterprise firm looking to sign off on a big deal with a bank. What happens if the bank in question gets smacked with a £1 billion fine? Months of hard work and careful relationship-building could end up being completely wasted, and there'll be little you can do about it.

So what can you do?

Framing expectations is crucial here: be realistic about what you can achieve and emphasise external factors that might impact your end result. If you do so proactively (.e. before metrics are in and being shared) rather than reactively, you're more likely to get senior board members on side.

Generating content is a whole new world for some brands...

...while for others, cutting through the noise is the biggest challenge. What so many marketers forget, pointed out one attendee, is that you need to be providing content for current customers as much as prospects: existing customers are just as important in retention terms, and great content can be a clever way to position yourself as a reliable, trusted authority on a particular subject, enabling your end customers to squeeze maximum value from the products/services they've bought from you. Content areas that seem to be widely well-received include pieces on upcoming changes and future trends (as unoriginal as prediction pieces are, they do work), and insights on your prospect or customer's customers: anything that sheds light on their behaviour will always go down well.

So what can you do?

Great content's about answering the questions being asked by existing customers and prospects. Start by looking at their painpoints and seeing how you can address those through your content. And don't forget to keep an eye on the competition's content via social channels: this'll help provide inspiration too.

Aligning marketing's objectives to those of the wider team is crucial

Several attendees talked about the challenges they sometimes face getting their colleagues in sales to jump on leads speedily. There were also murmurs of discontent around how to communicate with other internal stakeholders. When it

comes to the wider business, using the right language is crucial: in one attendee's business, 'demand generation' and 'lead generation' aren't terms that are used outside the marketing department.

So what can you do?

When interacting with internal stakeholders, focus on the objectives they're trying to achieve. This should keep you focused on speaking in a language they understand and avoid the interminable marketing jargon that'll end up just turning them off.

Demand generation isn't just about the here and now

And this is something you should bear in mind when seeking budget sign-off from the c-suite: outline which strategies you think will deliver growth in the short term, but keep an eye on the horizon too (think five and 10 years ahead).

So what can you do?

Delivering ROI will always be a big focus for those board-level budget holders, which is obviously fair. But ensure you're also emphasising the importance of long-term strategy and long-term growth. A focus on the here and now won't necessarily drive the ROI they're looking for in the months and years to come. Also, remember that having an understanding of wider business issues – such as upcoming GDPR legislation – will also help boost your standing and encourage your board to see you as having a truly holistic and business-focused approach.

Data segmentation is a persistent bugbear for marketers

Most marketers struggle with the fact that their data is scattered across multiple disparate platforms, systems and reporting tools – and that there's often no single version of the truth to rely on. The consequences of poor system integration can be far-reaching: firstly, it means data sets are often unreliable, and secondly, it can force marketers to do much of the grunt work themselves when it comes to reporting.

So what can you do?

Think about the data you really need: is propensity to spend or a telephone number actually more useful than location and email? And consider how AI-driven tools might fit into your overall marketing strategy: one of their main benefits is the associated efficiency savings – meaning less time spent crunching data and more time focusing on what really matters.

The age-old question of what to measure (and where) is still causing headaches in marketing departments

MQLs, SQLs and conversion rates are common metrics used to measure marketing's success (or otherwise), but are they always the right measures? Having the wrong metrics in place can often drive the wrong marketing behaviours. That said, one attendee decided early on in a new role to give her team sales targets to work to; although these have since been disbanded, they did help the department keep their eye on the (revenue) prize. And don't forget the metrics your agencies are working to: one attendee revealed that she has a gainshare agreement in place around demand generation, whereby the agency wins a cut of any profit made.

So what can you do?

It's crucial to ask: 'So what?' of any metrics you're collecting or considering as measures. What does this figure actually mean to the business? How's it going to help you drive improvement? Remember, what gets measured, gets managed – so it's important that your metrics are focused on the goals you want to achieve.

The value of risk-taking is sometimes forgotten in B2B...

With so many disparate channels and such large volumes of data to contend with, campaigns are sometimes designed around channels and metrics rather than overall marketing objectives. But while data definitely equals power in marketing, marketers (and their c-suite stakeholders) should remember that granular metrics, despite being inherently useful in the world of marketing, shouldn't be the sole focus: a tunnel-vision approach can inhibit innovation and creativity, and deter you from taking intelligent risks that lead to brilliant marketing campaigns.

So what can you do?

A major inhibitor of innovation and creativity is the fear of failure. If marketers are going to take more risks, they'll need the freedom to fail (on occasion). Consider the culture of your organisation – is the penalty for failure greater than the reward for creativity? These need to be balanced if marketers are to become less cautious.

A tunnel-vision approach can inhibit innovation and creativity, and deter you from taking intelligent risks

ATTENDEES

Participating at April's roundtable, held in association with LinkedIn, were:

Gonzalo Garcia Villanueva, international marketing director, financial products, Bloomberg

Nico Lutkins, marketing director EMEA, LinkedIn

Wayne Smart, head of marketing (Europe), Travelers

Keisha Baker, head of marketing, international, Ve Interactive

Kath Dewar, marketing director, IRIS Software

Antonia Wade, head of global marketing, Thomson Reuters

Kate Sinclair, partner, business development and marketing, Lane Clark & Peacock

Doug Marshall, head of marketing, Wilmington PLC

The discussion was moderated by **Jess Pike,** head of content, B2B Marketing.

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Copywriting

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Services: Copywriting
Industry expertise: Industrial, manufacturing and engineering, IT, telecomms, professional services
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Oracle Social
Services: Digital marketing, marketing services and technology, social media
Industry expertise: IT, telecomms, leisure and entertainment, media, publishing, marketing, public sector, retail and wholesale
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Industry expertise: Business services, financial services, IT, telecomms, professional services
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Industry expertise: Professional services
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Services: CRM, customer insight, digital marketing, ecommerce, marketing automation
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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

Concep
Services: Email marketing, events and exhibition services, marcomms, marketing services and technology, mobile
Industry expertise: Financial services, industrial, manufacturing, engineering, professional services, property and construction
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Pure360
Services: Digital marketing, direct marketing, email marketing, marcomms, marketing, technology services
Industry expertise: Business services, IT, telecomms, marketing, media, publishing
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Event and exhibition services

Cvent
Services: Email marketing, event and exhibition services, marketing automation, marketing services and technology
Industry expertise: Automotive, financial services, business services, IT, telecomms, professional services
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George P Johnson
Services: Events and exhibition services, marketing communications
Industry expertise: Automotive, financial, IT, telecomms
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Information technology

BrightTarget
Services: Customer insight, data analytics, data management
Industry expertise: IT, telecomms
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ClearPeople
Services: Affiliate marketing, business development, website development
Industry expertise: Business services
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Dun & Bradstreet
Services: Business development, customer insight, data analytics, marketing services, tecahnology
Industry expertise: IT, telecomms
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LinkedIn
Services: Advertising, branding, content marketing, demand generation, lead generation, marketing services and technology
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Industry expertise: Business services, IT, telecomms, industrial, manufacturing and engineering, media, publishing, marketing
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Insight

Decibel Insight
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Integrated marketing

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Stein IAS

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Digital Radish

Services: Content marketing, design, digital marketing, direct marketing, lead generation, marcomms
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MOI Global

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Industry expertise: IT, telecomms
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The Marketing Practice

Services: Demand generation, lead generation, sales and marketing integration, marcomms
Industry expertise: Business and financial services, IT, telecomms, media, publishing, marketing
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Lead generation

Lead Forensics

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DirectionGroup

Services: Branding, digital marketing, email marketing, lead generation, marcomms
Industry expertise: Business services, financial services, IT, telecomms
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Octopus Group

Services: Content marketing, marcomms, PR, social media
Industry expertise: Financial services, IT, telecomms, media, publishing, marketing
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Torpedo

Services: Branding, digital marketing, design, lead generation, marcomms, video, apps, websites, content
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Really B2B

Services: Digital marketing, direct marketing, lead generation, social media services
Industry expertise: Business services, industrial, manufacturing, engineering, IT, telecomms
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Earnest

Services: Branding, digital marketing, direct marketing, lead generation, marcomms
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OgilvyOne Business Services

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Services: Branding, content marketing, digital marketing, direct marketing, lead generation, website development, media, telemarketing, web design
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Marcomms

Brands2Life

Services: Content marketing, digital marketing, marcomms, online video, PR, web design
Industry expertise: Business services, IT, telecomms, industrial, manufacturing, engineering, professional services, property and construction, public sector
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Gravity

Services: Branding, digital marketing, marcomms, PR
Industry expertise: Automotive, business services, financial services, industrial, engineering, IT, telecomms, public sector
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Stickyeyes

Services: Content marketing, digital marketing, marcomms, online video, SEO/SEM, web analytics
Industry expertise: Media, publishing, marketing
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Bray Leino

Services: Branding, events and exhibition services, marcomms, media buying, mobile, web design
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Kingpin

Services: Advertising, digital marketing, lead generation, marcomms, media buying, telemarketing
Industry expertise: IT, telecomms
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The Crocodile

Services: Demand generation, digital marketing, direct marketing, marcomms, marketing automation, PR, web design
Industry expertise: Automotive, financial services, industrial, IT, telecomms, pharmaceuticals
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Market research

B2B International

Services: Branding, customer insight, market research
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Breaking Blue

Services: Branding, customer insight, data analytics, data management, market research
Industry expertise: Automotive, business services, financial services, IT, telecomms, property and construction, public sector, retail and wholesale
b2bmarketing.net/breaking-blue

Circle Research

Services: Customer insight, market research
Industry expertise: Business services, financial services, IT, telecomms, media, manufacturing, professional services, property, retail
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GfK

Services: Customer insight, data analytics, market research
Industry expertise: Business services, financial services, industrial, manufacturing, engineering, IT, telecomms, professional services
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Harris Interactive

Services: Branding, customer insight, data analytics, market research, social media
Industry expertise: Business and financial services, IT, telecomms, media, publishing, marketing
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Metro Research

Services: Content marketing, customer insight, data analytics, market research
Industry expertise: Business services, financial services, IT, telecomms, media, publishing, marketing, professional services
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Marketing automation

Apteco

Services: Customer insight, data analytics, direct marketing, marcomms, marketing services/technology, marketing automation
Industry expertise: Automotive, business services, financial services, media, publishing, marketing, leisure and entertainment, retail and wholesale
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CRM Technologies

Services: Content marketing, data management, demand generation, digital marketing, marketing automation, marketing services, technology
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dotmailer

Services: Digital marketing, email marketing, marcomms, marketing automation and services, technology
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Services: Digital marketing, ecommerce, mobile, marketing automation, web analytics
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Marketo

Services: Marketing automation, social media
Industry expertise: Marketing, media, pharmaceuticals, publishing, IT, telecomms
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Oracle Marketing Cloud

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

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-ibm-company

SuccessFlow

Services: Content marketing, design, digital marketing, marketing automation, social media
Industry expertise: Financial services, IT, telecomms
b2bmarketing.net/successflow

Marketing services/technology

Adobe Marketing Cloud

Services: Digital marketing, ecommerce, email marketing services, technology, web analytics
Industry expertise: IT, telecomms, media, publishing, marketing
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Opinion Matters

Services: Business development, customer insight, lead generation, market research, PR, data management
Industry expertise: Business services, financial services, IT, telecomms, media, publishing, marketing, pharmaceuticals, professional services
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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 Productions

Services: Advertising, content marketing, digital marketing, lead generation, marcomms, online video
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Public relations

Bite
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CubanEight
Services: Content and digital marketing, event/exhibition services, marcomms, online video, PR
Industry expertise: IT, telecomms, media, publishing, marketing, professional services, property, construction, public sector, retail, wholesale
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Mexia Communications
Services: Content marketing, event and exhibition services, marcomms, PR, social media services
Industry expertise: Business services, health and beauty, IT, telecomms, media, publishing, marketing, property and construction
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Speed Communications
Services: PR, content marketing, marcomms, social media
Industry expertise: Automotive, business services, financial services, industrial, manufacturing, engineering, professional services, public sector
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Social media

Hootsuite
Services: Digital marketing, marketing communications, marketing services technology, social media services, web analytics
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Telemarketing

GCL Direct
Services: Data cleansing, demand generation, direct marketing, lead generation, list brokers, telemarketing
Industry expertise: Business services, IT, telecomms, media, publishing, marketing
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MarketMakers
Services: Appointment setting, business development, data cleansing, lead generation, market research, telemarketing
Industry expertise: Automotive, business services, financial services, industrial, manufacturing, engineering, IT, telecomms, professional services
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The Telemarketing Company
Services: Appointment setting, business development, data, demand generation, lead generation, telemarketing
Industry expertise: Business services, financial services, industrial, manufacturing, IT, telecomms, pharmaceuticals
b2bmarketing.net/telemarketing-company

Web analytics

Google
Services: Marketing services, technology, online video, web analytics
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WHY THE TIME IS RIGHT FOR ABM



Account-based marketing is an idea whose time has come, and whether you're a seasoned practitioner or just starting out on your ABM journey, our annual conference will feature insights for everyone

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

Every year, the team at B2B Marketing puts on one event designed to capture the zeitgeist of our industry. For this event, we pick one issue which, more than any other, has stood out and captured the imaginations of B2B marketers at all levels and across the industry. In previous years, we've covered content marketing, emotional engagement, customer centricity and most recently CX (or customer experience). This year, more than any before, it was a pretty simple choice: ABM, or account-based marketing.

We're absolutely not pretending that ABM is anything new: it's actually been around in one form or another for many years. But over the past couple of years, it has attracted enough attention, generated enough momentum and galvanised enough interest for us to say with confidence that it's an idea whose time has come. It's gone from something with relatively niche appeal within a segment of the tech sector, to something which is resonant across all sectors and industries.

So the time has come for us to take it to a bigger stage – a full day to explore what it means, how it works, how to do it, how to get it right, and what you need to achieve that. And that's what we'll be doing at our annual B2B Marketing conference, which takes place in November at County Hall in London. But beyond that, we'll also be looking to take the whole ABM discussion forward – we'll be unveiling a benchmark and a methodology for marketers to understand their ABM journey, how they compare with others and what steps they'll need to take to reach the next level. Based on our own inhouse research following two years of offering ABM training to B2B marketers, plus discussions with senior practitioners on the topic, we believe this simple and highly usable tool will be a significant asset to those struggling to plot their journey to ABM success, or accelerate the speed of deployment.

We'll be unveiling a benchmark and a methodology for marketers to understand their ABM journey

This conference is designed to provide a whole new level of detail on ABM, and a total immersion in the topic – if you're just beginning on your ABM journey (as most people are) or if you're a seasoned ABM campaigner, we promise you a full and compelling day of insight and inspiration, plus a wealth of expert speakers covering all aspects of this topic.

If that weren't enough, we're also going to come at ABM from a new angle – embracing the concept of 'account-based everything', which encompasses sales and customer success as well as marketing, to build a more comprehensive picture of successful ABM adoption.

We'll also be seeking to balance the perspectives of inhouse marketers with practical experiences of deploying ABM techniques and processes from within an organisation, with those of vendors and agencies, who are becoming increasingly pivotal in helping brands achieve success with ABM, or helping them scale its usage.

If ABM is one of your priorities this year, then you can't afford to miss this event – I hope to see you on 9 November.

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