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What to do when it all goes pear-shaped



Paul Snell
Deputy editor,
B2B Marketing

At a roundtable I chaired earlier this year before GDPR came into force, I asked the senior marketers attending how many of them had prepared a plan if the worst was to happen and they had to publicise a customer data breach. No-one raised their hand. At the time, the pain of dealing with GDPR meant it was too much to consider what needed to be done if something actually did go wrong.

It's human nature to push those issues we'd rather not contemplate to the back of our minds, but we have two pieces in this issue – our cover story on leadership during a crisis (p14), and succession planning for the leaders of tomorrow (p20) – that'll help you confront them.

It's better to be discussing and dealing these thorny issues as a trusted business partner, than to be left on the outside looking in. But according to CMO Jerome Nadel, that's exactly the fate many current marketing leaders face. His argument is too many are focused on that sales-enablement, and not enough are involved in the design process of the products and services they offer – resulting in less authentic marketing. For more of this provocative viewpoint (and a possible existential crisis), turn to p33.

Making a difference internally is one thing, but can B2B marketing make a difference in wider society? The shocking sexist comments of senior executives revealed in the Hampton-Alexander review exposed how much more work there still is to be done on gender equality. So we asked four B2B agencies to tell us how they'd tackle these outdated views through a campaign (p24), and one agency is going to launch its own for real. This may only be a small step, but let's hope it's a catalyst for much-needed wider change.

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ISSN 1477-4895

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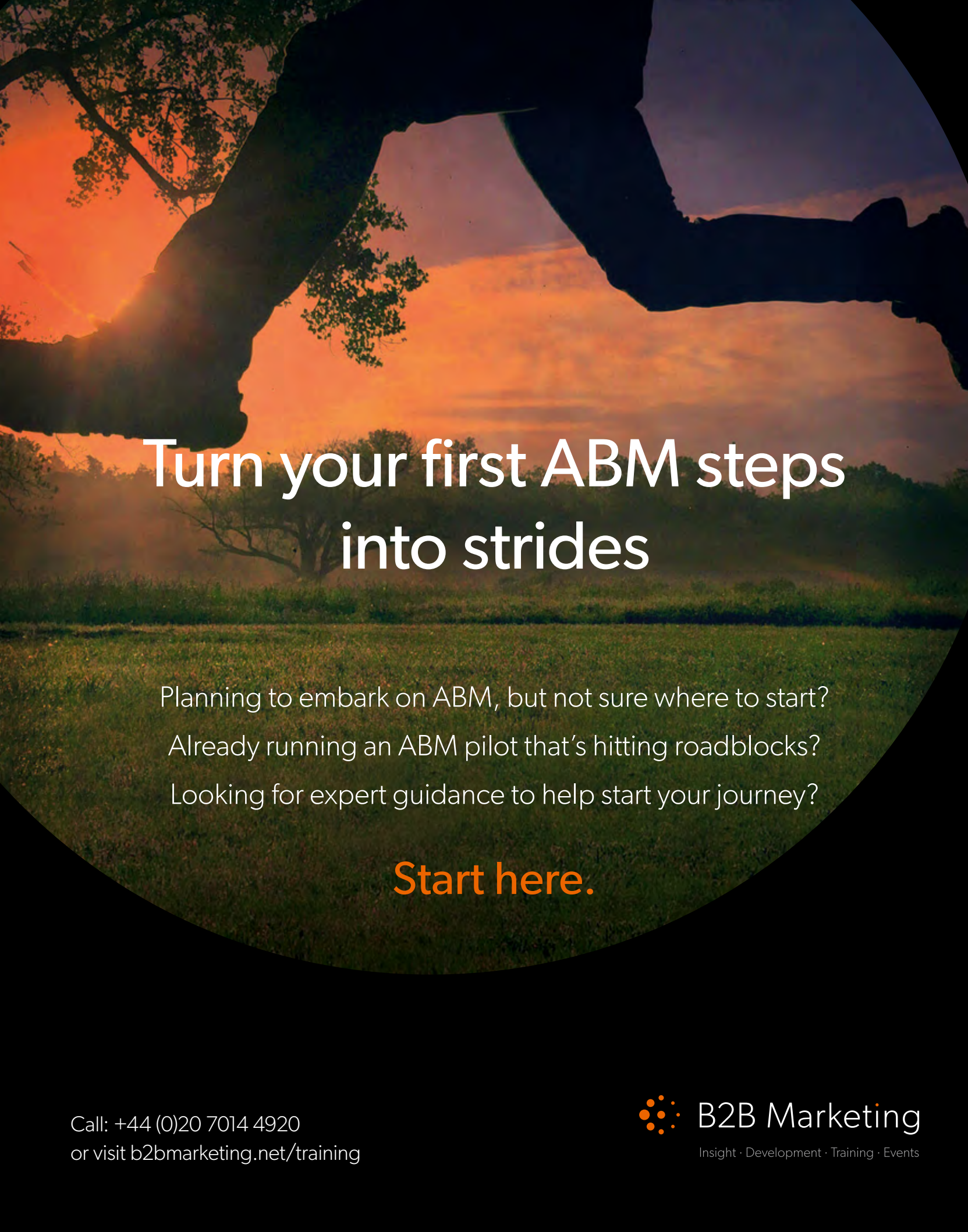
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The past 12 months have been positive for B2B marketers. After last year's fall, salaries have bounced back, up 12% on last year and above those seen in 2016. Here's a selection of findings from this year's report

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Nobody wants to believe a crisis will happen to them – but you can bet your luck that what you don't plan for will bite you in the butt. Molly Raycraft gathers advice on navigating those stormy waters

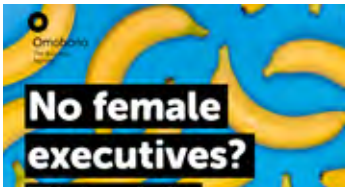
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Preparing to hand over the reins

CMO turnover is notably high, but what responsibility do they have to plan for the next in line? Rebecca Ley talks to Claire Macland, Sakina Najmi and Jada Balster about how to prepare the next generation of leaders

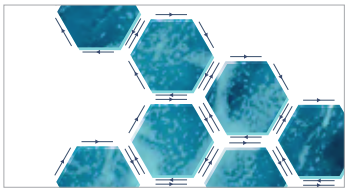
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Can B2B marketing tackle gender bias?

It's clear from the responses to a government review the message on gender equality still hasn't landed at the highest levels. Molly Raycraft asked B2B agencies how they'd tackle the issue.

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True marketing leaders get involved in product design, but Rambus' CMO Jerome Nadel believes many aren't sufficiently involved in this upstream activity. Interview by Paul Snell

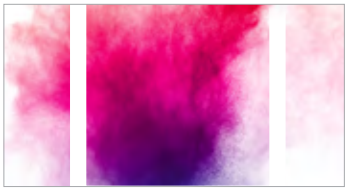
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The growth of martech has been stratospheric, with an explosion of hype and investment in platforms and systems. But is that all about to change? Joel Harrison reports

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Standing out in professional services

Differentiation in the B2B market can be a tricky business, particularly in professional services. Rebecca Ley talks to those in the sector about why a strong brand is crucial



Marie Hattar,
CMO, Keysight Technologies

Working your way to the top

Keysight Technologies has a history that stretches back more than 70 years, but until now, it's never had a CMO. Marie Hattar joined the business in August last year. She shares the challenges of being the company's first marketing executive.

Keysight Technologies began as the electronic test and measurement division of HP when it divested from HP's subsidiary, Agilent, in 2014. But it wasn't until August 2017, when Keysight signed a $1.6 billion acquisition of Ixia, that Marie took the reigns as the company's first CMO.

What are the challenges in being the first CMO at a company?

People have a lot of opinions on what a CMO should and shouldn't do – and you know what they say about opinions! I spent a lot of time educating the organisation about what best-in-class marketing practices are. I leveraged experience I'd had at Cisco and Check Point to share some of the key marketing initiatives those companies undertake and how structured they are.

My approach to building stakeholder relationships was to tie everything marketing does to a tangible business result. I looked at the company strategy, ensured my metrics were tied to those of my peers, and aligned the transformation I was putting in place to show them the impact.

How did you tackle misconceptions people have about marketing?

I had to do it at multiple levels. First with my peers, then with the board of directors, then scaling it down to the various VPs – sharing my vision of what marketing is and is not.

I had a lot of support from my CEO. He was really the guiding light to ensure I got the backing for the transformation I was putting in place. With both the CEO and head of sales 100% behind the transformation, it was a question of communicating the vision and starting to show some quick wins and fast results – because that's key. The reality is that as a CMO you have to show some fast wins, or people become impatient. You get about three months before the support runs away, and after that you need to start producing.

Is there more pressure as the company's first CMO, or is there more freedom because expectations are lower?

There's definitely extra pressure! I get to be the first person to show the true value of a marketing organisation and what it can bring. My results have to be spectacular, and fast. There's no precedent and nothing they can relate to in terms of performance – I'm it. I'm the first, and frankly I don't want to be the last!

Are stakeholders more open to what you're proposing without having had that precedent?

You're absolutely right. As you implement any changes there's inevitable griping and whining because you've moved somebody's 'cheese', or something isn't operating the way it used to. But the leadership team across the company has been 100% supportive by asking 'If you look at what's been done since Marie's been here, do you think it's for the better?' Fortunately people have said it is, which has silenced that noise.

Get tech savvy

MARKETERS UNCONFIDENT ABOUT AI

Almost a third of B2B marketers have no confidence in their knowledge of AI, research by Heinz Marketing and EverString has found.

Half (49%) haven't adopted AI into their marketing strategy, and 37% do not use it in their tech stack.

Early-adopters have the strongest knowledge, but most marketers are just interested in the personalisation AI offers.

SALES MISSED FROM INEFFICIENT MARTECH

CX is in critical need of improvement in 95% of organisations because companies are struggling to find good matches for their martech.

According to a global survey of 1440 CIOs, CTOs and CMOs by Avanade, some 60% of respondents said their organisation wasn't mature at understanding experience, personalisation and data analytics.

TWITTER PURGE SLASHES FOLLOWERS

Twitter accounts have seen a huge drop in followers after the company slashed millions of suspicious accounts from its site.

The social media platform said it took the decision to build 'trust' and help tackle fake news and 'bots' on the site.

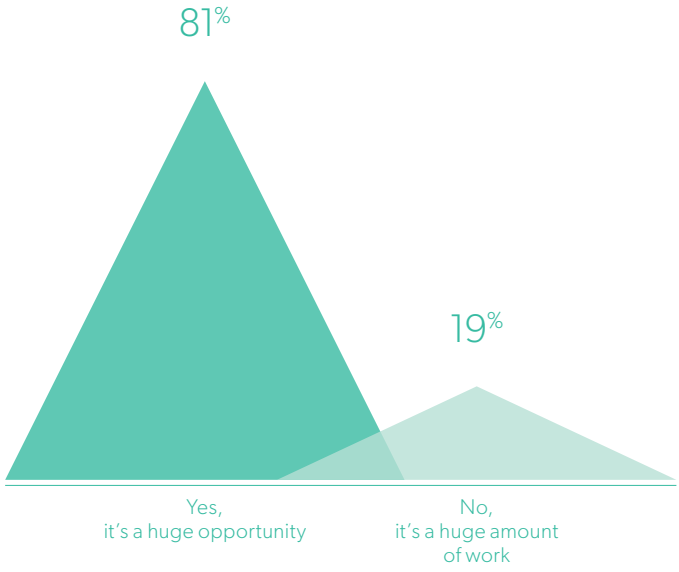
The locked accounts were those that appeared to have unusual activity, such as a large amount of unsolicited replies or mentions.



Would you be the first?

B2B writer and Twitter pollster quizzes the industry
@molly_b2b

WOULD YOU TAKE THE ROLE OF CMO AT A COMPANY THAT HASN'T HAD A MARKETING DEPARTMENT BEFORE?
#POLLOFTHEDAY



Taking a new job always offers the opportunity to make your mark on a department. But what if you had to create the department before you could make a mark on it? Joining a company as its first CMO would take a huge workload just to establish the basics, let alone convince stakeholders of its worth.

For 19% of our Twitter pollers, these things would be enough to deter them from the job. But for 81%, the feeling of accomplishment would outweigh the additional workload. They saw it as the perfect opportunity for a marketer to stake their claim and take the reins. With no predecessor, there's an empty canvas to be painted, a budget to won and stakeholders to be influenced.

But whatever opinion you side with, there's a consensus – it'd be hard work!



Paysafe:



Paysafe reveals new brand to accelerate evolution

Paysafe has revealed a new brand and positioning, designed to move the payments provider to the next stage of its evolution, according to its CMO

The overhaul includes a new logo, positioning and messaging – 'Plug into Paysafe' – which aims to shift the perception of Paysafe from a "distant holding company to a payments platform company". The launch has been backed by high-profile sponsorship at the Indy 500 in the US and England versus Barbarians rugby match.

"When I joined what I saw was the opportunity to take it up a level," CMO Oscar Nieboer told B2B Marketing. "We hadn't really told our story externally, or defined what we stand for, why we're different and why we're relevant."

The brand made its 'double-debut' on 27 May – in the US at the Indianapolis 500 motor race (attended by half a million, and seen by 200 million worldwide) with branding on the cars sponsored by Paysafe. At Twickenham the Paysafe logo adorned the shirts of the Barbarians as they took on England in a game of rugby union.



Anna Harry

What I wish I'd known about leadership, before I became a leader

One of the hardest lessons for a leader is knowing when to let go, says Anna Harry, head of marketing, go-to-market at Experian

We marketers love to create, make, write and design. There's a satisfaction in getting something at the end that you can see, touch, read and share with others. You get into the detail of it, get your hands dirty and really understand how something works. Well I did anyway. But what I've found is that marketing leadership doesn't involve marketing a lot of the time.

It's the hardest lesson I've learned as a leader. It's not just about delegation; you have to let go. I set the strategy and direction – the 'why' of a project. But the 'how' and the 'what', that's what we, as leaders, have to let go of.

If we don't, we're not being the leader our team needs. Everyone deserves the responsibility of delivering success – at any scale. How else will you develop and grow your skills as a marketer? And if your team doesn't grow, you won't have marketing leaders in the future.

I'm still learning about leadership. Compared to actual marketing it's the most intangible thing. I've learned that my success is reflected in my team and in the growth and development of my colleagues. I've found a way to take fulfillment from smoothing the path and fixing problems for my team. I've developed new ways of communicating collective success and making sure all the contribution is recognised.

When I take a step back and see the team around me I'm humbled by the amazing work they do, and I take satisfaction from the great marketing we create collectively. I hope I also provide a dash of inspiration on the way. But I haven't quite got there. I'm not entirely sure I will ever give up the pleasure of delivering a successful marketing project, so I keep my fingers in a few pies, no doubt to the frustration of my team!

I would ask you to remember one thing. Although we're leaders now, we were marketers once, and we still treasure the act of 'doing' marketing. Take pity on us when we want to get involved, let us remember what it is to be a marketer!



Zoe Mol

Authentic leadership in action

There are four key characteristics to authentic leadership – including a sense of humour, says Zoe Mol, VP global marketing and conferences, S&P Global Platts

Authenticity is hugely important in leadership. It's an essential component to building trust and a positive working environment. Without it you won't get support, respect or recognition – no matter how great your ideas are. For me, authenticity essentially all comes down to an awareness of emotions.

First and foremost, you need emotional intelligence. You need the ability to understand and express emotions positively, freely and appropriately. It's essential to being an authentic leader and it'll help you build interactions with your team.

Showing who you are as a person also helps your team understand the human behind the leader. People don't leave businesses, they leave bad managers, so let your team recognise your faults and empathise with your efforts and it will build trust and a sense of team unity.

Connected to emotional intelligence is a sense of humour and perspective. To me, this is essential. Humour can be a great way to defuse situations and bring people together. The end result is a happier and more productive working environment, but it takes emotional intelligence to know how – and when – to hit the right note.

Of course, this all comes down to self-awareness and the ability to accept your flaws. Having a 'constant learning' mindset is essential to good leadership and has the additional benefit of ensuring that you're seen as approachable.

Humility and listening are important traits to consider when you reflect on your interactions across the business. You've got to be willing to take accurate self-appraisal and be open to what others say and do in reaction to you. Be open to new ideas by listening intently, rather than listening so you can be armed with a sharp reply. You must understand that you alone can't have all the answers. In fact asking powerful questions of your team, in turn empowers them.

Lastly, ask yourself whether you can be relied on to be consistent, regardless of the business climate. This is important at all levels of the business because if your actions don't consistently support what you're spouting, you'll immediately seem fake.



Jen Grant

How to handle an 'aggressive thinker'

Ever met someone who is convinced their idea is the only way forward? It's easy to become frustrated, but they can be won over, says Looker's CMO, Jen Grant

You may have encountered a boss who's a bit of an aggressive thinker. They truly believe in their ideas and think they're better than yours. It doesn't give you space to offer your ideas and what felt like a constructive conversation suddenly feels like you're being given orders. It's frustrating, right?

Sometimes you meet colleagues who are just as bad. It's easy to become defensive in response to this sort of aggression, and it's even easier to point out all of the reasons your colleague is wrong. But don't. It doesn't move things forward and it won't make it better.

The aggressive thinker requires a more tactful approach. It may feel like theirs is the only voice in the room but they're most likely shouting until they feel heard. Asking questions is a really effective way of defusing their aggressive tactics and softening the conversation.

It's also good to give them at least a little bit of credit. Give them a chance to share their ideas and for you to understand all of the ins and outs of their suggestion. Then look for one aspect you can agree with – the 'golden nugget' of the story. By sharing why you think this part is great you immediately win them as an ally. They'll feel you've heard them out and understood their point of view.

Once you've turned the conversation to the thing you agree on, you can add your own views. You'll gain respect for listening, but also get your own ideas heard.

Sadly, being a woman in marketing – especially in the tech sector – can add to the issue. There's a perception that women are less technical. An interviewer once told a good friend of mine, who is a CMO, they were looking for someone more technical. This is despite the fact she has a master's degree in computer science.

The way to get over this is to support yourself with data. Make marketing seem less fluffy and more like you're building a machine. Pair that with your new conversational skills and it should work for both parties.



John Kerr

Be accountable to be credible

Marketing leaders must adapt to the new requirements of the business and its customers, says John Kerr, director, marketing and commercial excellence at Armstrong World Industries

A great event, website visits or the number of leads just won't cut it as a measure of success. They're critical parts of the journey, but the destination will always be profitability. It's what the business demands and you have to prove your part in it.

Accountability is the key to credibility, and having marketing directly responsible for segments of revenue and profitability clearly demonstrates its value to the rest of the business.

At Armstrong, marketing is divided into three key areas: research, management and communications. The three teams work collaboratively with specialists in each area. The cycle begins with market knowledge, understanding customer needs and values, moving to the creation of products and services that will grow the business.

The message to customers needs to demonstrate the relevance of what we offer to that individual as they go through the buyer journey.

The importance of understanding the customer and what they value is more important than ever before. With the range of choice buyers now have, businesses need marketing to be at the forefront. For many, this is a pronounced shift in how we do things. One of the main functions of the marketing leader is to drive that change.

The demands on a marketing leader are increasingly challenging. They're expected to be specalists while also alternating between identifying and qualifying opportunities, sharing knowledge, and interpreting a deep understanding of the customer. They also have to stay ahead of industry dynamics, business priorities and competitors – all of which are changing at an increasingly fast pace. There's huge disruption, but also a lot of opportunity.

Marketing leaders must stand at the forefront of this change, not only within their department but in all areas of the business. They must be a key enabler of it, armed with a clear message that demonstrates the value and impact marketing has across the company.

SALARIES ON THE RISE

The past 12 months have been positive for B2B marketers. After last year's fall, salaries have bounced back, up 12% on last year and above those seen in 2016. Here's a selection of findings from this year's report

AVERAGE ANNUAL SALARY OF A B2B MARKETER

£52,080

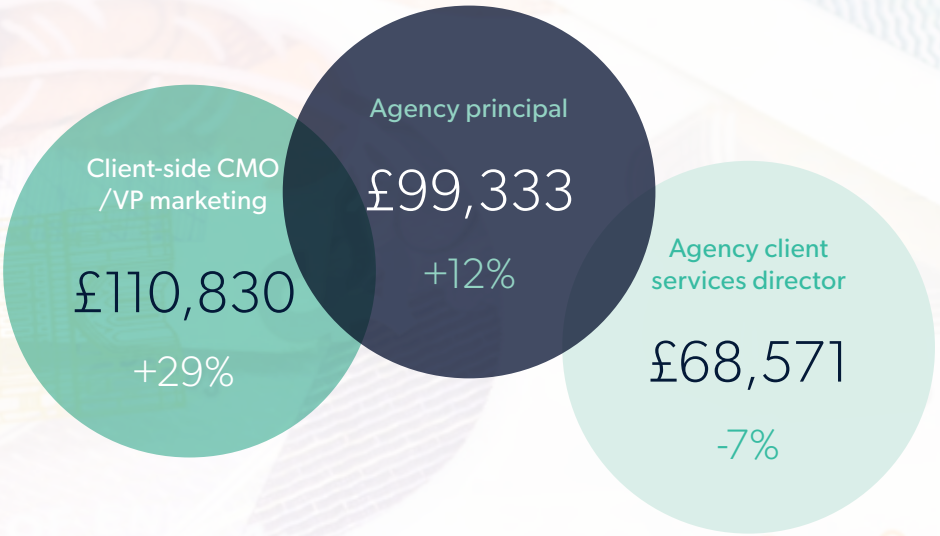
+12%

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MALE AND FEMALE PAY

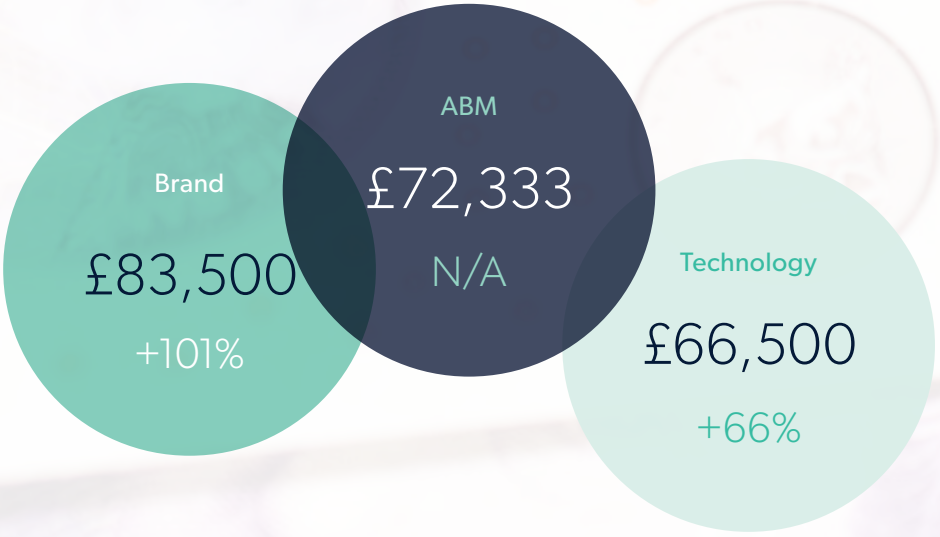
£14,731

+3%

TOP 3 BEST PAID POSITIONS

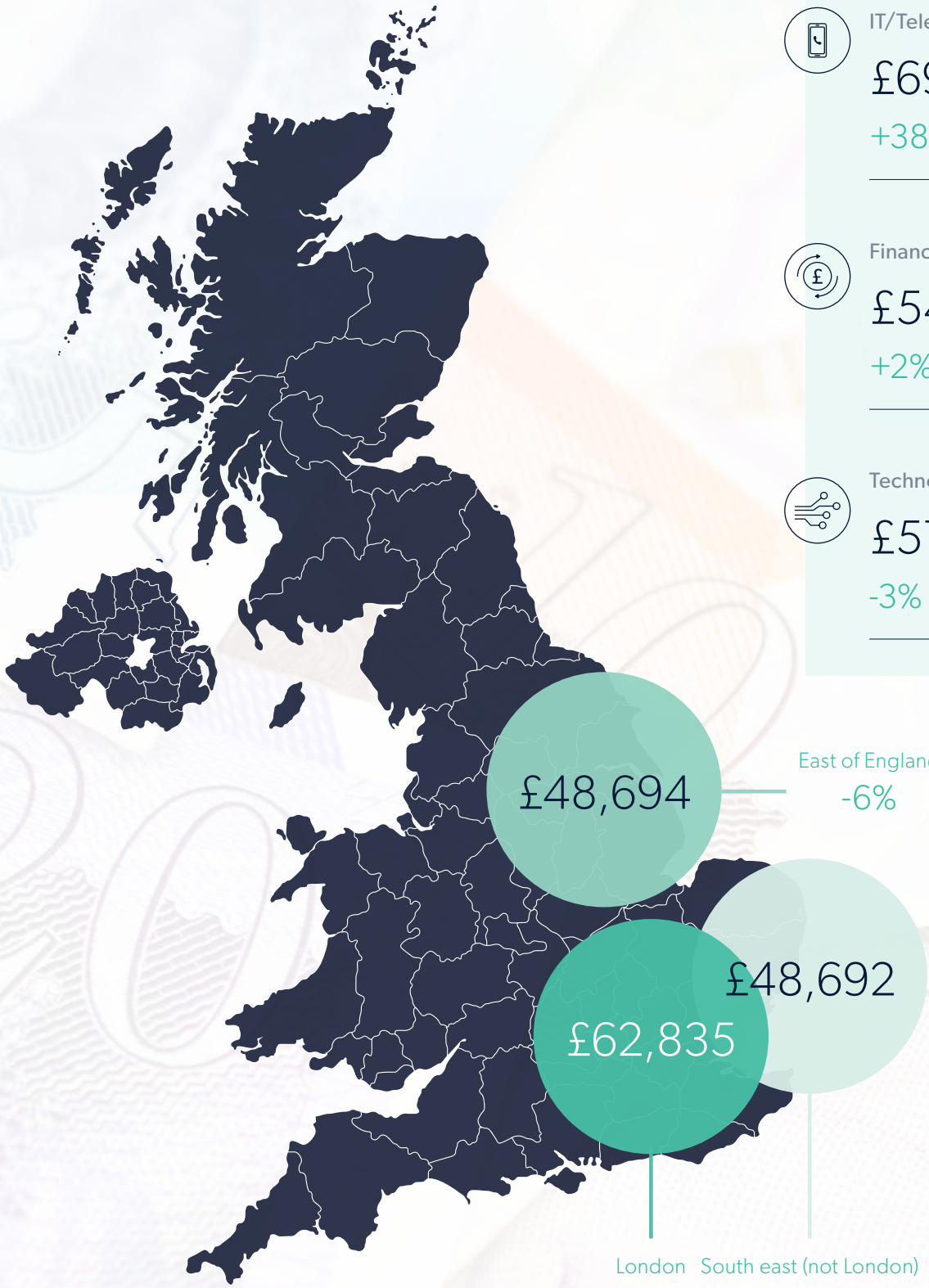


TOP 3 SPECIALISMS



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TOP 3 LOCATIONS



TOP 3 INDUSTRIES

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+38%

Financial services

£54,093

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£51,803

-3%

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HOW TO LEAD YOUR TEAM THROUGH A CRISIS

Nobody wants to believe a crisis will happen to them – but you can bet your luck that what you don't plan for will bite you on the butt. Molly Raycraft gathers advice on navigating those stormy waters

A crisis is like a shark attack. One moment you're swimming through calm blue waters, the next a risky predator torpedoes from beneath your feet, clamping you in its jaws. In this moment of terror, you must make multiple decisions and your survival will depend on them.

"Staff look to management for clear leadership and guidance in crisis situations, therefore it's down to leaders and management to ensure their teams have the infrastructure, skillset, knowledge and training to feel like they are well prepared to execute the required actions in difficult situations," says Pamela Ghosal, head of marketing and communications EMEA at OKI Europe.

Fortunately most have a crisis management plan, which although won't cater to all eventualities, does offer a framework on how to react and guide staff and customers through the tumult.

"More and more businesses are realising they need to have something in place should a crisis occur," explains Lisa McGauley, head of PR and content at Fox Agency. "I'd be incredibly surprised if any of the FTSE 350 didn't have a crisis plan in place."

"Any leader needs to set the example in a time of crisis. They need to be seen as calm, confident, and collected"

Keeping your cool

Right now you might already be breaking into a cold sweat as you realise that you've not thought this through. You've no masterplan for disaster. Should your product be deemed unsafe or your CEO be charged with fraud, you've got nowhere to go but into panic mode.

First of all, take a deep breath. It's easy to feel overwhelmed in the heat of the moment, but that will distract you from dealing with the incident logically and efficiently.

If you've prepared for the incident panic won't be the instinctive reaction. Abby Mangold, founder and MD of crisis management agency, The Mangold Consultancy, is keen to point out it's often an emotion that arises as a result of a lack of planning. "The source of panic is usually from the unknown," she says.

She urges that it's important leaders guide their teams in the same way they would usually. Familiarity creates a sense of calm. "There really shouldn't be a change in leadership technique, and if you're a leader who takes time to think things over, you need to buy some time because there's so much pressure from every layer of the business," she says. "The way you do this is by having a great team set up with a clear set of processes in place."

By maintaining this sense of calm, a team will most likely assess the situation better and propose more logical steps to tackling it. It will create the space to think and respond quickly and appropriately.

"Any leader needs to set the example in a time of crisis," Lisa explains. "They need to be seen as calm, confident, and collected. At the end of the day they're the figurehead and ideally they'll be first on the scene in terms of response."

Staying connected

There's safety in numbers, but only if you're all heading in the right direction and that won't happen without good communication. Crises will exercise your cross-department communication skills and if you haven't got this nailed, your hopes of retaining your company's reputation will end in tatters.

"Your staff need to know what's going on very quickly," warns Lisa. "You must have intranet, internal emails, newsletters and a really structured internal communication system to get your message out."

Second, your message must be consistent – not just in terms of information

TYPES OF CRISES

Crises take many shapes and you'll need a plan that adapts to them all.

This could be:

- Major political change
- Terrorist attack
- Environmental disaster
- Fatality
- PR blunder
- IT equipment failure
- Supply chain failure

but in tone. Mismatching and poorly constructed internal messages will shout loudly about your team's panic under fire.

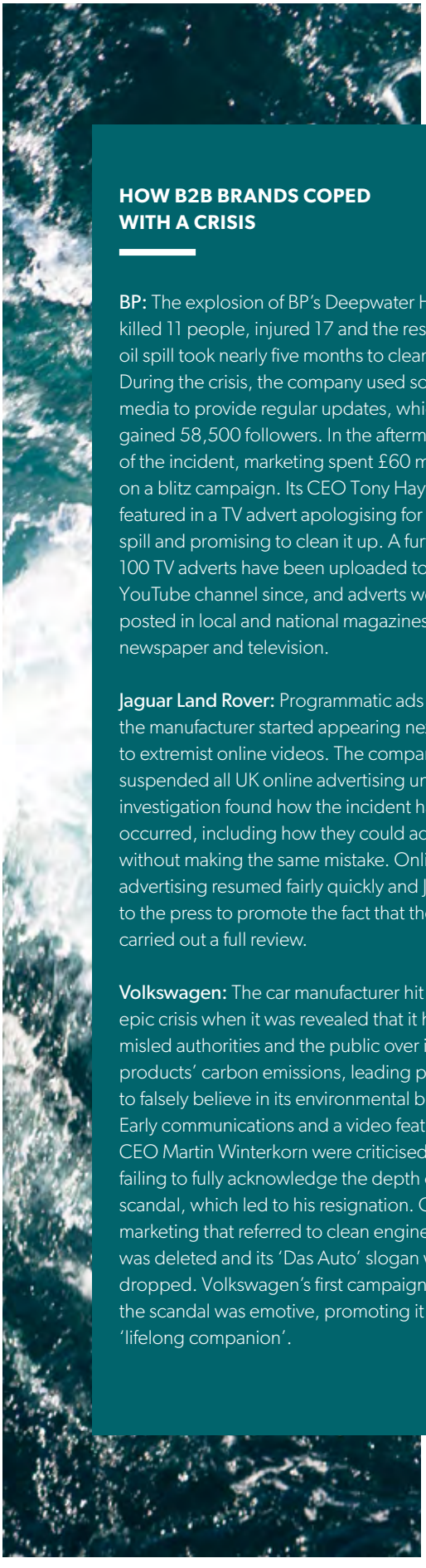
It can be helpful to create a set of messaging that will be the foundation to all communication produced during the crisis. But Abby suggests that this should translate into a tone and language that suits the person you're talking to. "Use the language that you usually speak to them in, don't use very corporate, very dry, grey language if it's not what they're used to hearing," she says.

It's also important that you don't do so much communication that there's no time to resolve the actual crisis. You can buy time by setting boundaries, says Abby. "It's about setting up regular calls and sticking to it. You need to say 'our next call is in two hours and that's when I'm going to update on the information'."

The dangerous currents of a crisis

When a crisis breaks, a whirlpool of challenges will threaten to pull you down. Here's what you should look out for:

- Reacting to negativity. A company is likely to come under fire when it's seen as neglectful or dishonest. Don't get off

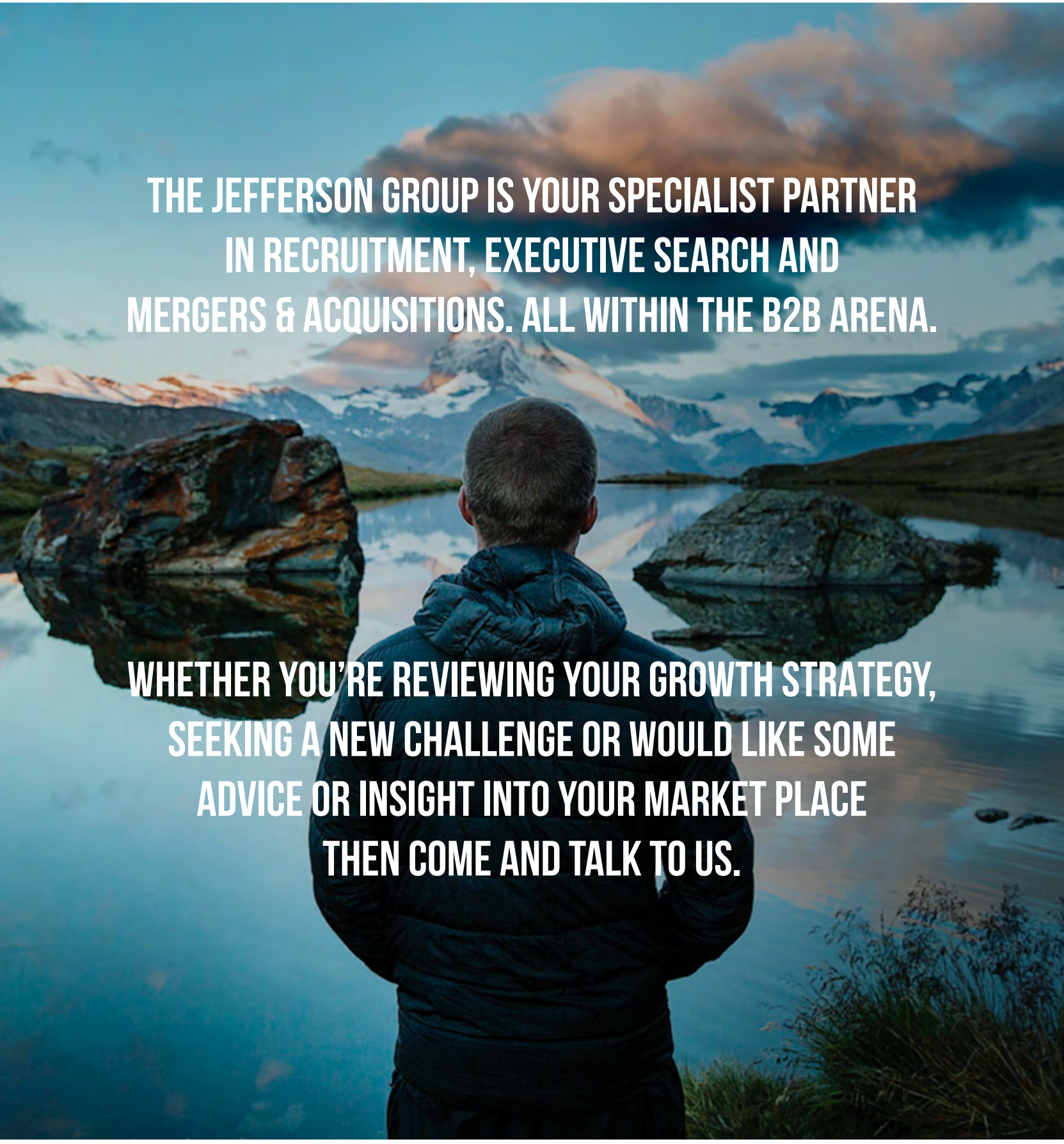


HOW B2B BRANDS COPED WITH A CRISIS

BP: The explosion of BP's Deepwater Horizon killed 11 people, injured 17 and the resulting oil spill took nearly five months to clean up. During the crisis, the company used social media to provide regular updates, which gained 58,500 followers. In the aftermath of the incident, marketing spent £60 million on a blitz campaign. Its CEO Tony Hayward featured in a TV advert apologising for the spill and promising to clean it up. A further 100 TV adverts have been uploaded to BP's YouTube channel since, and adverts were posted in local and national magazines, newspaper and television.

Jaguar Land Rover: Programmatic ads for the manufacturer started appearing next to extremist online videos. The company suspended all UK online advertising until an investigation found how the incident had occurred, including how they could advertise without making the same mistake. Online advertising resumed fairly quickly and JLR spoke to the press to promote the fact that they had carried out a full review.

Volkswagen: The car manufacturer hit an epic crisis when it was revealed that it had misled authorities and the public over its products' carbon emissions, leading people to falsely believe in its environmental benefits. Early communications and a video featuring CEO Martin Winterkorn were criticised for failing to fully acknowledge the depth of the scandal, which led to his resignation. Online marketing that referred to clean engines was deleted and its 'Das Auto' slogan was dropped. Volkswagen's first campaign since the scandal was emotive, promoting it as a 'lifelong companion'.



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on the backfoot by letting that negativity multiply as you craft a perfect response. Seize control of the problem by responding immediately with genuine compassion and concern. Connect at an emotional level until you can reply with the facts.

- Getting the right people together. Bad news hits at any time. It may be while you, or your boss, are on holiday. Plan a crisis community that includes reserves for all eventualities. If only one person can manage any given aspect of a crisis then you need to upskill your team.

- Looking after your team. It can be tempting to sacrifice your well-being for the sake of a swift resolution, but nothing will be completed efficiently if your staff aren't sleeping or eating properly. Ensure you look after them, and yourself.

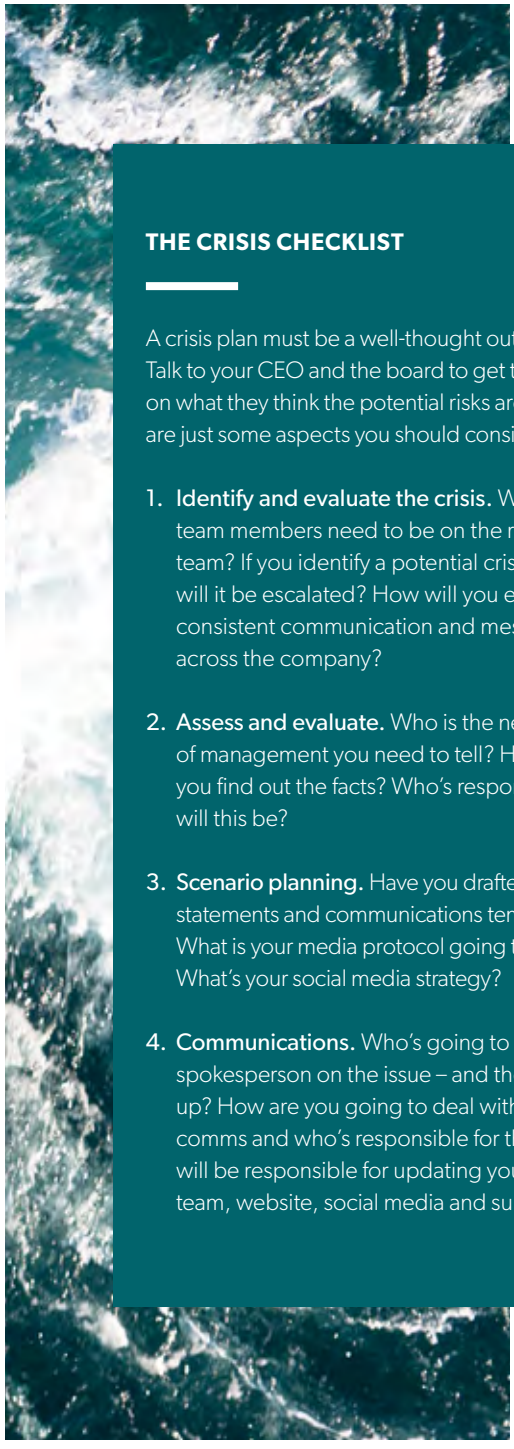
Fact finding

A crisis will leave everyone clawing for information but when dispersed through word of mouth it can often be a mix of fact and fiction. It's imperative you don't act on information unless you know it's true. "Information can often come through on an ad hoc basis, so it's important to have sight of the whole picture before commenting to external sources, particularly the media," confirms Pamela.

It's crucial that as soon as any potential crisis breaks, the senior management team including the CEO get round the table or on a conference call to assess the nature of the incident. This will usually include people from operations, legal, financial and HR in addition to marketing.

Pinpointing the facts can be one of the most difficult steps in the process. "You often know very little at the beginning and conversely later on in the crisis, you end up having way too much information that you've got to go through," explains Abby.

Emphasise the facts you've established, but don't ignore the gaps in what you know. "You need to acknowledge the situation and keep updating as often as you can. And sometimes that means you haven't got the information that you need," says Abby. From there, you'll be able to assign the right people to gather the information you still need.



THE CRISIS CHECKLIST

A crisis plan must be a well-thought out process. Talk to your CEO and the board to get their input on what they think the potential risks are. Here are just some aspects you should consider:

1. **Identify and evaluate the crisis.** Which team members need to be on the response team? If you identify a potential crisis, how will it be escalated? How will you ensure consistent communication and messaging across the company?

2. **Assess and evaluate.** Who is the next layer of management you need to tell? How will you find out the facts? Who's responsibility will this be?

3. **Scenario planning.** Have you drafted holding statements and communications templates? What is your media protocol going to be? What's your social media strategy?

4. **Communications.** Who's going to be the spokesperson on the issue – and their back-up? How are you going to deal with internal comms and who's responsible for that? Who will be responsible for updating your senior team, website, social media and suppliers?



PREPARING TO HAND OVER THE REINS



CMO turnover is notably high, but what responsibility do they have to plan for the next in line? Rebecca Ley talks to Claire Macland, Sakina Najmi and Jada Balster about how to prepare the next generation of leaders for the challenges ahead

CMOs have the shortest tenure of those in the c-suite, with the average only staying in post for 3.6 years, according to a recent report by executive-search firm Spencer Stuart (March, 2018). This compares to a stint of about eight years for a CEO.

It's understandable that a new CMO would want to rip up their predecessor's plans, but when it happens often it can have a negative effect on the continuity of the marketing department's efforts. CMOs should consider finding and nurturing their own successor in order to pass on the baton with minimal disruption.

Taking responsibility for the future

It's often ideal to promote internally. Hiring someone you know creates less risk, avoids recruitment costs and shows your other employees that promotion is achievable.

But who's responsible for ensuring those successors are match fit? The marketing leaders we spoke to were clear that the onus is on the employee to do the legwork, while it's the responsibility of their leaders to create a fertile ground for them to do so.

Claire Macland, vice president marketing EMEA at Equinix lets her team know that furthering their career ultimately sits

ENCOURAGING THE RELUCTANT SUCCESSOR

Sometimes a leader's succession plans just don't align with those they're trying to promote, as was the case for Sakina Najmi, director of global marketing at Criteo.

"I had a woman in my team who was extremely talented and hard-working and I thought she could do a lot more," she says. "I created a dynamic new role that I wanted to give her but she said no. She was happy where she was."

Employees may need to be convinced before taking a new role, and for that to happen they must trust their manager – only then will they believe they're capable of taking the next step.

Ask if the person you're trying to promote is daunted and address why that might be. In this instance it meant mentoring and training, but there must be willingness on both sides.

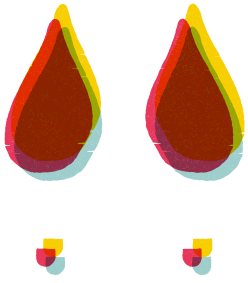
with them. "By asking people to take ownership of it I'm saying I want them to feel empowered, yet it is still the manager's responsibility to drive the direction of their team member's career."

Creating an atmosphere in which this is encouraged allows people to have "pushy conversations" about their careers, without worrying about putting themselves or their managers in a difficult position, says Claire.

A culture of confidence

Showing future leaders a route forward is just one part of succession planning, a wider goal is to create an environment of confidence and success. Every four months, Claire's company carries out an employee engagement survey. Those 20 questions allow employees to feed back on whether they're having valuable conversations with their managers, and whether both parties understand the goals and objectives.

"It's essential the employee has growth opportunities at the company, and they feel their current responsibilities are positioning them for a future at the company," says Claire, adding that the feedback has provided the push for many for the career development opportunities now in place at Equinix.



Sakina Najmi, director of global marketing at Criteo says individual development planning is essential in identifying the next step for her team members' training. "I'm a keen advocate of promoting internally and training young people, so that when I have leave, I have a choice of who will take my job. I've found one successor in particular who I feel is the right fit for my role when I leave."

She notes that no two people are the same, so it's essential to tailor to your management style to help each person achieve their goals. "They all want to be leaders, but they don't all necessarily want my job," Sakina says. This means not just regular coaching and guidance, but mentoring, training sessions and spending time with employees when you don't talk about work so that you may understand what's really right for them.

Sideways to the top

"Younger members of the team are very ambitious, which is great – but they're also quite impatient," Sakina notes. "Sometimes they don't understand why they're not going to be the CMO within six years." Part of succession planning



"The perceptions and expectations of leaders are undergoing a major generational shift"

is making sure the next generation is prepared for what the role might entail, and has gained experience in different areas. This may mean more of a circuitous career route than they've imagined.

"Careers aren't necessarily linear," agrees Claire. "A sideways move, or even a backwards move, is often the most important to step forward during the longer-term." For example, moving from a marketing manager role to become a junior account manager could give you the sales experience you need to take you to a more senior marketing role, explains Claire. But explaining this strategy to a young employee who is looking for a way straight to the top can be challenging.

"When you have a traditional pyramid structure to your organisation, it's not physically possible to promote lots of people all of the time. By giving people more visibility on what they can do, it shows people have had to move in and out of marketing to get ahead," she adds.

"A marketer has a really strong skillset for other roles, for example moving into mergers and acquisitions… It's really rewarding when your plan comes together and someone takes a role that's different."

Fit for the future

However, in many sectors the traditional hierarchies are beginning to die out, replaced by flatter structures and a more democratic way of working. "The perceptions and expectations of leaders are undergoing a major generational shift," says Jada Balster, vice president of marketing at Workfront. "We are witnessing authoritarian styles of leadership slowly fade out in favour of a more consensual style of management."

This shift should also affect who you select as your successor as they must have the right emotional drivers and soft skills for the future environment. "The expectations on tomorrow's leaders demand that they be more vulnerable and willing to show an authentic human side," Jada says. "These traits must be rewarded in workplaces today so they're instilled in our culture long term."

And while it might be tempting to choose someone who is simply just like you, the company is likely to benefit from diversity. Jada looks for those who are fit to tackle the problems of tomorrow. "I'm less concerned with finding a clone of myself, I want to see a combination of curiosity and tenacity and an approach that might be different from mine, but leads to the same outcomes."

VISIBILITY FOR EQUINIX'S FUTURE LEADERS

Equinix runs a leadership development programme for its top performers, called Archimedes. The four-month scheme gives employees team projects to manage, which they then present back to the company. The employees are chosen for their high potential and it provides extra visibility where they were previously hidden.

Beyond this, every marketer at Equinix has the opportunity to understand the different fields of marketing and the roles within each. By splitting the different fields into groups, for example product marketing and corporate communications, employees are able to see different job families and the natural stages of progression towards that career. "They can see what a more senior role could look like and what skills they'll need," says Claire Macland.

This is discussed in career conversations every three months. These allow a dialogue around ambition and expertise. "The idea of transparency has been really useful because active coaching and guidance has made them feel good," says Claire, whether this means advice on a career change or a short-term placement onto another team. The result of this is enhanced skills, confidence and extra ambition.

CAN B2B MARKETING TACKLE GENDER BIAS IN LEADERSHIP?

A recent government-commissioned review exposed virulent sexism at the highest levels of many FTSE companies. It's clear the message on gender equality still hasn't landed. B2B Marketing asked B2B agencies how they'd tackle the issue.

Words: Molly Raycraft

"There aren't that many women with the right credentials and depth of experience to sit on the board – the issues covered are extremely complex."

This isn't a quote from the 1920s. It's from 2018. It's a quote from a recent government-commissioned report, the Hampton-Alexander review into increasing the number of women in senior positions in FTSE 350 companies.

It's clear that despite the progress of recent years, many major companies are still merely paying lip service to gender equality at the highest levels.

Some of the most powerful changes towards equality have been the result of evocative campaigns. So we asked four B2B agencies how they would translate the argument for women on boards into a campaign that dislodges these out-of-date views.

CAMPAIGN:

Sitting /Uncomfortably

AGENCY:

Twogether

BEHIND THE CAMPAIGN

Twogether wanted to move beyond the conversation of how women can benefit a business because, "there are countless compelling stats which prove the impact women have in the most successful companies, so why would they listen now?" says Jane Brown, account director at the agency. Twogether would be eager to grab the attention of executives by focusing on the future of their firms, and how they could lose out to young, naturally diverse companies if they didn't open their minds and change, quickly. "You're continually diversifying your approach, your products and your offering. But are you diversifying your board to your advantage?" asks Jane, outlining the focus. Risk was placed at the centre of this campaign, reminding discriminatory executives that perhaps they shouldn't be sitting so comfortably.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The campaign aims to take targeted executives on a journey of awareness, and show them that diversity of talent outweighs any boundaries of gender. Twogether wants to drill in the realities of the risk associated with ignoring the diversity of talent that could be available to them if they if they just looked. "To survive the massive success of millennially minded companies, there is no doubt the need to recruit talent should never stop, no matter who they are and where they come from," adds Jane. To meet these objectives Twogether would carry out deep research, and partner with a leading B2B brand to validate the positive findings.



THE CREATIVE

The campaign's aesthetics needed to convey the threat of diversity looming over those not willing to shift their mindsets (the agency wanted to not only focus on women but all demographics disadvantaged by narrow views). This threat and opportunity is neatly symbolised with a predator presented right in front of your eyes but also camouflaged from view – much like those executives who seem to be hearing the issue but not listening to its dangerous potential. Publishing a series of online papers – *Diversity is the source of progress in the boardroom* and production of interviews and discussions with board members and diversity leaders would also be used to persuade sexist leaders to "unthink their current perceptions".

CAMPAIGN EXECUTION

To provoke interest, Twogether would use guerrilla marketing tactics focused around the dangers of ignoring diversity issues and highlight that board members shouldn't be sitting so comfortably. Cushions labelled "Sitting/Uncomfortably" and stuffed with uncomfortable materials would be left in places near the perpetrators' offices, alongside programmatic ads with research-related messaging.

The second stage would focus on directing attention to the research by sending mini-books of the reports and interviews to the executives who have justified the lack of diversity on the board. The agency also suggested a media partnership with a newspaper such as the *Financial Times* to hit the target audience at peak time.

WHY THIS CAMPAIGN MATTERS

> "Much like Darwin's theory of evolution, survival is born through diversity. To survive, there's no doubting the need to recruit talent should never stop, no matter who they are and where they come from. The most influential companies, including the ones you know today and crucially, the ones you've never heard of yet – will disrupt your business before you are even aware of it. The threat is real but might not be obvious. So, should you still be sitting comfortably?"
>
> **Jane Brown, account director, Twogether**

CAMPAIGN:

The Pregnant CEO

AGENCY:

True

"Today's pregnant man is now a pregnant CEO, but he's still in the dark regarding women's equality in the workplace"

BEHIND THE CAMPAIGN

True was keen to get to the root of the problem and place it at the crux of its campaign. "Women obviously belong in the boardroom as much as men, but we dissected the issue further to find some of the underlying causes of career inequality," says MD Richard Parsons. The agency drilled into research highlighting the disparity in career development and progression as being women's unfortunate price to pay for having children. And this is what True wanted to tackle in the most audacious way possible.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The agency knew changing someone's point of view on such a topic isn't easy. So the campaign aimed to evoke a sense of empathy by provoking people (including male executives) into considering it from a female point of view. "Some issues are ingrained in our patriarchal structure, advertising could find it hard to create change," Richard explains. "Our concept has focused on our culture and perceptions of ourselves. Rather than changing the structure of society." The agency wanted to question the male executives who didn't believe women belonged in the boardroom and get people talking.

THE CREATIVE

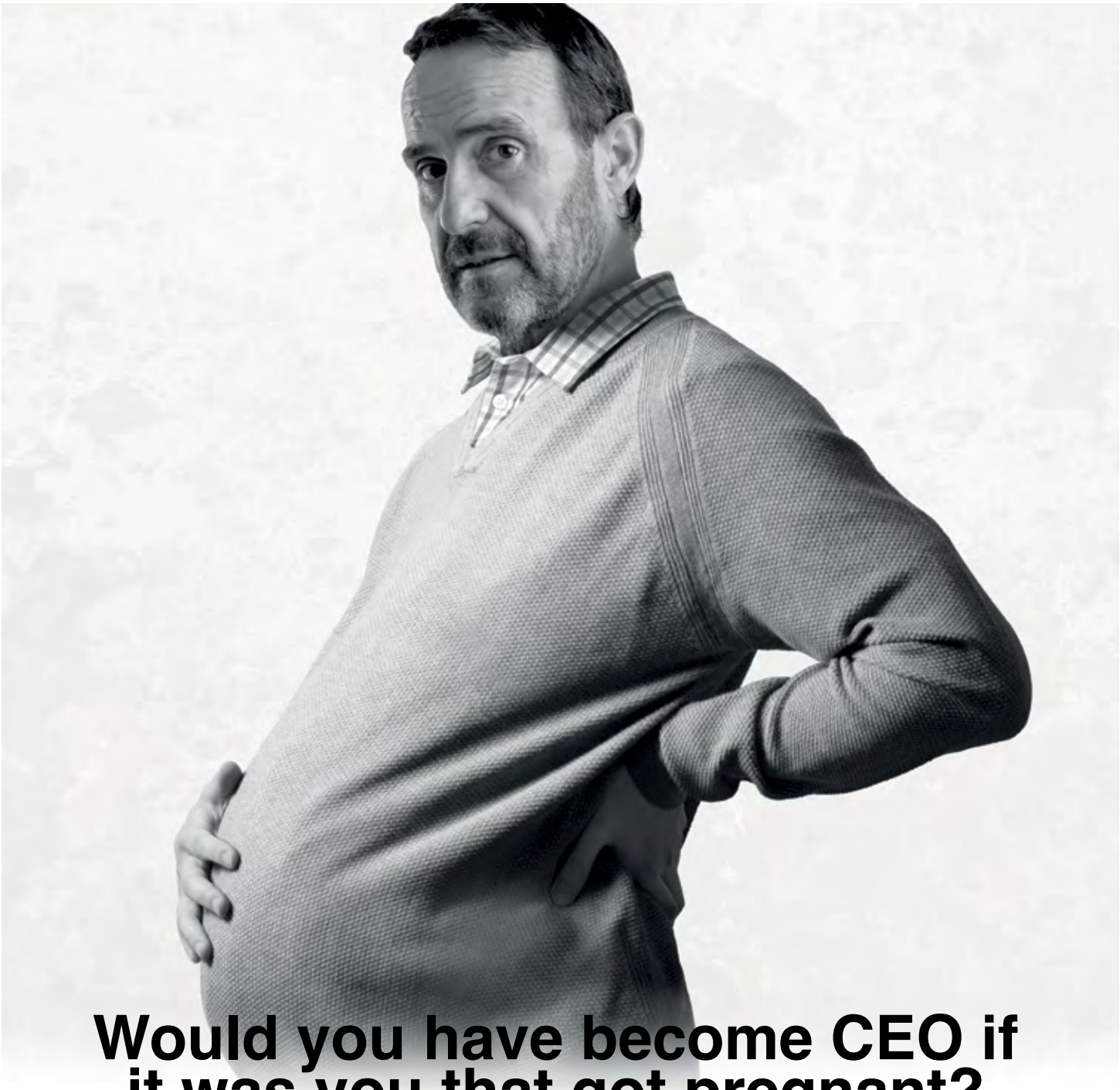
With its nostalgic black and white colour palette, the creative for this campaign pays homage to the iconic 'Pregnant man' ad created by Saatchi & Saatchi, which tackled male responsibility for contraception in 1970. The image was memorable and the question was simple and it efficacy changed men's perceptions. True wanted to progress the talking point to meet the modern day. "Today's pregnant man is now a pregnant CEO, but he's still in the dark regarding women's equality in the workplace." The agency directly questions male executives' journey to the top spot, and at the very least causes conversation, hoping to encourage a more positive opinion of women on the board.

CAMPAIGN EXECUTION

True's campaign will run across social media – not just hypothetically, but in real-life. The agency will launch the campaign to raise awareness of boardroom inequality not just in B2B but across all areas of business. "Our hope is that it will become more than just a piece of advertising and will be shared across social networks. We believe it has the potential to go beyond B2B marketing and command attention from a far broader group of people." The campaign also comes with a 'pledge-page' to raise money to continue heightening the awareness of the issue.

WHY THIS CAMPAIGN MATTERS

> "We believe business thrives when it operates a meritocracy. Supporting women throughout all stages of life is, quite simply, just good business. We hope our campaign will become more than just a piece of advertising and be shared across social networks. We believe it has the potential to go beyond B2B marketing and command attention from a far broader group of people."
>
> Richard Parsons, MD, True


Would you have become CEO if it was you that got pregnant?
Men progress their careers while women pay the penalty for motherhood. Let's put an end to career inequality and create more options for mothers.
Help us raise funds so we can launch this ad on social media and get everyone talking.
Pledge your support at trueagency.com/pregnantCEO
#pregnantCEO
Created by True for B2B Marketing. Inspired by the Pregnant Man by Saatchi & Saatchi for the Family Planning Association.

CAMPAIGN:

Fearless leaders

AGENCY:

Omobono

BEHIND THE CAMPAIGN

In light of the slurs reported by the Hampton-Alexander review, Omobono wanted to run a positive campaign. It didn't want to demonise white men, as like any group, people's views can be diverse. It's antiquated thinking that prevents women, ethnic minorities and those with disabilities from reaching their potential. From this, it chose to have a wider focus on balanced boardrooms and equality for all. "Uniting gender, ethnicity, and disability in our campaign was the right message and also the right strategy. It allowed us to increase the breadth of our audience and depth of our connection with them," explains Helen Rankin, lead strategist MENA at Omobono.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Omobono wanted its campaign to have both an immediate and long-lasting effect. The campaign was broken into three objectives to achieve this. First, it wanted to remove subjectivity by uncovering sexist comments as symptoms of limited business thinking. Before adding customer pressure by revealing how customer loyalty is taken for granted by all-white male boards. "A balanced boardroom makes every voice heard," says Helen. Finally, the agency was keen to reverse the mistakes of FTSE executives by appropriating an icon of outdated business thinking and creating an annual charity fundraiser to champion diversity on the board.

THE CREATIVE

The campaign targets four audiences: executives, shareholders, employees, and everyone else, and each group has different creative to suit. Photos of Rosa Parks, Kathy Switzer and disabled activists remind executives that some of the most memorable leaders are those who challenged the status quo. Stakeholders are challenged to literally look at their excuses in the face. Employees are encouraged to make their voices heard. The general audience were told to seize the moment by 'ending this sh*t'. Creative would take form in public places such as street billboards, bus stop posters, and mugs.

CAMPAIGN EXECUTION

Communication would be a combination of targeted and mass so pressure for change would be felt from both the top and bottom. The messages created to target each of the chosen groups would be amplified by paid media and PR. The agency also wanted to help businesses diversify by creating a microsite with a 'diversity dashboard', advice for leaders, and toolkits for customers and employees to make their voices heard. A fundraiser would happen every year to keep the awareness ongoing. "Funds raised would go to selected charities who lost money from the demise of the President's Club Charity Dinner, as well as lobbying, PR pressure, and grass-roots programmes," says Helen.

WHY THIS CAMPAIGN MATTERS

> "Attitudes change and someday non-balanced boardrooms will seem laughable. We wanted to make someday today – and give people a laugh in the process or make them pause for thought. Talkability, media coverage and commentary surrounding the campaign/conversation will show us the health of current attitudes among executives, shareholders, employees and customers."
>
> **Helen Rankin, lead strategist MENA, Omobono**





"A balanced boardroom makes every voice heard"







CAMPAIGN:

The Diversity 100

AGENCY:

Kingpin

"In short, dry content isn't interactive. The facts are there, they're just not brought to life"

BEHIND THE CAMPAIGN

Kingpin saw potential in the Hampton-Alexander review but wanted to dissect the reasons as to why people weren't taking note, and change their ways in light of the information it reported. It believed one of the reasons was because gender diversity reports are often seen as dry and lack the opportunity for interaction. The agency wanted to ignite the information and the issue; make it noticeable, make people listen and more importantly, take action. "In short, dry content isn't interactive. The facts are there, they're just not brought to life," explains James Foulkes, co-founder of Kingpin.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Kingpin wanted to understand the barriers as to why the gender diversity issue exists from all parties, so took a data-based rather than visual approach. It wanted to outline the boundaries employers and prospective employees saw for women. "Without answering these simple questions, whatever strategy we deploy has an equally high chance of failure as it does to succeed," says James. It also wanted to engage stakeholders, and the best way they felt to do this was by working out the value propositions, both metric-focused and emotionally-driven. "There are several data points for those that embrace a diverse culture," says James.

THE CREATIVE

To bring the facts to life and lay bare organisations' culture and commitment, Kingpin would launch a 'Diversity 100' ranking. Initially the campaign would target the perpetrators in the FTSE 350, but as momentum builds the ranking would be extended to the broader business world. "Change has to come from the boardroom," says James. "If we can truly make it commercial sense (even though the facts are already there) to look at your leadership team mix, then business will follow." Kingpin want to go beyond just the number of women in the company, it would create a scoring system that rewards initiatives and programmes to "reward actions not just a snapshot of today.

CAMPAIGN EXECUTION

Once the initial research for the ranking is completed Kingpin's efforts would become an account-based marketing campaign. They would target all 350 FTSE organisations via all possible channels. Communications would let them know the company's score on the 'Diversity 100' and the agency would also send them the full report in printed form. "For PLCs you can often do this to c-levels at their home addresses – if you dare!" James says. The campaign ultimately gives executives who are hardwired to conservative business ways, a goal, which of course they'll want to achieve, and in turn hopefully rewire their thinking.

WHY THIS CAMPAIGN MATTERS

> "The goal of the campaign is simple and one I'm surprised we even have to push. It has one objective, and that is to make sure no board director of any organisation can ever utter the words 'We have one woman on the board, so we are done – it is someone else's turn'."
>
> **James Foulkes, co-founder, Kingpin**

KINGPIN'S DATA FOCUS*:

36%

better return on equity

64% v 47%

Stock price growth

57%

of orgs with a female majority on the board outperform the OECD benchmark versus 33% as an average

6%

added to GDP for countries that reduce gender inequality in their workforce

11.1% v 5.8%

Earnings before interest and tax (EBIT)

*Stats cited from MCSI, McKinsey, Bloomberg and Citigroup

TOP 10 EXCUSES BY BOARD MEMBERS FROM THE FTSE 300, CITED BY THE HAMPTON-ALEXANDER REVIEW:

1. "I can't just appoint a woman because I want to."
2. "Shareholders just aren't interested in the make-up of the board, so why should we be?"
3. "My other board colleagues wouldn't want to appoint a woman on our board."
4. "There aren't any vacancies at the moment – if there were I would think about appointing a woman."
5. "We have one woman already on the board, so we are done – it is someone else's turn."
6. "There aren't that many women with the right credentials and depth of experience to sit on the board – the issues covered are extremely complex."
7. "We need to build the pipeline from the bottom – there just aren't enough senior women in this sector."
8. "All the 'good' women have already been snapped up."
9. "I don't think women fit comfortably into the board environment."
10. "Most women don't want the hassle or pressure of sitting on a board."

B2B Marketing

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"EXECUTIVE MARKETING HAS TURNED INTO MARKETING AUTOMATION"



Jerome Nadel,
CMO, Rambus

True marketing leaders get involved in product design, but Rambus' CMO Jerome Nadel believes many aren't sufficiently involved in this upstream activity. Interview by Paul Snell

Jerome Nadel is a psychologist, and he's diagnosed most CMOs with a problem.

While he is not a clinical psychologist, Jerome trained in 'applied experimental' psychology and understands the boundaries of human cognition and how to apply that to design. The field formed the foundation of what we understand about user experience today.

"I'm being provocative here, but I think executive marketing has turned into marketing automation," the CMO of Rambus tells B2B Marketing. "Most executive marketers have KPIs that cover putting systems in place, plus knowing the customer and how to reach out to them in a detailed, personified, segmented way. That's really about promotion – from a customer's awareness to their purchase decision."

He argues the more exciting work, what he describes as the 'upstream' activity – strategy, experimentation, gathering user stories – form the narrative for the promotion, and this should take place before the 'downstream' promotion.

"Of course promotion is super important, but the art is connecting it to the product," he adds. "An executive recruiter, who's a marketer herself, once told me that executive marketers who own product marketing are real CMOs, and those who don't are not. That hit me in the gut, because I don't have all of product marketing at Rambus reporting to me."

It's not just physical products he's talking about; it could be whatever you sell. What Jerome advocates is that executive marketers become as involved in this upstream activity as they are in the downstream stuff.

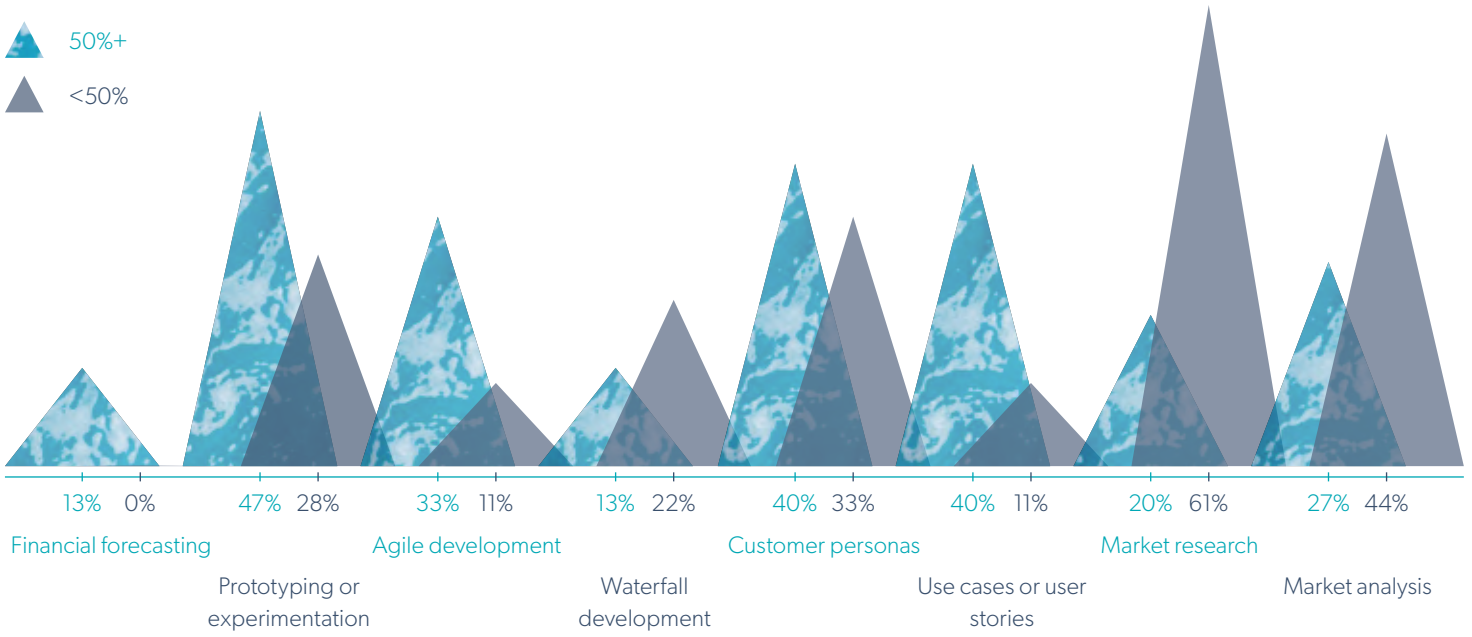
Success factors

In addition to his role at Rambus, Jerome is also president of the Silicon Valley chapter of the CMO Club. To evidence his argument, he conducted a survey among 64 peers establishing the correlation between the success of product launches and how involved the marketing leader was in the upstream and downstream activity.

The results? Those with a product launch success rate greater than 50% were much more likely to be involved upstream than their less successful counterparts.

Jerome explains: "When you look at 'prototyping and experimentation' for example (see chart), it suggests a

UPSTREAM TOOLS USED



correlation – there were more folks responding and when they did, it corresponded with more successful launches.

"In contrast more of those who talked about 'waterfall development' reported they had launches that were not successful. And I'm sorry for the market researchers and analysts, but the findings were that if you sit at your desk and let others tell you about your market, you're probably associated with launches that aren't successful."

The takeaway from this, he says, is that you need to play an active role in making sure the product and service your company is designing is effective – and then couple that with effective promotion. If you're involved early on, says Jerome, you'll be far more than a sales enabler. You'll be a partner in conception and development, plus everything that flows from that will be far more authentic. This alternative approach is user-centered design, also referred to as 'design-think'.

Blocked at the source

So what's holding back today's marketing leaders from being involved in upstream activity?

Jerome believes that as an organisation grows and its focus moves to P&L, business unit leaders are under pressure to make their numbers. They become less transversal and less collaborative.

Consequently, marketing and the marketing leader's role are seen as a downstream 'enabler'. People associate the marketing efforts with promoting, advertising, awareness, lead generation and sales. "I think both as an executive sitting at the table, and as a marketer, it's a bad trend. It makes marketers less effective," Jerome adds.

"We talk about how everyone loves stories, and not to be disrespectful or overly provocative, but you're just making up stories like they're a veneer. You're not even cooking the dish you're going to talk about," he argues.

But are marketers turning their backs on product management because it is perceived to be unexciting?

Jerome encourages an alternative view. In engineering companies, he says, there's typically no difference between product marketing and product management. It's an engineer's approach, which focuses on following a process – ticking off the things that need to be done with very little creativity involved.

"What we [as B2B marketers] do is complicated and esoteric, and it's not easy to get it"

He managed to change the approach at Rambus. The division in which he owns product marketing drew a Venn diagram with a product marketer on the left, and a product manager on the right. This was to show what similarities there are between the two roles, depending on the product line. That enables leaders to give better assistance depending on whether they need more, or less, product marketing support.

Soul-searching questions

Digging further into Jerome's argument could prompt further soul-searching. In complex B2B industries (in which products and services can be highly technical) how many marketing leaders truly understand the intricacies and detail of the products they're marketing? How many understand them enough to effectively contribute to the design phase?

"What we [as B2B marketers] do is complicated and esoteric, and it's not easy to get it," says Jerome. "We're learning it incrementally until we have that revelation when we get it – not just at a veneer level, and then it's more comfortable."

If you don't know what you do, you can't be of any help, he explains. And you need to demonstrate how you can add value in highly technical environments. If you can't, you'll won't be respected and will be told to buzz off and make an advert or a factsheet. You need to show both why your view is valuable and what's behind your thinking.

So how should a leader get more involved in the upstream activity? One area, Jerome proposes, is early internal involvement. One of the biggest problems he says, is the failure to sell marketing requirement documents (MRD) internally when new products are introduced.

"When the product marketer sits at their desk and creates the MRD it doesn't have any life. And here's where marketing and influence is so important – you need to get your internal audience excited about what you're doing, you need to paint your vision of what it's going to be like when it's done," he says. When this doesn't happen the concept often falls flat. And if you're not testing at this stage you won't get the all-important customer voice.

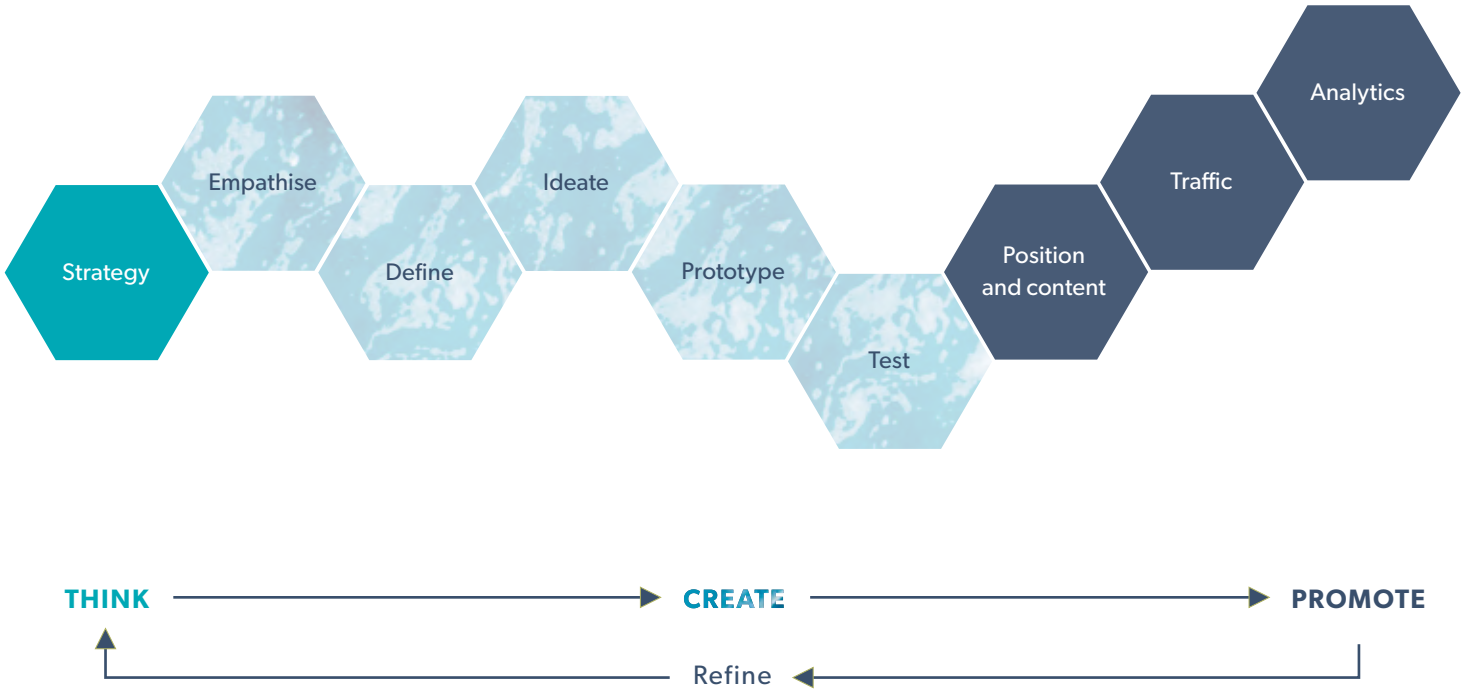
"At that point of concept and design, my group creates beautiful collateral. I don't mean factsheets - it could be UI demos – but they use it to get structured, critical and positive feedback on what we're doing. Once that feedback is in, the product requirements document gets better because we've already done some iterative 'voice of the customer' validation."

But leaders might face a more fundamental challenge in that any involvement in upstream activity is questioned. So how should one sell it into the business?

"You have to bring real value," advises Jerome. "In today's world things like voice of the customer are important. Number one, I don't just want to promote with my eyes closed, I want to be close to the voice of the customer – so understand what's going on with them. And often if you're in B2B you have to go past your direct customer and go to their customer."

Jerome is a big advocate of design-thinking and advices marketers to brush up on this as well as the idea of being empathic with the end customer. You can do this by thinking of use cases and how you will tell a story about your product and service.

CONNECTING MARKETING TO DESIGN



Applying design-led thinking at Rambus

The history of Rambus, says Jerome, is almost like a Dan Brown novel. In 1990 two Stanford University graduates, Mark Horowitz and Mike Farmwald, came up with an interface architecture that multiplied the speed data could move from RAM to a processor – a requirement for the next generation of computing.

The company went public with a hugely successful IPO in 1997, and drove much of the revenue it earned through licensing patents for these chip interfaces to customers. But the company's "assertive" approach to licensing won it few friends, and a few years of heavy litigation saw the stock price fall to a low.

Ron Black was brought in as CEO, and Jerome joined shortly after in 2012 as CMO. "There's nothing wrong with licensing if you give value. You want to stabilise that base of revenue by getting long term contracts with those who license, and you want to make products out of the inventions you have," says Jerome. "That's been the transition and our market cap quadrupled, the stock has climbed 4x. We're still getting there, but it's been a big change on how folks in the company see themselves.

"When I came in, it was a very engineering-led company. There wasn't a CMO, and Ron asked me to come in with a seat at the table and contribute to strategy, a way forward, and product and service thinking. I think, humbly, that has really changed the company, and clearly with my executive peers we play a very important, connected role."

CAREER HISTORY: JEROME NADEL

› CMO, Rambus	2012-present
› Chief experience officer, Option	2011-2012
› EVP user experience and marketing, MobiWire	2009-2011
› Chief experience officer, Human Factors International	2003-2009
› VP marketing, Gemplus	1999-2003
› CMO, SLP InfoWare	1998-1999



THE RISE, FALL, AND RISE OF MARTECH

The growth in scale and power of martech has been stratospheric, with an explosion of hype and investment in platforms and systems, many of which are barely out of their 'beta' development phase. But is that all about to change? Are we on the cusp of a profound re-evaluation of martech deployed and utilised by B2B marketers? This was the question we sought to address in a major new report, created in conjunction with Stein IAS. **Words:** Joel Harrison

Marketing technology, or martech, is increasingly defining the world that B2B marketers operate in – for better, or worse. The level of investment and focus on technology is growing exponentially, as evidenced by the continued growth of the number of vendors listed in the chiefmartec.com chart, which hit 7000 for the first time this year.

But what are the practical implications for B2B marketers (particularly senior ones) in managing this technology – and more importantly, in delivering effective marketing communications? Furthermore how are these implications going to change should our reliance on tech deepen (as looks most likely)?

These are some of the key questions that B2B Marketing and Stein IAS wanted to answer in a landmark report on this exploding and increasingly important scene. But perhaps more importantly, we also wanted to get a sense of whether the hype and momentum behind martech was showing signs of tailing off. Are CMOs beginning to focus on making the best use of the infrastructure they have, rather than continually investing in more new kit – and dealing with the inevitable disruptions this would entail? In other words, we wanted to understand if there were signs we are exiting this first rapid ascent phase of martech development, and whether we're seeing the emergence of a more measured, less hype-fuelled (but probably more effective) attitude and approach to martech. As the title suggests, the rise, fall and rise, of martech.

To build a picture for this report, I personally interviewed nine senior marketers in leading B2B organisations on different sides of the Atlantic, to understand their martech strategy, the challenges they have faced, and where they believe the future lies. These interviews were some of the most prescient and interesting that I have conducted in 14 years of running B2B Marketing, and provide a fascinating perspective of an industry (if not a profession) in a state of transition.

The full report is available to download from our site at bit.ly/riseofmartech, but for this edition of *B2B Marketing* we've summarised some of the key findings below.

1. Enthusiasm for martech remains a critical component in marketing success, and marketers are spending between 30% and 50% of their budgets on the technology and associated people skills. There is some evidence this is starting to flatten out, as some companies review their existing infrastructure, but the overall trajectory appears to be upward. The overriding message is that today's marketing leaders can't do their job without martech, their optimism surrounding the potential of the technology vastly outweighs any cynicism.

> "Marketers will not succeed without martech – it's not even an option. Does that mean it isn't complex? No. Could we still get into trouble without the right skills to use the best tools? Yes. But the idea that it's optional is a flawed premise."
>
> **Matt Preschern, senior VP demand and performance marketing, CA Technologies**

> "The capability of martech now compared to even two to three years ago is radically different in

terms of what you can actually put into action. It's not just pie in the sky anymore. The solutions all actually work well. Now it's more about building a business case to find the best solutions out there and whether it delivers a return.

Andrew Nester, CMO, Nuix

2. The tech stack is growing in size and complexity – management of this has become the biggest martech challenge. Some of the marketing leaders we spoke to had up to 50 separate platforms in their martech stack – although such proliferation was typically the result of merger and acquisition, rather than profligate purchasing.

"Am I daunted by the chiefmartec.com landscape chart [which shows 7000 martech platforms]? Yes, I am, and I'm daunted by the chart of our own tech stack. We're constantly working with new platforms and new organisations. We need better knowledge in this area, and we're boosting our marketing ops team to enable this. We rely on them to trial and measure. I need a line of site on these new things."

Kathy Seegebrecht, CMO, UL

"Looking at the martech map is scary. There is just so much out there, it's hard to know who does what anymore. But CMOs need to stay on top of this, as needs change and new things become important. You need the ability to 'sunset' some technologies and implement new ones."

Vasu Jakkal, CMO, FireEye

3. Marketers don't want the future of their martech stack to be dictated by vendors and whatever's on their development roadmap. This has particular resonance for the cloud solutions vendors (Oracle, Salesforce, Adobe, IBM, Microsoft), whose aim is to facilitate as many martech needs as possible within one integrated suite.

"The vendors are expanding their capabilities and replicating the functionality of one another. What is best-of-breed anymore?"

"The vendors are expanding their capabilities and replicating the functionality of one another. What is best-of-breed anymore? There has to be consolidation of the martech world. We need to get budget working harder, and it's easier to do all of this on one platform than on four."

Paul Stevenson, head of marketing operations, O2

"The growth in marketing cloud providers could go one of two ways. Firstly, everyone buys one cloud solution or other. This means integration is hassle free, but it results in high prices, lock-in, lack of control and no flexibility. The second scenario is best-of-breed. But that requires you to have a world-class team to make it work, and you'll need to integrate everything. The nirvana is somewhere in the middle, with some degree of interoperability. We all want choice, flexibility and the ability to create innovation."

Vasu Jakkal

4. There are numerous speed bumps and obstacles along the road to building your optimum martech stack.

"Martech requires new skills and responsibilities, and we need to create these within the organisation. Talent is in demand, and there's more demand than supply. This can bring your budget up. To manage this, we are spending less on agencies and managing more marketing ourselves. This has benefits in terms of cost and flexibility."

Kathy Seegebrecht

"It's becoming harder and harder to be average as a B2B marketer. Today, with the level of technology involved in execution, there's nowhere for marketers to hide. If you're not getting enough traction, you're probably not doing your job well enough. This will inevitably challenge marketers."

Antonia Wade, CMO, Thomson Reuters

"Our CEO and CFO are very interested in marketing, and that's a double-edged sword. In other places where I've worked, marketing was a little island. At Nuix, we're seeing a very big investment in marketing in a very positive way. My challenge is that our c-suite needs to take time to understand what we're doing. Their understanding of marketing is a bit outdated. But you also have to prevent them from being too excited and manage their expectations."

Andrew Nester

"The discussion around shadow IT will only grow. Martech was previously seen as a tactical solution, and marketing was not scrutinised over the investments it made. That's starting to change now, and you could say that it signals martech is growing up… but it doesn't always feel that way!"

Matt Preschern

5. There are a handful of key challenges which marketing leaders need to address in order to enable martech to achieve its much-anticipated potential.

"The biggest challenge is integration. Every time you take a new bit of tech, you have to look at how it will integrate. And you need to train people on how to use it. CMOs need specialist resource to handle it. In the pitch process for new technology, integration challenges are not considered thoroughly enough."

Vasu Jakkal

"A key learning for me is that I would do more scoping at the start and look more closely at the impact. I'd ask vendors where they think we should focus, where the bottlenecks might be. Now that we have the right skills within the team, it's much easier. It took us 18 months to roll out Eloqua for enterprise customers in 2013, but it only took us 12 weeks to roll it out last year for the midmarket team because we have the in-house skills."

Paul Stevenson

MODERN MARKETING TECHNOLOGY: THE PLATFORM FOR POST-MODERN MARKETING

Tom Stein, chairman and chief client officer, Stein IAS

In interviewing marketing leaders for this new report, The rise, fall and rise of martech, Joel Harrison called his conversations the "most fascinating" he has conducted in 14 years of running B2B Marketing. I'd add that they may be the most important.

According to Gartner, B2B marketers in the US and UK are on average allocating 22% of their budgets to martech. Many other studies validate this investment level and martech's ongoing adoption. Clearly, martech has risen with amazing speed and seemingly will keep rising in prominence and predominance.

Yet, for all the data pointing to martech's ascendance, many other reports point to a parallel and far different reality – namely that marketers' proficiency in utilising martech and realising the desired benefits lags far behind investment levels.

This begs the question: Are the massive bets marketers are placing on martech not paying off? And is martech actually starting to level off or even decline because of this?

In Stein IAS' view, the answer is no. Martech is not falling and, inevitably, will continue to rise. But as the study clearly indicates, marketers are grappling with enormous new challenges.

Meeting those challenges is the imperative of the day for B2B marketers for two interrelated reasons. The first is that the stakes are high – and our seat at the table ultimately rides on the results we must deliver on the back of martech. The second is that B2B's impending post-modern marketing era will be marked by creative and content experiences that will rise to new heights powered by a growing grasp of digital technologies.

The role and relevance of martech in B2B have never been greater than right now. The rise, fall and rise of martech provides a compelling view of how CMOs are preparing for the future.

In the full report...

- How to plan for the future of your martech.
- How to enable creative and emotionally-rooted experiences.
- The role of agencies in this new world.
- How to be ready for what's next in martech.
- Twelve things that you need to do to achieve excellence in B2B martech.





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STANDING OUT IN PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

Differentiation in the B2B market can be a tricky business, particularly in professional services where rivals often compete to deliver similar services. Rebecca Ley talks to those in the sector about why a strong brand is crucial

The success of professional services companies is critical not only for the many businesses they help, but for the UK economy – in fact, the sector represents 15% of UK GDP.

From architects to financial advisors, the range of businesses that professional services cover is incredibly vast, yet the difference between them and their competitors is not. In a world where customers are increasingly calling for tailored, responsive and customised solutions, this is a problem.

So how does a professional services company differentiate? The answer for many is to focus on brand. "Brand plays a very important role as a way to distinguish yourself and highlight important underlying values," says Steve Sinclair, head of sales and marketing at PwC.

For PwC, it's all about purpose and values, explains Steve. "People want to work with those who share their values," he says, "We see that all the time in B2C, but those relationships are increasingly important in B2B too." What the business stands for, says Steve, is what makes it stand out.

A trusted brand is a remembered brand

"Brands live in one place and one place alone," says Brian Macreadie, head of brand and campaign marketing at Berwin Cave Leighton Paisner LLP. "That's the mind of the client. Can you imagine having an indistinct, ignored or forgettable brand – and still wanting to outperform your rivals? Good luck with that!"

It's a strong argument and one that shouldn't be ignored. But how do marketers at professional services firms ensure their brand stays firm in their customer's minds?

For Brian it really comes down to being trusted. "Trust in professional services is probably the most critical factor impacting purpose," he explains. "As a marketer, if we are to persuade clients to consider replacing an incumbent adviser, they need to really trust us. And I mean potentially 'putting their career on the line' trust us."

Steve agrees that a trusted brand is a remembered brand. PwC positions itself from the pack by maintaining its reputation as 'leading on trust', as well as being recognised for quality, technical knowledge and excellence, says Steve.

Building trust means a constant monitoring of relationships. "We spend a lot of time analysing the feedback we get," explains Steve. This includes information from every project the company runs, post-decision reviews from clients (whether PwC wins the business or not) and conversations with key stakeholders during the course of the year.

"The feedback tends to be plotted on a buyer journey so that we understand how we're being perceived. It gives us a very detailed view of what we're good at and what we're not good at," says Steve.

He believes it's crucial to ensure the values you're famous for are embedded into how partners and directors behave with clients. "A classic example is around transparency," he explains, "around the fees you charge, the diversity of your team, the experience you've had. Being open about who you are, and what you do reinforces the values."

A sense of pride

Julie Parsons, global marketing communications director at law firm White & Case emphasises brand as essential to gaining good relationships in the first place. "Of course lawyers always get business because of individual reputations, but there's a limit to the people they know," she says. "A strong brand brings people closer to the negotiating table and allows you to build relationships. It ensures prospects will seek you out when the need arises," she explains.



Julie believes differentiation is about what you do, not what you say. "You need to focus on what your real competitive advantage is," she says, acknowledging that this might only mean small gains when the services you offer are similar to your rivals. "But it's looking at those attributes you outperform the competition on. For White & Case it's the strength of our global network, which is difficult to replicate, the strength we have on the ground in those markets, and client commitment."

Of course, no one outside of the company will believe in your brand, vision and purpose if your own employees don't. They must be your brand ambassadors.

"Your people are both the product and the route to market," says Julie, explaining that internal marketing is just as important as external. An employee who has a sense of pride in the organisation does the external work for you, she says, and delivering on your employee proposition means that people will want to be your advocates too.

Brian agrees, while highlighting the problems associated with an industry built on people. "In professional services we're promoting people and their intellectual capital, but people all have different personalities and styles of working, so creating a consistent brand to unite diverse people can be complex."

Investing in your partners' reputation can infuse the lifeblood of your business, but also presents a challenge, warns Brian. "People that you've supported heavily to build their personal brand can resign and walk straight out of the door to a rival."

Targeted content

Looking for external cues for success, Julie points to understanding your audience as well as your competitors. Designing relevant content that speaks to the right buyer at the right time can help attract prospects. "It doesn't have to be onerous," she says, "short, pithy content drip-fed into the market with frequency is more powerful than a 40-page report twice a year."

PwC also makes use of short-form content, using social media as a way to increase transparency while creating valuable information for its audience. This extends to reporting, where the firm has made sure to stay ahead of the curve.

The company was the first to go digital with its annual report, in a move to develop a clear tone of voice and approachable storytelling. "We were also the first to publish our gender pay gap figures and we've been very active in publishing diversity and inclusivity figures as we believe that's part of building trust," says Steve.

Of course content can be a means to position your brand and remind your customer what you stand for. Professional services companies have to sell the invisible, focusing on intangible expertise rather than products. This means making sure they stay current, says Steve.

"Sometimes brands are seen for what they used to represent and not what they are now," he explains. For example, PwC was historically known as an accountancy firm, but now consulting on a host of areas such as blockchain, AI and even drones. Moving with the times, and communicating your new vision to clients is essential to keep your brand's reputation modern, he says.

Brian echoes this. He interprets brands as simply what their clients think of them. "All professional services firms can hope for is a clear vision of what we want client perceptions of us to be, and then do absolutely everything in our power to make that vision become a reality."

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9 THINGS I LEARNED ABOUT INFLUENCER MARKETING IN B2B



Is influencer marketing right for you? And if so, what do you need to do to make it work, and scale effectively? Here's what Joel Harrison learned at B2B Marketing's recent interactive session with Traackr and SAP Ariba

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 responsible for the development of B2B Marketing's training and events activities.

I spent a fascinating morning with the good people from Traackr and SAP Ariba learning about the latest trends in influencer marketing in B2B – a widely misunderstood and sometimes even maligned discipline.

Nicolas Chabot, EVP EMEA of Traackr, revealed the results of its annual survey into key trends in B2B influencer behaviour and activities, after which Amisha Gandhi, VP of influencer marketing at SAP Ariba, spoke candidly and enthusiastically about how that organisation is using influencer marketing to improve its customer journey and interaction.

These presentations and the following discussion went a long way to deepen my understanding and counter a lot of the cynicism which exists in some quarters around influencer marketing, particularly within B2B. There was a wealth of knowledge and insights from these sessions, and below I have listed just a small sample of the things which resonated most with me.

1. Start small with influencer marketing – pick a defined use case and run a trial. Although it has lots of potential applications, it's not a panacea for all your marketing ills.

2. As influencer programmes scale, compliance becomes the number one issue. It has wide-ranging implications across your business, and how it engages with customers, and these need to be understood.

3. Direct peer-to-peer is key to managing your top influencers, most likely between the programme manager and/or the company's CMO, because ultimately people buy people.

4. Agencies can potentially handle the management of influencer programmes at the beginning, middle and end of the maturity curve – they can add different value at different stages. But for companies who are mature in their use of influencer, the bulk of the activity is likely to be managed in-house.

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5. Technology can allow both agency and client to work from the same dashboards, sharing metrics and having the same visibility over effectiveness.

6. You don't need to pay B2B influencers to collaborate, apart from things you would pay them for in other capacities. Most will offer their insights and contribute towards content activities (through interviews) if they perceive and understand the value exchange.

7. The style of engagement with influencers must be about 'collaboration', not 'management', like you would a supplier of other kinds of marketing services. Your first question to them must be: "How can I help you and your audience?"

8. You need a c-suite sponsor to trial influencer marketing effectively – and probably an individual tasked with building a business case and proving the relevance.

9. Most importantly, influencer marketing is an ethos, rather than a tool or a channel. It runs throughout your marketing activity, underpinning and supporting all aspects.

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