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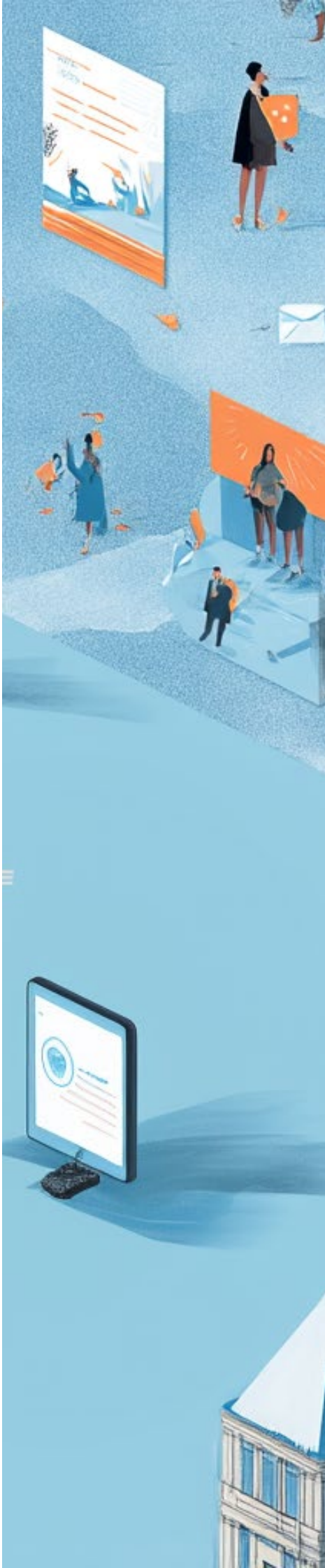
# B2B Digital Advertising:
## How to Thrive in a Privacy-First World

FUNNELFUEL

B2B MARKETING

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# Introduction



Lina Vaz,
*Senior Editor*,
**Propolis**

B2B digital advertising is at a turning point. With third-party cookies disappearing and privacy regulations tightening, the challenge is clear: How do you engage the right audience, in the right place and at the right time, while staying compliant? The answer isn't simple, but leading industry voices suggest a return to fundamentals.

To remain competitive, B2B marketing leaders must rethink their approach to targeting, execution, measurement and attribution. The era of unrestricted data collection is over, and businesses that fail to adapt risk falling behind. However, this shift also presents a powerful opportunity.

A privacy-first world calls for a more sophisticated, trust-driven strategy that prioritizes first-party data, contextual targeting and innovative measurement solutions. Those who embrace these changes pro-actively can build deeper client relationships while maintaining compliance and, ultimately, increasing their effectiveness.

**This white paper draws on insights from industry leaders, including:**



Paul Collier,
*CMO*,
**FunnelFuel**



Hetal Petal,
*Head of Marketing*,
**European Markets & Listings Nasdaq**



Nathalie Dorricott,
*EMEA & LATAM Head of Growth Marketing*,
**Palo Alto Networks.**

Their expertise provides a strategic roadmap, equipping decision-makers with actionable solutions to navigate challenges and drive business growth. The future of digital advertising lies in adopting a privacy-first mindset.

# Foreword by Mike Harty *CPO and Co-Founder* FunnelFuel



Mike Harty,
*CPO and Co-Founder*,
**FunnelFuel**

Today's digital media landscape is in an accelerating period of transformation across all areas of the supply chain. On first inspection, this is often misunderstood, even taken for granted, after all historically this all "just worked" didn't it?, part of the modern B2B marketer's arsenal can seem daunting, even frightening in terms of its complexity, lack of transparency and associated rigor.

But within the context of seismic and constant change lies opportunity for the B2B marketing practitioners and the wider function. Opportunity around increased focus and effective identification and targeting of your ICP buying groups, opportunity to improve the quality and effectiveness of your digital advertising delivery and opportunity to better understand your engaged targets actions, behavior and intent post click during their buying cycle.

Predicated on a B2C ecosystem and historically shoehorned for a "B2B fit" the reality is that from brand to demand there are areas for improvement and increased ROI that take advantage of the evolving committee-based buying cycles of today, changing individual digital media consumption habits in a post pandemic world and emerging omnichannel delivery mechanisms that were once considered only the purview of our B2C colleagues but are now B2B ready.

The B2B Marketing function can and should do better, it's precisely why we conceived of and created the FunnelFuel capability. Using our proprietary identity solution, omnichannel delivery capability and analytics suite, clients, agencies and publishers alike are all seeing improved ROI and additional future proofing benefits from working with the specialist B2B media technology partner at the forefront of this rapidly evolving space.

SECTION ONE

# **Agility:** Key to B2B Marketing Success

# Agility:
## Key to B2B Marketing Success

**Tony Lamb**, our Propolis Data and Insight Expert, explains that traditionally, target marketing is done through intent signal monitoring. Information collected from third-party cookies, about the types of content contacts interact with online, is analyzed to find patterns. These indicate whether an individual or account is actively in-market and researching a purchase.

*"The loss of third-party data leaves B2B marketing and programmatic display advertising platforms looking for new sources to credibly track user behavior across the internet."*

The impact on the efficiency of display advertising targeting is inevitable. **In episode 180 of our B2B Marketing podcast**, **Paul** discusses how to adopt an agile approach in today's digital marketing landscape. He makes it clear: what worked in the past is no longer enough. Those who fail to recognize, understand and act on this shift will struggle to keep up.

*"With third-party cookies disappearing, B2B marketers must rethink their attribution models. The traditional frameworks many have relied on will soon expose gaps and inconsistencies. The only way forward is agility."*

Paul adds that marketing teams need to embrace continuous learning, experimentation and data-driven adaptability in order to remain competitive. **Hetal** reinforces this point:

*"A test-and-learn mindset is crucial. We need to ensure we're moving with the market and responding to what our customers are showing us. It's important to experiment continuously and adjust based on real-time intent signals."*

Agility isn't just a competitive edge but the foundation for long-term success. In a landscape where customer behaviors shift rapidly and traditional models lose relevance, the ability to adapt, experiment and evolve is essential.

**Nathalie** recalls when GDPR was first introduced, panic ensued. But, in hindsight, it forced organizations to clean up databases and ensure they were engaging with genuinely interested prospects.

The lesson? *"Embrace change,"* she advises. *"Try it, A/B test it, start small and scale."* **Nathalie** adds the key is to allow for failure, but to fail fast. Not every test will work, but each failed experiment provides valuable insights.



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>
> Tony Lamb
> *Propolis Data and Insight Expert*

SECTION TWO

# Smarter Targeting:
## Reaching the Right Buyers with Precision

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B2B marketing leaders must rethink targeting strategies to maintain precision and efficiency. Precision targeting is more critical than ever, particularly when B2B buying behavior is now characterized by long sales cycles and large buying committees.

This requires marketers to engage with multiple stakeholders rather than focusing on individual leads, leading to a shift in approach, as the focus has now shifted to entire buying committees.

*"It's no longer about targeting MQLs. You have to get your arms around the full decision-making group,"* **Nathalie** stresses. The key challenge lies in identifying and engaging high-value prospects without relying on traditional tracking methods.

**Nathalie** points out the rise of *"hidden buyers"*, who are becoming more influential. The tech industry marketers, working on large scale enterprise deals, traditionally targeted IT decision-makers, but now, procurement heads and CFOs play pivotal roles. If key stakeholders are unfamiliar with a brand, deals can stall.

*"Even if 80% of the buying committee knows us, the 20% that don't can make or break the deal,"* **Nathalie** *says. She suggests balancing brand and demand: "If we put all our budget into demand, we'll struggle to generate pipeline. A balanced strategy ensures brand visibility while nurturing prospects down the funnel."*

Despite all the technological advancements, one truth remains: marketing is about people. **Nathalie** mentions that one of the most effective strategies is human engagement, especially peer to peer: *"A short conversation between our CISO (Chief Information Security Officer) and another CISO on LinkedIn gets us 10 times further than bombarding someone with ads and white papers."*

Platforms like LinkedIn, with their advanced targeting capabilities, remain crucial, but Nathalie stresses that leveraging ABM (Account-Based Marketing) is essential for targeting entire buying committees.



SECTION THREE

# The Central Role of First-Party Data

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First-party data has become the backbone of effective marketing strategies. It's essential to consider how to collect, organize and leverage this data. Companies should invest in data collection tools, CRM enhancements and strategies that incentivize potential clients to share their information willingly.

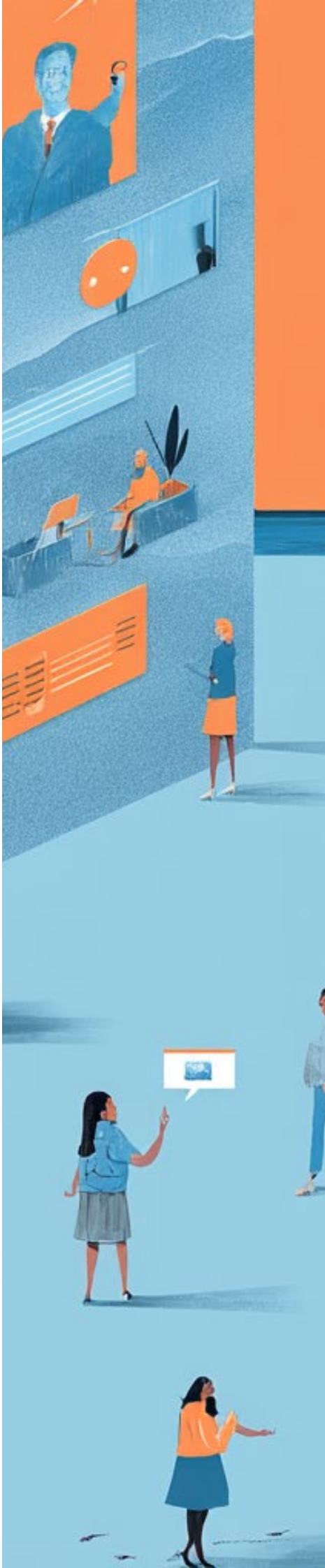
Strong data governance will ensure both compliance and effectiveness in a privacy-first world. This means that a marketing team's focus on first-party data, as well as data in general, and the multi-touchpoint process of data collection and management, will become increasingly important. **Hetal** highlights Nasdaq's evolving approach:



> *"We're using first-party data for personalized email and social media campaigns, tailoring content to specific buyer personas. Additionally, we leverage real-time intent signals to identify potential customers more precisely."*

**Nathalie** also acknowledges the importance of a well-structured first-party data strategy. This implies ensuring data hygiene, as the data collected must be high-quality and relevant. She also recommends a long-term view and the need of engaging prospects across multiple channels and touchpoints.

The days of asking prospects to fill out lengthy forms for a single piece of content are fading. *"I'm still surprised to see a 12-field form before accessing a white paper,"* she admits.



SECTION FOUR

# Maximizing Precision in IP and Contextual Advertising

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To navigate tightening privacy regulations, marketers must refine IP targeting strategies by integrating multiple data sources for accuracy and compliance. Marketers need to enhance their skillset around IP targeting, amplifying it with multiple data sources to ensure accuracy and privacy compliance.

Contextual advertising is resurging as a powerful tool, enabling ad placements within relevant content instead of relying on outdated tracking.

**Paul** explains that *"contextual advertising technology has been developing rapidly over the last few years. When it comes to targeting and delivery mechanisms, this is where key specialist media owners in B2B will truly shine."*

Beyond traditional targeting, partnering with trusted data providers and industry-specific communities can also refine targeting efforts. *"We've started working more with communities and key thought leaders,"* **Nathalie** shares, particularly in cybersecurity, where niche audiences are highly engaged.

Partnering with trusted data providers and industry communities enhances targeting precision, ensuring engagement with highly relevant audiences. **Nathalie** adds that carefully selecting partners who provide access to opted-in data remains a key part of digital marketing strategies for Palo Alto Networks.

**Hetal** adds that a purely data-driven approach is not always the best option, as it can sometimes backfire by limiting the channels being used. Instead, she advocates for a more holistic, 360-degree approach:

*"Engaging with audiences across different channels while maintaining consistent messaging (or adapting it appropriately) tends to be more effective. Ultimately, a multi-channel and multi-decision-maker strategy seems to yield the best results."*



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SECTION FIVE

# Modernizing Attribution and Performance Measurement

# Modernizing Attribution and Performance Measurement

With the demise of cookie-based tracking, B2B marketers must revisit their attribution strategies. **Nathalie** admits that *"if you can't target and track accurately, attribution becomes a headache."*

Real-time tracking solutions and alternative measurement techniques are now essential for evaluating campaign success. Companies that invest in predictive modelling and AI-driven analytics will be better positioned to measure marketing effectiveness. **Hetal** addresses the challenges of attribution:

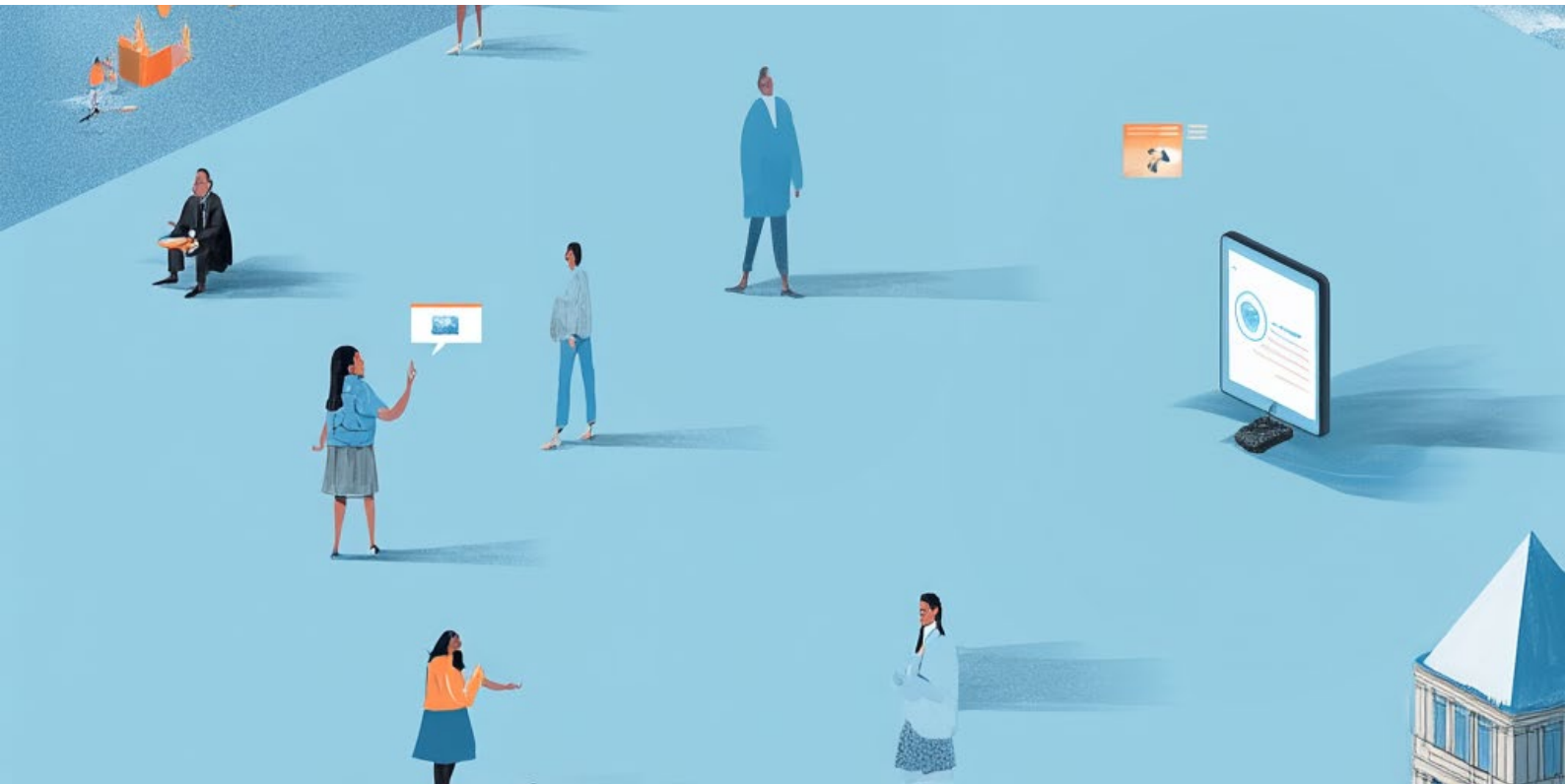
*"Attribution isn't linear, and relying solely on last-touch attribution is misleading. Some of the most impactful touchpoints may have happened a year ago. We're implementing Power BI dashboards to get a more holistic view of marketing performance."*

Additionally, as digital channels diversify, B2B marketers can no longer rely solely on traditional digital advertising methods. Emerging platforms like Connected TV (CTV), digital audio and digital out-of-home (DOOH) provide new engagement opportunities. **Paul** says it's important to embrace an omnichannel approach:

*"This is not a one-size-fits-all situation, and it's not something that can be solved by a single vendor. It's important to move beyond just native digital display ads. You will see clear opportunities to improve performance through omnichannel activities."*

Connected TV, digital audio, and digital out-of-home advertising are actually part of the B2B marketing strategy at Palo Alto Networks: *"We've been using them for over 18 months now,"* **Nathalie** reveals, highlighting how these channels complement flagship events and amplify brand presence.

Podcasts are also gaining traction, particularly among millennial professionals. *"Millennials don't want to read lengthy white papers; they'd rather listen to a podcast on their commute," she explains*



SECTION SIX

# Strategic AI Adoption

# Strategic AI Adoption

In the context of B2B marketing and digital advertising, staying ahead of technological shifts is crucial. AI-driven tools are transforming targeting, personalization and content creation. As AI continues to transform the industry, businesses that delay adoption risk falling behind. As **Hetal** puts it:

*"I think it's important to adopt AI now, otherwise the world will move on quickly; we're already seeing that happen. Adopting AI early and beginning that journey is crucial for a strong long-term strategy."*

However, marketers should be cautious about over-relying on emerging tech without fully understanding its applications. Balancing innovation with strategic oversight is crucial. To unlock AI's full potential, businesses must first refine targeting and implement robust data governance frameworks. **Paul** advises marketers to focus on the fundamentals:

*"There are three main areas to focus on: targeting and identification, delivery and execution, as well as measurement. These areas work like concentric circles. If you can't effectively target individuals, then the effectiveness of your delivery will be reduced."*

AI needs to complement strategic decision-making, and its implementation should be intentional and tested for effectiveness. Businesses must ensure AI is not just an efficiency tool but a value driver, enhancing engagement and delivering relevant content. **Hetal** shares Nasdaq's experience with AI:

*"We've used AI for content development, particularly for multilingual content. However, when we tested AI-generated video content, it still felt too robotic. We're waiting for the technology to evolve further before fully adopting it."*

In any case, AI is already amply used in B2B marketing. From automated copy variation for search ads to multilingual localization, **Nathalie** notes that AI is streamlining operations: *"AI gets 70% of the work done, and then we add the human element."*

However, she also stressed its limitations: "AI is great for data-driven tasks, but when it comes to empathy, humor and brand tone, human oversight is crucial." *She adds that AI-driven personalization can be powerful, but only if executed flawlessly, otherwise, the risk of alienating prospects is high.*



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# Future-Proofing B2B Digital Advertising Strategies

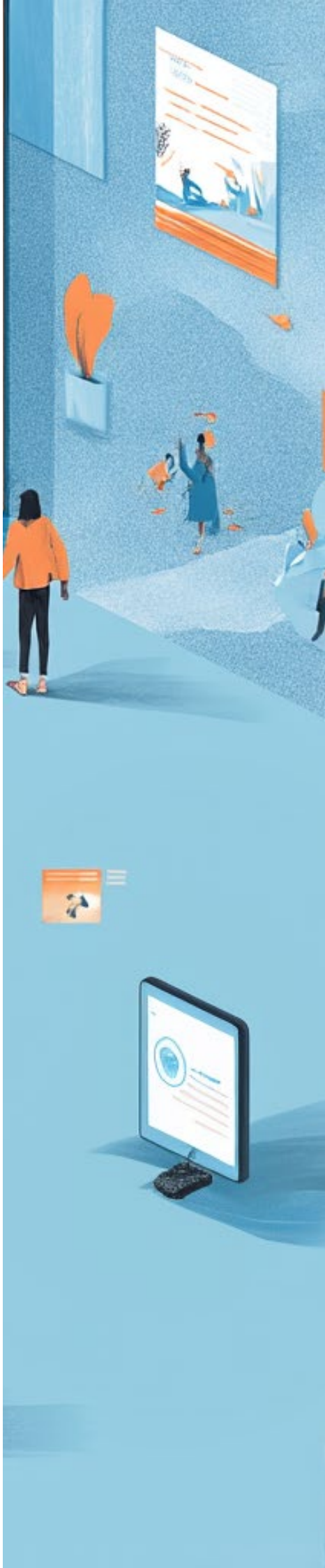
With privacy regulations tightening and third-party cookies disappearing, B2B marketing leaders must adopt agile, test-and-learn strategies to stay ahead. Those who embrace change proactively will drive the next wave of digital transformation.

Smarter targeting requires engaging entire buying committees, not just individual leads, making first-party data the foundation of effective marketing. Prioritizing ethical data collection, governance and multi-channel engagement will be critical to creating seamless customer journeys and maintaining brand visibility.

To measure success in a cookie-free world, marketers must rethink attribution models, leveraging real-time tracking, AI-driven analytics and alternative performance metrics. Expanding into emerging channels like Connected TV, digital audio and digital out-of-home will also provide fresh avenues for engagement.

Even though AI is streamlining operations and personalization, human oversight remains essential to maintain brand authenticity, empathy and strategic direction.

Ultimately, B2B marketing leaders who foster agility, leverage first-party data, explore new channels and integrate AI thoughtfully will lead the way. The future of digital advertising belongs to those who remain data-driven, adaptive and customer-focused.



# About B2B Marketing

Established in 2004, B2B Marketing is now the number one go-to resource for B2B marketers across the globe.

Right from the start, we had a clear mission: to provide marketers at business brands with the intelligence, tools and inspiration they need to grow and succeed – as both individuals and businesses.

Unlike B2C, we focus on building relationships between businesses, strengthening connections within the B2B marketing community and putting marketers at the centre of the businesses they work for. We believe that every company has a unique story to tell, and we are committed to helping them communicate that story in the most impactful way possible.

Ultimately, we exist as a partner to a business, leveraging our community intelligence to help marketers make informed decisions and achieve their marketing goals.

We are committed to providing the B2B community with the tools and resources they need to succeed in today's competitive marketplace, and to fostering a culture of learning and innovation that drives long-term success for everyone involved.

We're proud to serve as the focus point for the B2B marketing sector, enabling marketers and leaders to transform their marketing.

B2B MARKETING

# About FunnelFuel

Founded in 2022, FunnelFuel is a B2B demand gen platform that specialises in data-driven advertising, audience analytics, and lead gen solutions. In an industry striving for personalisation and actionable insights, traditional tools often fall short—especially with the decline of cookies and the limitations of Google Analytics.

FunnelFuel empowers modern marketers by providing a set of capabilities to identify, target, deliver and report on B2B digital advertising.

**funnelfuel.io**

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For further information on how to partner on the Marketing Lead Generation Report, contact:
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