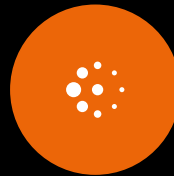


The B2B Marketing US Agencies Benchmarking Report *2021*

2021



US



Contents

Section 1: League tables	4	The blurring lines between ABM and demand gen <i>Red House</i>	41
Top 48 US B2B marcomms agencies	6	Integrated demand gen strategies – where does programmatic ABM end and demand gen begin? <i>Kingpin</i>	43
Top 10 fastest growers	10	Developing emotional capital to overcome hyper fragmentation and audience inattention <i>MSQ B2B</i>	49
Top 10 rising stars	11	Changes in technology and consumer behavior have opened up a new opportunity for B2B marketers <i>LoSasso Integrated Marketing</i>	51
Top 10 international B2B marcomms agencies and networks	13		
World map: Agencies with an international reach	14		
Section 2: Market analysis	16	Why knowing your audience is more important than ever <i>Two Rivers Marketing</i>	53
Features:		Which emerging or ‘fringe’ channels will break through in B2B in 2021? <i>Merkle B2B</i>	55
The state of the US agency marketplace	18	Bringing your ‘A’ game to ABM <i>Quarry</i>	57
Insights from the highest-performing US agencies	32		
The 2021 Trend Tracker	44		
Opinion:		Section 3: Showcase pages	58
How do you build impactful campaigns in today’s uber-fragmented media landscape? <i>TriComB2B</i>	25	Services selector	58
A funny thing happened on the way to martech ubiquity... <i>BBN International</i>	27	BBN International	60
Why flexibility is crucial in the age of uncertainty <i>The Mx Group</i>	29	Godfrey	62
Stay the course <i>MarketReach</i>	31	Iris	64
The age of transformation is already here <i>Iris</i>	37	Kingpin	66
Are you ready to meet buyers’ changing expectations? <i>Godfrey</i>	39	LoSasso Integrated Marketing	68
		MarketReach	70
		Merkle B2B	72
		MSQ B2B	74
		Quarry	76
		Red House	78
		The Mx Group	80
		TriComB2B	82
		Two Rivers Marketing	84

Introduction

Flying in the face of adversity



David Rowlands,
editor,
B2B Marketing

If a psychic told you in 2019 that a pandemic was on the horizon, you would be forgiven for selling your business, escaping to some far away corner of the planet, and becoming a self-sustaining farmer.

Failure would seem inevitable, and the consequent restrictions simply too much for any business to reasonably cope with.

Fortunately, it appears that US B2B marketers are not interested in switching careers, and agencies have (pun intended) continued to grow.

The scale of this achievement can simply not be underplayed.

2020 was one of the worst economic years in many of our lives, and for US agencies to actually report an increase in their gross income is truly inspiring.

Of course, this doesn't mean 2020 was an easy year. Quite the opposite, in fact. The average headcount has sadly decreased, demonstrating the impact of the crisis on employment. In addition, agencies – and the entire B2B industry in fact – have had to dial up their digital transformation to full speed in order to succeed in a now almost entirely digital world.

Whilst normality is now just coming into view, 2021 is not without its own challenges, of course, as you'll see in our features on pages 18 and 32. Unsurprisingly, many of the same challenges faced by agencies in 2020 have simply carried over to this year, namely: working from home and a rise in short-termism.

However, challenges are there to be overcome, and the fact that the vast majority of US agencies we spoke to are expecting growth in the coming 12 months suggests they will be.

Perhaps most inspiring of all is our 2021 Trend Tracker, which you can find on page 44. Without going into too much detail, the Trend Tracker suggests that agencies are focusing increasingly on the customer this year, with customer experience, personalisation and customer success (amongst others) all at the forefront of B2B marketers' brains. Arguably, this is where B2B has always needed to go anyway – perhaps it just needed a push to get there.

I will leave you with this. 2020 was a tough year, and 2021 won't be easy, but US agencies are positive about the state of the market, they're reporting continued growth, and they almost all expect a great year to come. I can certainly raise a glass to that.

Section 1: League tables

Top 48 US B2B marcomms agencies	6
Top 10 fastest growers	10
Top 10 rising stars	11
Top 10 international B2B marcomms agencies and networks	13
World map: Agencies with an international reach	14

League tables

Top 48 US B2B marcomms agencies

Rank Agency	Type of agency	US GI in \$m in most recent financial year	US GI YoY change in \$m	YoY US GI % change	US headcount 2020	US YoY headcount % change	Rank in 2020	Rank change
1 Merkle B2B (p.72)	Integrated	115.3	45.1	64	339	28	n/a	*
2 Bader Rutter	Integrated	45.1	-4.8	-10	260	-12	1	↓
3 Iris Worldwide (p.64)	Integrated	30.1	-3.2	-10	143	-8	15	↑
4 MSQ B2B (p.74)	Digital	26.7	3.1	13	143	-74	n/a	*
5 Fahlgren Mortine	Integrated	25	-4.5	-15	163	-13	5	—
6 The Mx Group (p.80)	Integrated	24.8	4.7	23	130	0	7	↑
7 MOWER – Eric Mower and Associates	Integrated	23.1	-3	-11	151	-8	6	↓
8 Walker Sands	Integrated	21.3	1.3	6	128	-2	n/a	/
9 Two Rivers Marketing (p.84)	Integrated	21	-0.5	-2	180	9	n/a	*
10 Cargo	Integrated	16	-1.5	-9	40	-12	n/a	*
11 Gelia	Integrated	15.4	-0.1	-1	120	-6	8	↓
12 Stirista	Martech	14.1	3.9	38	50	79	12	—
13 Stein IAS	Integrated	12.4	0.6	5	60	-9	11	↓
14 Quarry (p.76)	Integrated	10.2	-2	-16	70	-14	10	↓

Key: * New entry; ↑ Moved up rankings; ↓ Moved down rankings; — Stayed the same; / Re-entry; Returning to the survey after a year's absence

Notes and annotations on specific agencies

MSQ B2B (4) is the parent company of Stein IAS (13), whose information is also included in this report. Stein's data is shown separately, but is also included in MSQ B2B's data.

Agencies highlighted in bold are sponsors of this year's report. To hear more from them, head to the page numbers listed.

Definition of gross income (GI)

The data in this table is ranked using gross income. Gross income is calculated by deducting external media and production costs from the invoiced total. It includes income from all above-the-line and below-the-line activity. If the agency has been subject to a takeover or merger during the financial year in question, gross income includes the combined figure.

Rank Agency	Type of agency	US GI in \$m in most recent financial year	US GI YoY change in \$m	YoY US GI % change	US headcount 2020	US YoY headcount % change	Rank in 2020	Rank change
15 Omobono	Digital	10	-1.2	-11	68	-24	30	↑
16 Transmission	Integrated	10	3.6	57	51	65	21	↑
17 MarketOne International	Demand gen	9.9	-0.5	-5	55	6	n/a	*
18 CG Life	Integrated	8.8	-0.2	-2	61	39	14	↓
19 Godfrey (p.62)	Integrated	8.6	-1.1	-11	80	-9	13	↓
20 DeSantis Breindel	Creative	8.2	-0.8	-9	34	0	16	↓
21 Rabinovici & Associates	Integrated	7.8	-1.3	-15	47	-2	n/a	*
22 April Six	Integrated	7.8	0.8	12	38	12	18	↓
23 Kingpin Communications (p.66)	Demand gen	7.7	1.6	27	12	100	26	↑
24 Metia Group	Integrated	7.4	0.7	10	50	2	19	↓
25 Elevated Third	ABM	6.8	1	17	38	6	n/a	*
26 Retina	Integrated	6.7	0.8	13	62	9	23	↓
27 Directive	Demand gen	6.6	0.2	3	48	-14	n/a	/
28 Somnio	Integrated	6.5	-0.08	-1	30	7	20	↓
29 The Marketing Practice	Integrated	6.3	1.5	31	34	21	27	↓
30 TriComB2B (p.82)	Integrated	6.2	0.01	0.2	41	3	22	↓
31 LoSasso Integrated Marketing (p.68)	Integrated	5.9	0.4	7	33	-13	n/a	/

Reflect how customers feel.



Superior Emotional Capital for Enduring Brand Advantage

There's plenty of talk about emotion in B2B marketing. But creating enduring advantage takes more than plucking heart strings. It means discovering how customers really feel in order to engage emotionally and empathetically. Showing up across channels with coherence. Being aware of your strengths and facing up to your weaknesses. Being ethical, respectful and on the level at all times. That's what MSQ B2B is uniquely suited to help you do. With end-to-end capabilities all joined up to meet any need, we can develop the Superior Emotional Capital you need to get closer to your customers and create lasting advantage.

Meet MSQ B2B

B2B Brand to Demand
Data, Research & Insights
Creative
Corporate Design
Internal Comms
PR, Social & Content
Media
Web & Digital

[MSQpartners.com/B2B](https://msqpartners.com/B2B)

msq

* New entry: Included in the survey for the first time
 † Moved up rankings
 ‡ Moved down rankings
 † Re-entry: Returning to the survey after a year's absence
 / Stayed the same

Rank	Agency	Type of agency	US GI in \$m in most recent financial year	US GI YoY change in \$m	YoY US GI % change	US headcount 2020	US YoY headcount % change	Rank in 2020	Rank change
32	CBD Marketing	Integrated	5.3	0.2	4	35	0	24	↓
33	Intelligent Demand	ABM	5.1	0.8	19	35	21	28	↓
34	MarketReach (p.70)	Other	4.9	0.1	2	38	6	25	↓
35	SCHERMER	Integrated	3.7	0.08	2	23	10	29	↓
36	Crossbow Group	Integrated	3.2	-0.3	-9	28	-7	32	↓
37	MOI Global	Integrated	3.1	1.3	69	10	100	n/a	/
38	David James Group	ABM	2.8	-0.5	-14	18	-10	33	↓
39	Littlefield Agency	Creative agency	2.8	-0.9	-25	19	-21	n/a	/
40	Red House (p.78)	Demand gen	2.8	-0.4	-11	26	0	34	↓
41	ER Marketing	Channel marketing	2.7	-0.6	-20	14	8	31	↓
42	Pepper Group	Integrated	1.8	0	0	14	0	n/a	/
43	Zipline B2B Marketing	Digital	1.7	0.2	13	25	25	n/a	*
44	The ABM Agency	ABM	1.6	0.8	108	17	113	n/a	*
45	Velocity Partners	Content marketing	1.4	0.9	167	4	0	38	↓
46	Knowmad Digital Marketing	Digital	1.2	0.2	15	8	14	n/a	*
47	Drucker Group	ABM	1	-0.1	-9	7	17	n/a	*
48	EvolveBPM	Demand gen	0.6	0.06	10	8	0	n/a	*

Top 10 fastest growers

This table shows the US agencies that reported the largest increase in US gross income year-on-year

Rank Agency	Type of agency	YoY change in US GI in \$m	US GI in \$m in latest financial year	YoY % US GI change	Rank in main league table	Rank in 2020 fastest growers table	YoY % change in US headcount
1 Merkle B2B (p.72)	Integrated	45.1	115.3	64	1	n/a	28.4
2 The Mx Group (p.80)	Integrated	4.7	24.8	23	6	3	0
3 Stirista	Martech	3.9	14.1	38	12	6	78.6
4 Transmission	Integrated	3.6	10	57	16	2	64.5
5 MSQ B2B (p.74)	Digital	3.1	26.7	13	4	n/a	-73.6
6 Kingpin Communications (p.66)	Demand gen	1.6	7.7	27	23	7	100
7 The Marketing Practice	Integrated	1.5	6.3	31	29	13	21.4
8 Walker Sands	Integrated	1.3	21.3	6	8	n/a	-1.5
9 MOI Global	Integrated	1.3	3.1	69	37	n/a	100
10 Elevated Third	ABM	1	6.8	17	25	n/a	5.5

Top 10 rising stars

This table shows the US agencies that reported the largest increase in US gross income year-on-year as a percentage

Rank Agency	Type of agency	YoY US GI % change	US GI in \$m in most recent financial year	US GI YoY change in \$m	Rank in main league table
1 Velocity Partners	Content marketing	167	1.4	0.9	45
2 The ABM Agency	ABM	108	1.6	0.8	44
3 MOI Global	Integrated	69	3.1	1.3	37
4 Merkle B2B (p.72)	Integrated	64	115.3	45.1	1
5 Transmission	Integrated	57	10	3.6	16
6 Stirista	Martech	38	14.1	3.9	12
7 The Marketing Practice	Integrated	31	6.3	1.5	29
8 Kingpin Communications (p.66)	Demand gen	27	7.7	1.6	23
9 The Mx Group (p.80)	Integrated	23	24.8	4.7	6
10 Intelligent Demand	ABM	19	5.1	0.8	33

B2B Marketing Training

**We are proud to deliver the future of training
with our certified virtual workshops**

Our training is case study rich, practical in outcomes and focused on the genuine areas where we know you want to grow the most. We have best in class B2B consultant trainers, because we know the B2B market is the toughest, yet most rewarding market in town and we have to reflect that, in all that we do.

Course topics include:

Account-based
marketing

Customer
experience

Content

Planning
and strategy

Martech

Lead nurturing/
Lead generation



*“Genuinely the best
training I’ve had.
Engaging, informative
and relatable”*

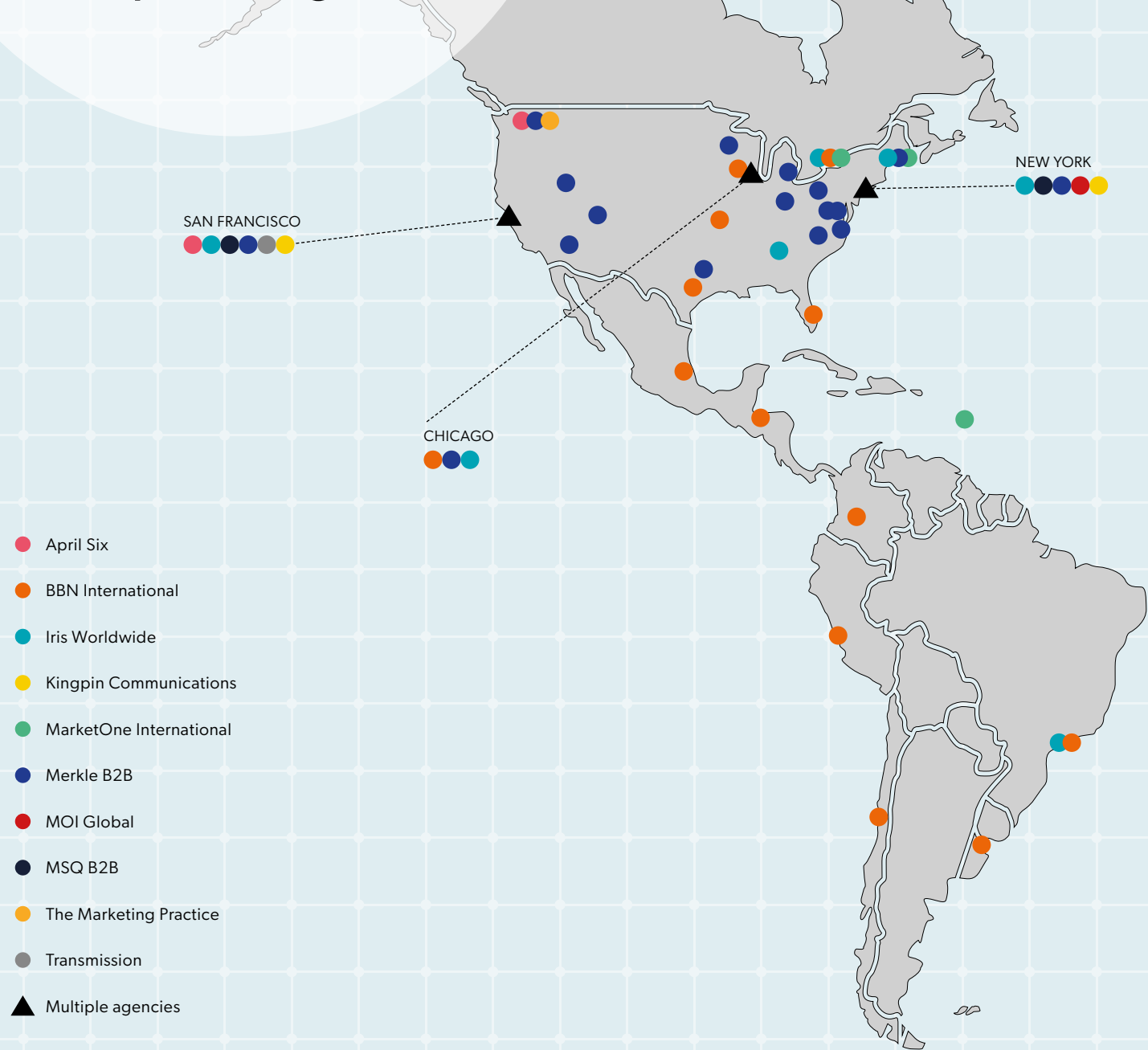
Ash Hamidi,
marketing manager, Sky

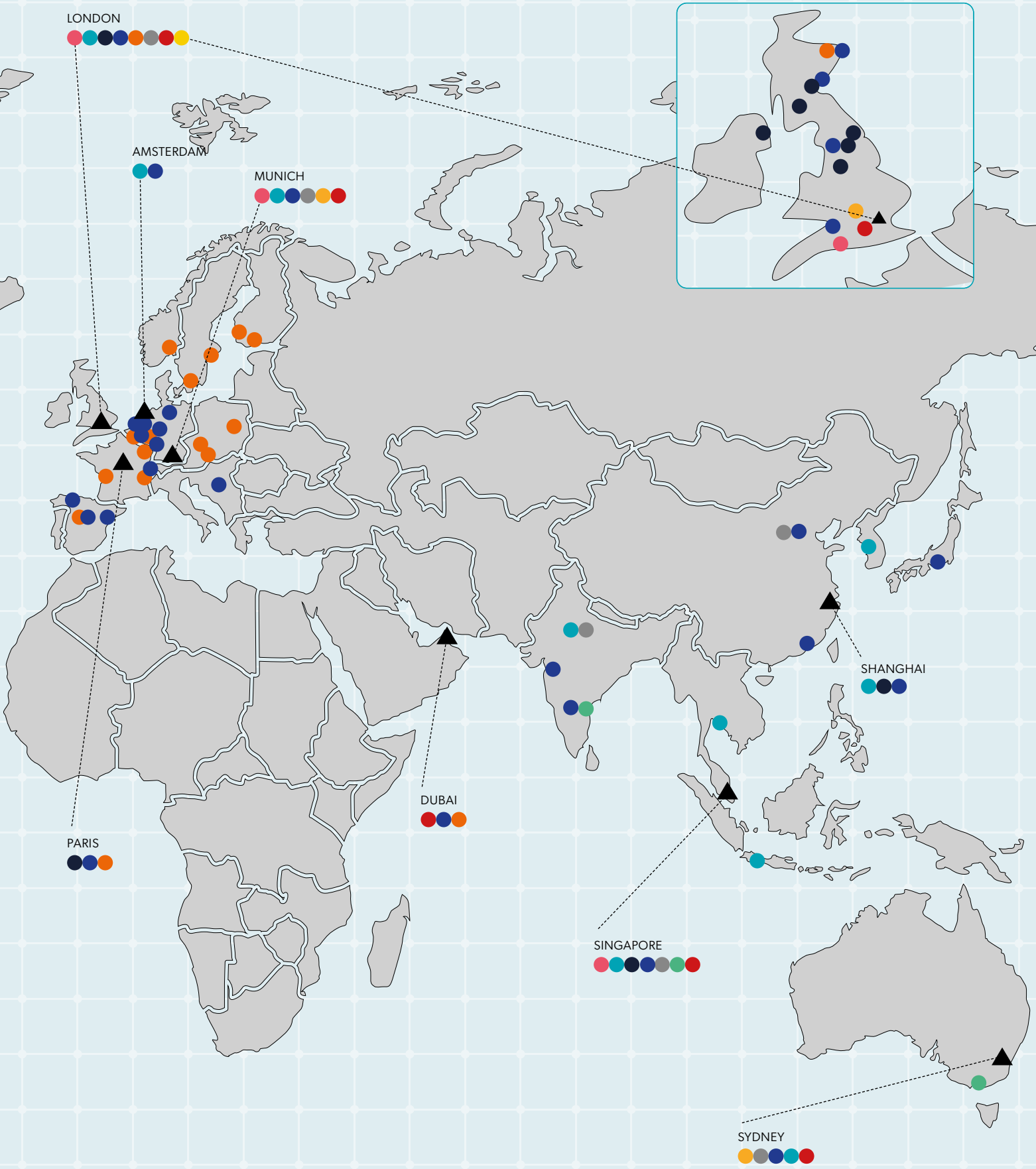
Top 10 international B2B marcomms agencies and networks

To appear in the international table, more than 20% of an agency's global gross income must come from outside the US

Rank Agency	Non-US GI in \$m in most recent financial year	Global GI in \$m in most recent financial year	US GI in \$m in most recent financial year	Global GI YoY change in \$m	YoY global GI % change	Global headcount 2020	Global headcount YoY % change	International table rank 2020	US GI as % of global total
1 MSQ B2B (p.74)	68.2	94.9	26.7	9.6	11.2	724	8.2	n/a	28.1
2 Iris Worldwide (p.64)	67	97.1	30.1	-17.5	-15	759	-11.6	5	30.9
3 Merkle B2B (p.72)	61.7	177	115.3	64.5	57	704	17.5	n/a	65.1
4 BBN International (p.60)	35.3	95.7	60.4	-19.3	-17	992	-9.3	1	63.1
5 Transmission	19	29	10	4.2	17	202	66.9	6	34.4
6 The Marketing Practice	17.4	23.8	6.3	4.9	26	162	8	7	26.4
7 MarketOne International	15.1	25	9.9	0.01	0	436	2.8	n/a	39.6
8 MOI Global	13.7	16.8	3.1	4.6	38	14	133.3	n/a	18.4
9 Kingpin Communications (p.66)	13	20.7	7.7	2.6	14.4	51	37.8	11	37.1
10 April Six	8.7	16.5	7.8	-0.03	-2	153	14.2	9	47.2

This world map shows the locations that the agencies included in our international table are operating in





Section 2:

Market analysis

Features:

The state of the US agency marketplace	18
Insights from the highest-performing US agencies	32
The 2021 Trend Tracker	44

Opinion:

How do you build impactful campaigns in today's uber-fragmented media landscape? <i>TriComB2B</i>	25
A funny thing happened on the way to martech ubiquity... <i>BBN International</i>	27
Why flexibility is crucial in the age of uncertainty <i>The Mx Group</i>	29
Stay the course <i>MarketReach</i>	31

The age of transformation is already here
Iris 37

Are you ready to meet buyers' changing expectations?
Godfrey 39

The blurring lines between ABM and demand gen
Red House 41

Integrated demand gen strategies – where does programmatic ABM end and demand gen begin?
Kingpin 43

Developing emotional capital to overcome hyper fragmentation and audience inattention
MSQ B2B 49

Changes in technology and consumer behavior have opened up a new opportunity for B2B marketers
LoSasso Integrated Marketing 51

Why knowing your audience is more important than ever
Two Rivers Marketing 53

Which emerging or 'fringe' channels will break through in B2B in 2021?
Merkle B2B 55

Bringing your 'A' game to ABM
Quarry 57

The state of the US agency marketplace

Each year, our US Agencies Benchmarking Report asks agencies about their income, headcount, challenges, focus areas and more. In this feature, **David Rowlands**, editor, takes a look at their replies, and presents a lay of the agency landscape



In last year's US Agencies Benchmarking Report, 100% of US agencies were expecting 'growth' or 'strong growth' for their agency in the year ahead. Of course, the survey was conducted pre-pandemic, so it would have been interesting to see their responses had it been conducted in, say, March 2020.

In this year's survey, meanwhile, 96% are expecting 'growth' or 'strong growth' for the year ahead. The remaining 4%, meanwhile, are expecting to remain flat, as opposed to seeing a reduction.

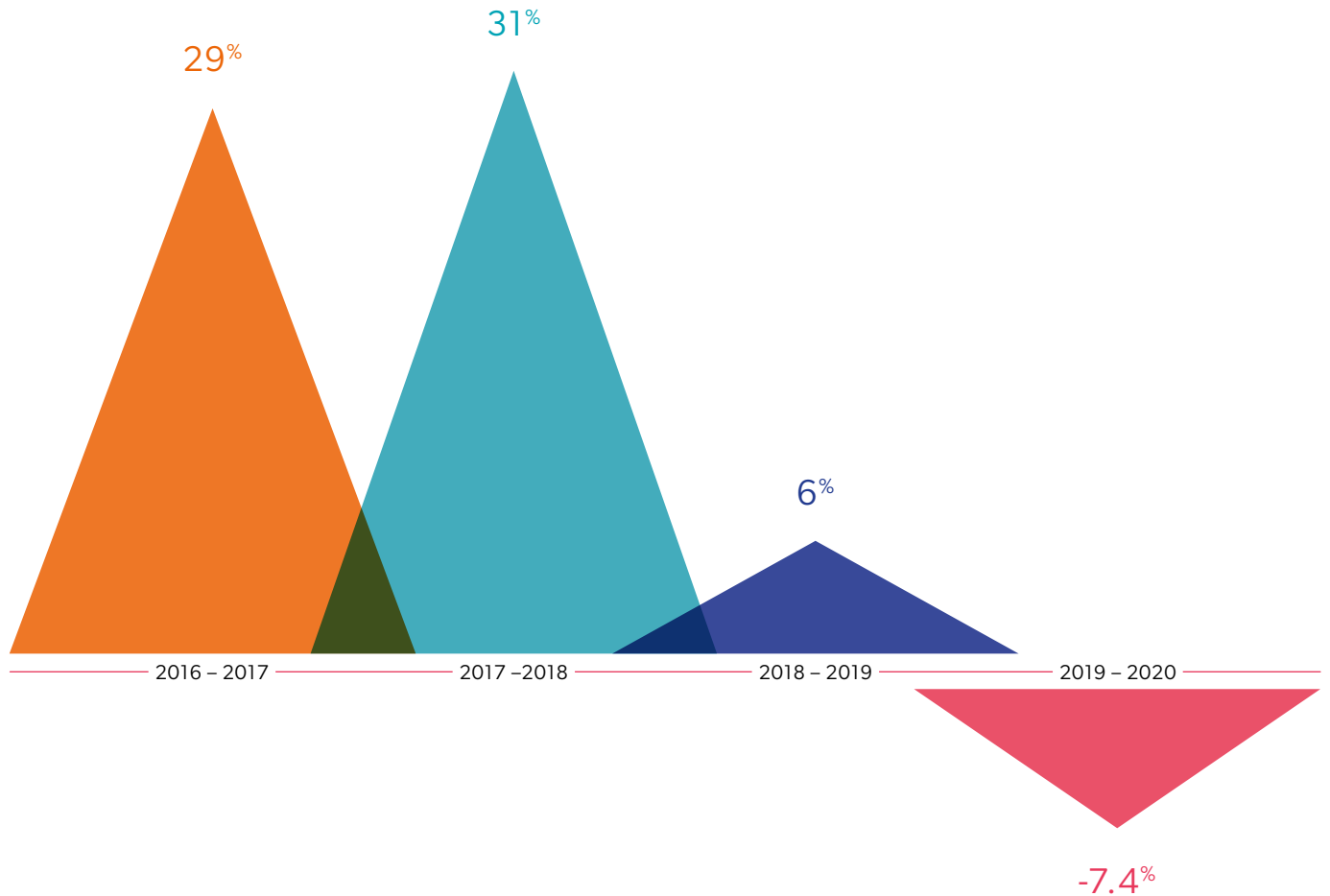
Whilst this 4% is not negligible, personally, I like to see the bright side, and I'd say that's not too bad given the year we've just escaped. Had these numbers been significantly worse – say,

20% expecting to remain flat or see a reduction – would we have been that surprised?

Not only are the vast majority of US agencies expecting 'growth' or 'strong growth' over the next 12 months, they also see the current state of the market for B2B marketing services as 'good' or 'strong/very good' (92% combined). Only 6% see the market as 'static', and 2% see it as 'challenging'. Fortunately, absolutely nobody sees the market as 'dire'.

So, in the worst economic year in many of our lifetimes, most agencies are expecting a good year to come, and see the market as being in a great place. Of course, it's not that straightforward, but at least it shows the marketplace isn't in completely dire straits.

Average change in US headcount



Despite the good feeling, headcounts have taken a hit

Unfortunately, it's not all good news. We asked agencies to provide their headcount as of 1 September 2019 and 1 September 2020. In 2019, the average headcount amongst agencies that took part in our survey was 81. In 2020, this dropped to 75 – a year-on-year decrease of -7.4%. For reference, in last year's report, agencies

reported an average increase of 6% year-on-year. In the two years prior, they reported increases of 31% and 29%, respectively.

So, whilst most agencies may be continuing on the road to growth, there have been casualties along the way. Of course, this is not surprising given the uncertainty around the pandemic, particularly in the first few months of its existence.

How US gross income has changed over the years

2019 – 2020	8.17% increase
2018 – 2019	16% increase
2017 – 2018	58% increase
2016 – 2017	17% increase

Despite headcounts taking a hit, the average US gross income has increased by 8.17% year-on-year

Average gross income has increased

Our survey went on to ask about agencies' gross income in their most recently closed financial year, as well as in their previous financial year.

For clarity, most agencies included in our report closed their most recent financial year on 31 December 2020. In other words, their most recent financial year was the year of Covid-19. This may seem like an obvious point to make, but compare that to our UK Agencies Benchmarking Report, wherein most agencies closed their most recent financial year in March 2020, before the pandemic was truly underway and so before its effects could be truly felt. In this sense, the US report findings are particularly interesting.

Despite headcounts taking a hit, the average US gross income in the most recent financial year was \$14.8 million. This is an increase of 8.17% from these same agencies' gross income from the previous financial year, in which the average US gross income was \$13.7 million.

Although an 8.17% increase in US agency gross income is by no means a negative, it is important to compare this against previous growth. In last year's report, agencies reported an increase in US gross income of 16%. In the two years prior, they reported increases of 58% and 17%, respectively. So, while agencies are continuing to grow in the face of adversity, they are undoubtedly pushing against some quite considerable resistance.

Which agency services are you considering offering?



What services are US agencies focusing on?

So, what services are US agencies offering their clients? As part of our survey, we listed a number of major services, and asked survey participants to select one of the following options:

- › 'We're considering adding this in more than a year's time.'
- › 'We already offer this service.'
- › 'We aren't interested in offering this service.'

› 'We're considering adding this in more than a year's time.'

'Data analytics' saw 96% of survey participants say that they already offer this service, or that they are considering adding it within the next 12 months. 'Digital development' followed closely behind at 92%, while 'ABM' came in at third place, with 84%.

In last year's report 70% of survey participants were already offering ABM as a service. This year, this figure has 82% – a significant increase in a year.

As in last year's report, direct referral remains the number one way in which agencies are winning new business

Winning the business

But just how are US agencies winning business in the first place? Our survey – quite bluntly – asked: ‘Where does your new business come from?’ Agencies were then presented with a list of ways they might win business, and could select: ‘common’; ‘very common’; ‘rare’; or ‘unknown’.

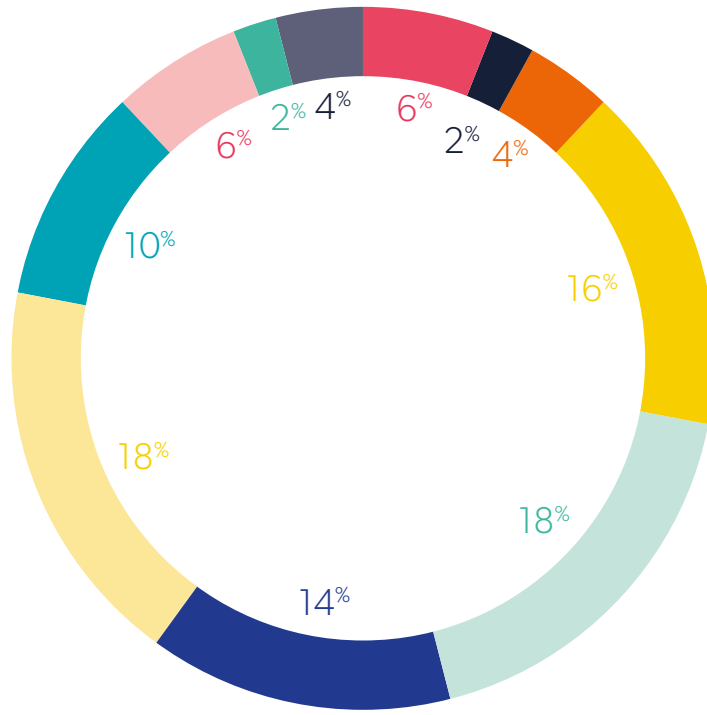
As in last year's report, direct referral remains the number one way in which agencies are winning new business, with 72% of agencies saying this is a ‘very common’ way of winning new business.

In second place, at just 38%, is ‘referral from an external individual (not the client)’. The gap between first and second place goes some way in showing the extent to which direct referral is crucial for US agencies.

Following closely behind in third place is ‘pitch’, with 32% of agencies saying this is a very common method of winning new business. Request for proposal, advertising, media exposure (i.e. B2B Marketing) and specialist referral agencies also followed.

Although ‘pitch’ remains an ever-popular method for agencies to win business, this does not necessarily mean pitching is easy. In fact, only 8% of agencies have won 81% or more of their pitches in the last 12 months.

Approximately what percentage of pitches entered has your agency won over the past 12 months?



- 0-10%
- 11-20%
- 21-30%
- 31-40%
- 41-50%
- 51-60%
- 61-70%
- 71-80%
- 81-90%
- More than 90%
- I don't know

How significant are the following challenges to your agency currently?

Challenge	% that said 'very significant'	Change YoY
Pressure on clients' budgets	12	Up 2 places
Ability to attract/retain quality staff	10	Down 1 place
Data privacy	10	Up 7 places
Clients moving agency activity in-house/insourcing	8	Same
Role of procurement and purchasing departments	8	Down 3 places
Clients' appreciation of creativity	8	Up 1 place
Ability to measure campaign effectiveness	4	Down 2 places
New product/service developments	4	Same
Business model transformation	0	Same
Embracing and managing internal digital capability	0	Down 4 places

Where there is a tie (i.e. the same percentage of agencies described a challenge as 'very significant'), we included the percentage of agencies that described the challenges as 'significant' to determine the ranking

Pressure on clients' budgets is this year's key challenge

Of course, winning pitches isn't the only challenge faced by B2B marketers. In order to establish just what issues agencies are facing this next 12 months, we presented agencies with a list of potential challenges, and asked them to describe each as: 'very significant'; 'significant'; 'neither significant nor insignificant'; 'insignificant'; or 'n/a'.

As you can see by the table, 'pressure on clients' budgets' is the number one challenge faced by US agencies this year. This is up two places from last year, when 'ability to attract/retain quality staff' held the number one spot. It is of course not surprisingly that pressure on clients'

budgets has taken the number one spot, as this past year has seen many organizations tighten their belts in an effort to see the pandemic out. Still, the ability to attract/retain quality staff remains a key challenge, coming in at second place.

Also of note is the fact that data privacy has risen a number of places from last year, whilst 'embracing and managing internal digital capability' and 'business model transformation' finished bottom, with 0% of agencies describing these as a 'very significant' challenge.

Final thoughts

The state of the marketplace is strong. Optimism is rife. Revenues are up.

But headcount has taken a hit. It would be unfair to paint a picture of a rosy marketplace when so many agency-side marketers have been casualties of the pandemic. However, it's also undeniable that the US agency marketplace has proven itself remarkably resilient.

In a year in which so many organizations – in fact, entire industries – have been dealt catastrophic blows, the agency marketplace appears to be weathering the blows and continuing to grow.

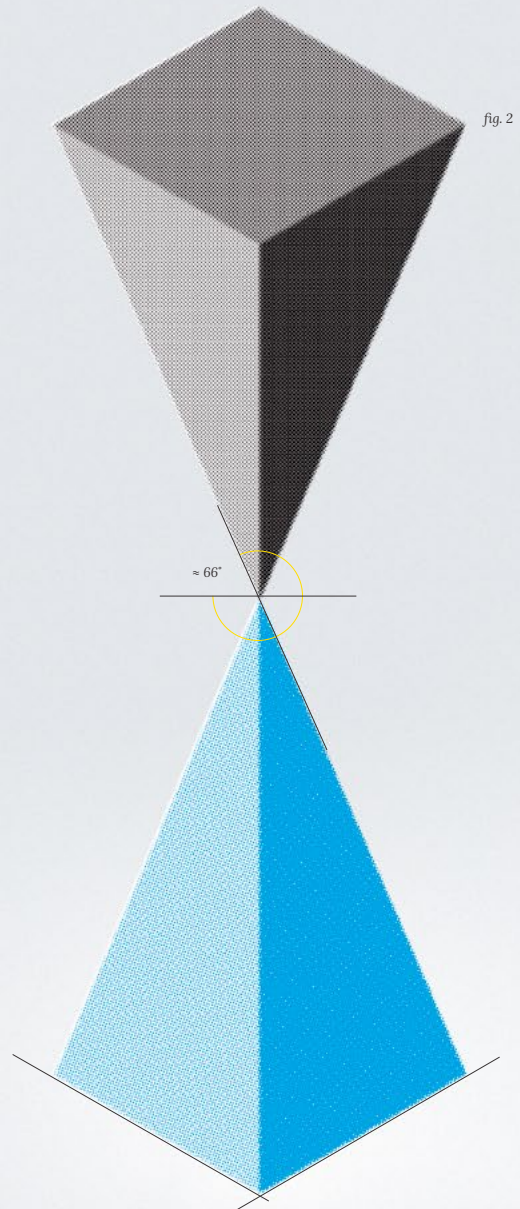
Overall, things are looking good, but, as there always have been and as there always will be, there are challenges to overcome on the road to growth. How agencies overcome these challenges will be fascinating to see.

Trust is imperative

So much so, we wrote a book about it.

In an age of skepticism and noise, it's more important than ever to build and keep trust. "Trust Me, B2B," written in collaboration with Katie Martell, dives into why it's time to prioritize trust in our B2B marketing efforts.

Get the book and other B2Behavior insights at TriComB2B.com/Resources



How do you build impactful campaigns in today's uber-fragmented media landscape?

There may be more channels than ever, but fragmentation is not inevitable. Chris Eifert explains how to tie everything together to create unified campaigns

Rather than rehashing the challenges of 2020, it's time to look ahead. The media landscape continues to shift, and so we must adapt. But with that comes a hurdle some marketers struggle with: executing a proper marketing campaign when there are seemingly unlimited ways to broadcast your message. How do you succeed when each digital channel carries its own distinct capabilities, best practices and cultural norms? Furthermore, how do you effectively blend these efforts with your offline marketing?

Let's start with some tough love. If you feel like the media landscape is fragmented, it could be because your strategy is. Let's review some fundamentals to keep you on track toward achieving your goals.

Speaking of goals, what are they? If you don't know the answer to this, and instead are hammering away at boosting Instagram followers, take a breather. One of the biggest luxuries digital marketing offers is how immediate everything is. Don't let this tempt you into leapfrogging into an execution phase without having gone through a proper planning and goal-setting process first.

Next, determine what your primary message is going to be. Don't let members of your search marketing team and your media team each come up with their own versions of

Chris Eifert,
principal,
TriComB2B



this. That's not to say collaboration isn't wonderful – it is. But there needs to be a unified idea that everyone on your team can rally behind – one that customers will recognize and relate to wherever they encounter it.

Goals? Check. Message? Check.

Yes, there are seemingly unlimited channels with their own little nuances and capabilities. However, if you never lose sight of your goals, your channel selection process will fall into place on its own. If a 'best practice' suggests you should do something that conflicts with your goals, ignore it.

Be realistic. You can't be (nor can you afford to be) everywhere, all the time. If you can't commit to routinely updating your blog, don't launch one. If you don't understand TikTok, don't post there. If your website needs work, don't dump a bunch of money into buying clicks. Focus your energy on the handful of channels where you know you can move the needle, rather than diluting your message across dozens of accounts.

Also, remember that we make decisions quickly, and form our impressions on brands even quicker. Treat every post and placement with the respect your brand deserves, even if it's a seemingly innocuous tweet.

If a 'best practice' suggests you should do something that conflicts with your goals, ignore it

Finally, be intentional with your data. Just as there are seemingly endless channels, there are endless things you can measure. If you can't figure out how a given data point meaningfully threads back to those first goals you've established, don't slap it into a report nobody will read. Your analysis should either serve to evaluate your efforts or inform next steps.

The media landscape will only become fragmented if you let it. Establish your goals, unify your message, judiciously select your channels, and measure what matters. Sounds a lot like simply doing great B2B marketing, doesn't it?

Marketers are highly **frustrated** by CEOs.

Over 60 international offices and 1,200 B2B experts that know your battles are ready to help you smash down internal barriers and shatter the misguided expectations of anyone who foolishly questions you or your marketing capabilities.

Start making that difference. Partner with the right resources.
Visit www.hopeformarketers.com



THE WORLD'S B2B AGENCY

A funny thing happened on the way to martech ubiquity...

Tech is great, but it should never be used as a substitute for human ingenuity and ideas. Ed Davis asks all tech-lovers to consider this caveat

In the last two decades, the explosion of smart devices and technology has been incredible, and there is no aspect of our lives that technology has not touched. In many instances, this is a good thing, as technology can be the catalyst for making all manner of items, processes and services better and more efficient.

However, there is a fallacy being peddled about marketing technology. The idea that simply adding technology platforms to your integrated campaigns will incite significant and positive changes in performance. That's right – it's a lie and you've likely fallen for it hook, line and sinker. That's OK. We all have.

In speaking to our partners and team in the US, they report that there continues to be a steady march towards technology adoption in all facets of communications. Increasingly, we are being asked to help manage projects like sales marketing alignment, martech optimization and sales transformation, but, what clients seem to be forsaking (or taking for granted) is creativity – ensuring their campaigns appeal to their audience's logic and emotions.

Martech, adtech, salestech and commstech have created a world in which many businesses and agencies believe they can hire unskilled labor to manage their marketing and sales to an acceptable automation level that is generally stable, predictable and can satisfy the needs of many agencies and businesses. The unintended consequence is that

Ed Davis,
business development
director, BBN USA



we are putting too much faith in technology, and we are losing the key driver to a campaign's success: creativity. By becoming too reliant on technology, rather than maximizing the embedded wisdom in our heads and hearts, we are missing the opportunities to truly connect on an emotional and logical level.

Keeping up with technology advancements is critical to a business' success. Technology helps us better understand complex buyer habits and journeys. It helps us manage an increasingly complex ecosystem that businesses must deploy to manage their operations. Not possessing a mastery of how these systems work or understanding the impact it has on our behaviors and the value it adds to the customer experience can be catastrophic to a business.

By becoming too reliant on technology, rather than maximizing the embedded wisdom in our heads and hearts, we are missing the opportunities to truly connect on an emotional and logical level

Agencies, and the businesses and marketing teams they empower, must remember that, while technology is critical to what we do, it comes with limitations. It is incumbent upon the people who incorporate these technologies and use them for campaigns, to harness the empathy and emotional intelligence of humans just as much as the databases and algorithms of the platforms.

If we continue to over-rely on technology and substitute quality creative for streamlined automation, we are destined to code ourselves into an endless cycle of insufficient campaigns that fail to hit their mark and further the business, sales, and marketing goals of our clients. Worse, we will continue to erode the faith that a true creative marketing agency can have an impact on a company's bottom line.

"X" IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN
BIG IDEAS AND BIG IDEAS THAT WORK.

YOUR AGENCY SHOULD BRING YOU FRESH THINKING.
IT SHOULD ALSO BE ABLE TO HELP YOURS SOAR.



The Mx Group

Why flexibility is crucial in the age of uncertainty

Emily Kleist,
VP and executive creative
director,
The Mx Group



Emily Kleist explains why the most effective strategy for marketers in 2021 is to plan loosely and message fiercely

For humans in general, and marketers in particular, a plan is a line of protection. Even as we adapt to life in the age of uncertainty, we look for ways to control our environment, to protect ourselves from the dreaded pivot. Control is appealing. Plans are comforting. But a plan will not make you effective in 2021.

Don't get me wrong: human to human, we should comfort ourselves and each other as we continue to navigate our uncertain present and future. But marketer to marketer, my recommendation is to get comfortable being uncomfortable. If your top priority is to make a 'robust and effective marketing plan,' you are not protecting yourself from anything but opportunity.

That's because a plan is different from a strategy.

A plan is also different from a promise.

Covid-19, social unrest and a contentious political environment have drawn a stark line between what matters and what doesn't to your customer. And that will last, even as we heal together. This stark line is the critical opportunity, and now is the moment to seize it – to promise something that matters to your market.

It will feel challenging and uncomfortable to be honest about what that promise is, to focus less on your proof points and products and more on your commitment to customers. It will be just as challenging and uncomfortable to hold yourself accountable to it, but (here's my most sophisticated advice) do it anyway. Decide what matters most,

and decide not to bend from it. That will give your plans – and pivots – a purpose.

I'm seeing it pay off for B2B brands already. I know a manufacturing brand that once differentiated itself from comparable commodity providers by promising precision-engineered products to builders across the country. 2020 drowned out the importance of that value proposition, and the company itself craved a more meaningful conversation. So, they pivoted their 2020 plan to go to market with the higher promise of future-proofing American communities. And it paid off. When your product promises job creation, ethical manufacturing and affordable housing during a global crisis, your product sells.

This is an exhilarating and not easy approach to crafting the customer experience. Traditional (tactical) marketing plans are easier to make than meaningful promises. And they still matter, just through a different lens. As I like to say: carve your brand promise in stone. Keep your marketing plan in clay. That requires a sincere understanding of your customers' challenges. It requires honesty about what you can promise to ease their pains and increase their capabilities. It requires tolerance and flexibility as you plan and re-plan the tactics and tools you need along the way. And it requires strategic and creative courage to deliver effectively.

**Carve your brand promise
in stone. Keep your marketing
plan in clay**

The brands that embrace this challenge will be successful and impactful as the uncertainty continues. Keep the promise, continually mold the clay, and the experiences you create will be more important and impactful than any plan you could've made.

B2B TECH MARKETING IS ITS OWN SPECIAL WORLD.



At MarketReach, we specialize in producing marketing materials and experiences for B2B technology marketers. And we've been at it for decades.

To every client project, we bring an insider's understanding of the challenges, project types, terminology, solutions, channels, and partnerships that characterize the industry.

That makes us different.

And it gives our clients an advantage. Because we're easy to hire, fast to ramp up, and easy to work with.

Yes, B2B technology marketing is its own world. We call it home.



marketreach[®]

mreach.com

Nashua, NH, USA

Stay the course

Gregory Hooven,
president,
MarketReach



Greg Hooven explains how to build robust and effective marketing plans in an age of uncertainty

We're often asked if marketing plans should be rebuilt when rapid change is making the future less certain. Our answer is simple: stay the course.

Unless the industry you're in has been completely decimated, most essential elements of your marketing plan will probably not significantly change. While your buyer personas, competitive analysis, target KPIs and marketing budget may need a tweak or two, they probably won't need a complete overhaul.

Uncertain times do, however, warrant your investing more time and effort in analysis. With a fresh SWOT analysis, you can reveal the relatively small number of plan elements that are likely to be affected by uncertain times.

Take another SWOT at it

Most solid marketing plans are built on a SWOT analysis: strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. The SWOT analysis is a valuable exercise that helps paint a clear roadmap for your organization and reveal the potential pitfalls that lie ahead.

If the changing landscape warrants changes to your marketing plan, a SWOT analysis will likely bring the issues to light. Even during times of uncertainty, you can probably chart more of the landscape than you may first think, if you take the time for in-depth reviews of your organization and the market.

Finding the right data to monitor can be a challenge, especially when unknown threats may lie beyond the horizon. If you take the time to spot patterns

and understand their signals, however, you'll find information in all sorts of places, such as industry trends and market indicators.

Your SWOT analysis will reveal unknowns that've been brought on by the uncertain climate. These items may revolve, for example, around partnerships, your channel, current technologies, or even the ability of your supply chain to deliver.

In their Harvard Business Review article, 'Strategy Under Uncertainty', Courtney, Kirkland and Viguerie outline four levels of 'residual uncertainty' that most strategic decision makers face.^[1] These levels range from 'Level 1: A Clear-Enough Future,' where much can be determined via simple market research, to 'Level 4: True Ambiguity,' in which the future landscape is virtually impossible to predict.

Regardless of the level of uncertainty, you can address your challenges by building out a range of scenarios and possible outcomes based on available market data

Regardless of the level of uncertainty, the authors convincingly argue, you can address your challenges by building out a range of scenarios and possible outcomes based on available market data. By using your SWOT analysis to identify key variables and event triggers to watch for, you'll more easily be able to pivot as you execute your fully developed marketing plan.

While it may seem tedious to do all this upfront work – to plan for events that may never come – it will leave you better prepared to make solid decisions and continue to move in the right direction, despite the uncertain times.

^[1] COURTNEY, H., KIRKLAND, J. and VIGUERIE, P., 'Strategy Under Uncertainty', *Harvard Business Review*, (November-December 1997).

Insights from the highest-performing US agencies

In this feature, **David Rowlands**, editor, takes a look at this year's highest-performing agencies, revealing just how they've done so well, and what they're expecting in the year ahead

Merkle B2B

#1 fastest grower

Velocity Partners

#1 rising star

Before we begin, what is a 'high performer' in the world of B2B marketing? Well, in this year's US Agencies Benchmarking Report, we've decided to include two tables that break it down.

Up first are the 'fastest growers', which you can find on page 10. These agencies are those that demonstrated the largest year-on-year increase in US gross income.

Then, we have the 'rising stars', which you can find on page 11. These agencies are those that reported the largest year-on-year increase in US gross income as a percentage.

This year's number one 'fastest grower' is Merkle B2B, who reported

a whopping \$45.1 million increase in US gross income year-on-year. Velocity Partners, however, reported a larger percentage increase, with a year-on-year increase in US gross income of 167%, making it this year's number one 'rising star'.

Drivers of success

So, how did these high-performing agencies achieve such impressive growth in the year just passed?

For Bob Ray, global CEO of Merkle | DWA and head of global agency services, Merkle B2B, bringing services together and being seen as a trusted advisor was crucial. Bob said: "In January 2020, Merkle B2B launched our integrated operations, combining key B2B service lines at Merkle, Merkle | DWA, gyro, B2B International and Digital Pi. When the pandemic hit in early March 2020, we found that clients were looking for a trusted advisor to navigate many unknowns.

"Due to the diversity of services that we purpose-built, our clients looked to Merkle B2B for opportunities to streamline global and regional support across a number of integrated services. This allowed our business to grow in all geographic regions in a very difficult market for agencies."

Bob went on to say that, although the pandemic had an initial impact, by the second half of the year, many clients were ready to spend again. Bob said: "Our largest global accounts were conservative in the first half of 2020, but, by the second half, most of our accounts had invested heavily in new campaigns, especially in the technology sector. This has only accelerated into the current year, whereby clients now better understand the uniqueness and benefits of working with a globally scaled organization that is driven by data, enabled by technology, and powered by creativity."

This is a sentiment echoed by Mike Santoro, CEO, Walker Sands, who said: "Despite seeing a dip at

Despite seeing a dip at the beginning of the pandemic, we experienced an incredibly fast rebound in the second half of 2020

Mike Santoro

the beginning of the pandemic, we experienced an incredibly fast rebound in the second half of 2020. I credit our success to the value of our services driven by our very committed team. Thanks to their dedication and hard work, many of our clients that had to reduce scope at the beginning of 2020 quickly returned.”

Although not quite making our ‘rising stars’ table, Walker Sands was one of our fastest growers, with an overall change in US gross income year-on-year of \$1.3 million.

Short-termism and working from home are key challenges

So, how do these high performers see the state of the market right now? In our ‘State of the US agency marketplace’ feature, we already established that 92% of US agencies see the current state of the market for B2B marketing services as ‘good’ or ‘strong/very good’, but what do they have to say at a more in-depth level?

Peter C. Wroblewski, principal and founder, The Mx Group, had this to say: “Based on existing client activity and what we’re hearing from new prospects, we see the market as strong. Work from home is a challenge, but the hybrid model we’re now offering is the right mix between individual work location flexibility and the collaboration necessary to provide the depth and breadth of services our clients have come to expect.”

Harmony Crawford, EVP and managing director, USA, The Marketing Practice, also sees working from home as a challenge, but one that can be overcome. She says: “We’ve had to create a creative process that works remotely for our clients and our team, building our relationship to deliver real solutions together. By focusing on WFH culture and mental health, we are starting to see true partnerships develop.”

Harmony’s colleague, David Hayes, VP client growth, added that short-termism remains a significant challenge. With the pandemic forcing

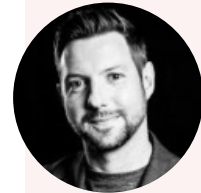
Contributors



Ricky Abbott,
president, Americas,
Transmission



Harmony Crawford,
EVP and managing
director, USA,
The Marketing Practice



David Hayes,
VP client growth,
The Marketing Practice

Our clients' customers expect more, and positive customer experience is vital to the growth of any business, so having siloed strategy and execution is never a good thing

Ricky Abbott

organizations to make tactical moves, strategy has sometimes been left at the wayside. David said: "Brands are increasingly under pressure to demonstrate results for their marketing investment, which isn't a new trend but has intensified. We are still wrestling with clients' hyper-focus on short-termism and not losing sight of the future. Covid isn't going to be around forever.

"The brands that will be successful 24 months from now are those investing in their future brand state, where we've been able to strike a healthy balance between supporting them with short-term growth and pipeline but balancing it with some longer-term brand building."

It is perhaps not surprising to note that these challenges – working from home and short-termism – are the same as those mentioned in our UK Agencies Benchmarking Report, which was published earlier this year.

For Ricky Abbott, president, Americas, Transmission, 2020 was a

strong year. Although it wasn't a great year for the market, Ricky claims: "That trend seems to have been bucked in B2B. Most of our clients pivoted toward digital and especially toward account-based experiences, and that has driven a huge upturn in demand and our subsequent growth. However, the biggest factor has been our clients realizing the need to unify their marketing and sales efforts to drive better business outcomes."

In terms of challenges for this year, however, Ricky says: "We are noticing a bit of a swing in our client base, where there are more clients trying to move their marketing efforts in-house. For some agencies this has been a challenge, and, in some respects, we are no different. However, the requests we are now getting are more strategic and less executional in nature. As we work with our clients to build strategies that drive business outcomes, we are noticing that execution consultancy is needed, because, as per my last point, you

can't have elements of your sales and marketing programs working in silos. Our clients' customers expect more, and positive customer experience is vital to the growth of any business, so having siloed strategy and execution is never a good thing."

2021's big themes

So, US agencies see the market as being in a good place, albeit with some not-insignificant challenges. But what do they think are going to be the big themes that pervade the industry over the next 12 months?

Ricky Abbott expects to focus on the following three key themes this year:

- › **Customer experience.** Ricky claims this was always a big theme, but clients are now seeing the importance of unity, and the effect it has on CX.
- › **Account-based experiences.** ABX, Ricky claims, is vital for many of Transmission's enterprise accounts.

"In all honesty," Ricky says, "this weaves in very neatly with customer experience because, if executed correctly, ABX is all about a customer-first mindset. However, the reality is that two different teams often own these separate functions, and, in some cases, customer experience can be more of an operational conversation versus ABX, which is more of a strategic imperative."

- › **Globalization.** "I should probably have titled this 'Efficiency' instead of 'Globalization'," Ricky says. "Many organizations are very inefficient in the way they market themselves as a global-to-local model. We are seeing budgets being increased but with higher expectations, so the need for efficiency is more important than ever before."

Peter C. Wroblewski, meanwhile, claims digital transformation will continue to be a major focus in 2021, expecting The Mx Group to grow around 15–20% this year. Of course, although 2020 was the year of the digital transformation, that certainly does not mean the transformation is now over, and we have now reached some digital El Dorado. For almost everyone, digital transformation will remain a key theme in 2021.

For Bob Ray, analytics will be key. "Analytics will be at the heart of everything in the next 12 months. Predictability will be the fuel of investing in better marketing in B2B starting with branding."

How might we see the agency landscape evolving in this period?

For Harmony Crawford at The Marketing Practice, "As the B2B marketing industry matures, we're seeing a trend of consolidation

and new launches as clients increasingly seek integrated solutions. There is a lot of talent in the space, and, as consolidation happens, talent starts looking for breaking-ground environments with growth opportunities."

David Hayes adds: "The disadvantage for brands is B2B as a discipline is becoming diluted with agencies claiming to be doing it. We see more 'B2B technology marketing propositions' emerging. Over the last 12 months, the global economy saw technology brands perform better than traditional categories such as retail. It's inevitable that a lot of agencies are going to put technology marketing under their list of services."

Mike Santoro brings it back to the working-from-home challenge, claiming that he expects to see a shift in focus towards retention of both employees and current clients. "Employer branding and employee care," Mike claims, "will be essential to recruiting and retention efforts in a hybrid work environment, and, as a result, we might see more agencies prioritizing cross sell and upsell opportunities in the interim."

Indeed, while working from home might be great for some, it's not ideal for everyone – especially for those without a suitable space to actually work from. Ensuring employees are happy in their role will undoubtedly be a key theme this year.

For Ricky Abbott, further integration is the order of the day. "I feel that there is a changing landscape in the agency marketplace where innovative, customer-first strategic and execution agencies will take hold of the market" Ricky said. "I believe that the old world of pure play brand or creative or media agencies will still have a place, but their stronghold will not be as important as years gone by. Clients are looking for efficiencies, and the only way to do that is to try and be as integrated as possible."

Contributors



Bob Ray, global CEO, Merkle | DWA and head of global agency services, Merkle B2B



Mike Santoro, CEO, Walker Sands



Peter C. Wroblewski, principal and founder, The Mx Group

***If you think
transformation
is the future,
you're already
living in the past.***



For the forward

iris-worldwide.com



The age of transformation is already here

Erin Creaney,
managing director,
Chicago, Iris



B2B is in the transformation era. Erin Creaney explains what you should already be doing about it

The language around transformation is focused on the future. This is cruelly misleading because B2B industries that think of transformation as a future strategy have already missed the boat. The truth is that transformation is our present-day reality. If the events of the past year have taught us anything, it is to reset expectations, lose our fear of change, and remember the adage ‘what is constant is change.’

Your customers get it. Their expectations and needs are constantly changing. They’re comparing the experience you offer them against your competitive set and customer-centric brands like Amazon and Uber – natives of the fourth industrial revolution that have broken free of legacy technology and behavioral inertia. Many B2B organizations aren’t there yet and, as such, have already missed the boat. Forget keeping up. You need to lead. Here’s how to transform now.

Embrace challenges

Many B2B organizations were not built to support this new kind of customer-centric digital ecosystem. Don’t let this core challenge become an excuse for inaction. Face transformation head on and focus on strategy first. Ask:

- › What does transformation mean for your organization?
- › What problems are you solving?

- › Do you have a customer data platform (CDP) in place that powers your digital ecosystem?
- › Are you personalizing your channels with that data? If not, consider why and how that might change.
- › And, perhaps most importantly, are the buyer and customer truly understood and placed at the center of every interaction and decision?

Take your first step

Generating a quality pipeline is a key objective of B2B marketers in ‘the new normal’. This may feel like an enormous and complex task. Change takes time, right? Time is a luxury you don’t have because 21% of North American and European enterprises say their digital transformation is already complete (Forrester, 2018).

Perhaps your mindset, not time, is the biggest challenge. It’s more useful for your organization to think about transformation as a series of smaller sprints than a marathon. If you can get through the mental block of how big the transformative process is, and if you have stakeholder support across your organization, you will make it to the finish line.

Accelerate progress

When it comes to transformation, success is not measured just in effort and time, but in the collaborative recentering of the organization itself. Digital transformation accelerates progress towards enterprise goals like workforce diversity, financial returns and environmental targets by at least 22% (Deloitte, 2020). It also increases operational efficiency, ensures faster time to market, and helps companies meet customer expectations (PTC, 2018).

At Iris, we are constantly rewriting and elevating the playbook based on new consumer data. And that is where the magic is: thinking about consumers, today. Join us as we defeat short-termism and take rapid transformation head on with focus, clarity and action.

OUR KIND OF HEAVY METAL

YOUR COMPLEX AUDIENCE IS MUSIC TO OUR EARS.

When you're marketing a B2B brand, you're selling more than products and services. You're selling real-world solutions to professionals who live and breathe complexity. That's not easy. But as a full-service B2B marketing agency, we've spent decades mastering the art of marketing to complex audiences. From telling your brand story in a compelling way to leveraging the ever-changing toolbox of marketing practices, we'll engineer an experience that delivers the very best in B2B marketing.

www.godfrey.com

GODFREY 

Are you ready to meet buyers' changing expectations?

Stacy Whisel explores ways marketers can pivot to meet buyers' rapidly shifting expectations

Some of the transformations already taking place in B2B marketing have been accelerated over the last year, forcing many companies to adjust to a virtual world practically overnight.

But what does this mean for the rest of 2021 and beyond? B2B buyers have adopted new behaviors, and many are here to stay. Marketers who had already begun to shift their strategies and tactics to align with modern customer expectations are better positioned for this new era. However, it's not too late to focus on a few areas that will go a long way in meeting B2B buyers' changing demands.

Easy access to information

From identifying solutions to vetting suppliers, most B2B professionals self-educate through digital channels. Now, it's just as (if not more) important to provide easy information access and remove friction points. Is your website menu built around your internal structure, or is it organized for your user's mindset? Does your SEO content reflect how your prospects search for information? Considering questions like these can help align experience with expectations.

Ecommerce options

In the past, B2B's complexity made ecommerce less prevalent than in B2C. Now, however, B2B buyers seek more self-service options, and they want to replicate the consumer experience, such as adding an item to an online shopping cart. As more millennials take on purchasing responsibilities, an easy-to-use ecommerce platform will be the preferred model.

Stacy Whisel,
president,
Godfrey



Still, it's not as simple as adding a shopping cart to your website. There is, of course, inventory management, pricing and dozens of other factors to consider. Marketing teams should lead the update or launch of an ecommerce experience that puts priority on a user-friendly purchasing process. If operations or IT teams lead the strategy and implementation of ecommerce, the result may not be a strong customer-first experience.

Valuable/interesting virtual events

'Zoom fatigue' is real. Business professionals experience tech angst. So, how do marketers connect with their B2B customers and prospects in the virtual world without adding to the noise? It starts by bringing real value – without being boring.

Make sure the content presented is new information and/or is helpful. If your content can be found in other places, like white papers or videos, ask if your audience really needs this virtual event. If the answer is 'yes,' invest the time to make it engaging and, if possible, interactive. Features like polls and chats, common on many virtual software platforms, can make an attendee feel more like an active participant and less like a spectator. Even smaller details can help virtual events stand out. Think branded backgrounds, music or video, or a contest.

On-demand support

Even prior to the hyper-connected, work-from-home environment, B2B buyers had very high expectations around response times. This expectation is part of the reason why live chat and chatbot/virtual assistant technology has seen strong growth. Deploying this type of solution on your website can help prospects and customers get answers. B2B companies need to dig into their own customer journeys and data to understand the types of questions and needs their audience may have in order to build out helpful online support.

We don't expect any of these new expectations to reverse course. B2B marketers should assess how they're doing in these areas and take steps to align their offer to meet shifting buyer needs.



Strategic B2B marketing to reach your most elusive audiences.

Our experts profile and segment your prospects into distinct groups based on their needs and behaviors, and then customize programs to drive maximum performance.

We're comfortable working cross-department with your marketing, sales and technology teams, and have deep experience with industry standard analytics, automation and CRM platforms.

The result is seamless execution of programs to drive positive customer experience and revenue, and optimization through continuous testing, learning and optimization.

Connect with us:

Email consulting@redhouse2b.com or Google "Red House B2B"



[linkedin.com/company/red-house](https://www.linkedin.com/company/red-house)



twitter.com/redhouseusa

 **RED HOUSE**
B2B MARKETING
redhouse2b.com

The blurring lines between ABM and demand gen

Dan Hansen, senior partner, Red House, explains why the line between ABM and demand gen will become increasingly difficult to identify

I believe that programmatic ABM is in its infancy, because thus far what's been built is really just the facilitating infrastructure: automation platforms; programmatic one-to-many ad platforms; and centralized content management platforms.

Growth will come as AI and machine learning hit their stride. Because, without AI, programmatic ABM may be a more appropriate strategy than broad-based demand gen programs, but not as cost-effective when you take all costs into account.

AI improvements in the last few years are changing the marketing landscape. And, as online AI (e.g. Google display retargeting) gets better at knowing what a 'like' audience actually looks like, the accuracy dividing line between programmatic ABM and demand gen becomes harder to identify.

Ultimately, I believe they'll be the same. Here's why:

True demand gen programs take market intelligence and apply it to a fixed audience. Thus, it should stand to reason that, as general marketing tools integrate more AI and connectivity, your demand gen programs will work along the same lines as programmatic ABM, reaching the customer that most closely matches customers we've successfully closed in the past.

If you play the scenario out, your integrated demand gen program will net people in a wider range of places,

Dan Hansen,
senior partner,
Red House



because the system already knows who best fits based on their online behavior. For example, if the prospective intelligence in Google search, Google display or Google retargeting indicates the visitor is prequalified based on past site visits (competitive sites, news properties, or other means of tracking) and they meet other data markers, there's a good chance they'll be served your message.

So, why would I want to narrow my chances of success by targeting a smaller, select group of companies with an ABM program? Higher profitability? If so, by how much? The variation in profit by client – in most cases – is nominal at best.

If you look at your client base, you may find that size – not profit – is the true differentiator. As long as the folks you're acquiring have the same qualitative makeup as the majority of your client base, there's no reason to believe the two approaches are mutually exclusive.

If you look at your client base, you may find that size – not profit – is the true differentiator

And, while many marketers apply the 80/20 rule to customers to achieve their ABM models, I do not. When we've done client customer analytics, including profitability studies, most client customer rosters look more like a box and whiskers graph: the majority of clients that are most profitable aren't their largest, or smallest. They're somewhere in between. It's that wide, but narrow, section that holds the key to successful, highly targeted marketing.

In the end, if programmatic ABM and demand gen are not the same, my guess is that digital Darwinism will simply run its course and one will emerge with negligibly better results than the other.



B2B buying, an increasingly complex journey of problem finding, solution exploration, procurement interrogation, finance briefings, calls on zoom, kids in the room, google searches, webinar views, peer reviews, browsing the news, consultation, consolidation, reconsideration of the suggested findings, social media, whitepaper downloads, budget approval and risk removal, sales enter with targeted precision until finally... there's been a decision.

At Kingpin, we use actionable intelligence and a rich understanding of how businesses make purchase decisions to help B2B technology brands identify in-market accounts, reach and engage with buyer groups and nurture and acquire business customers.

Kingpin

Actionable Intelligence. Measurable Results.

Integrated demand gen strategies – where does programmatic ABM end and demand gen begin?

Mirza Fur explains why ABM versus demand gen should be a thing of the past. It's time for account-based everything

2020 was a ride. In general, there was a feeling that 10 years had passed in the space of a few months. The world of ABM has been a little contradictory to that. In some ways, things have gone backwards in terms of targeting efficiency and capability, with IP targeting presenting huge challenges with everyone working from home. Various global data protection laws made it difficult, or even illegal, to send something directly to someone's office address, so direct mail became even more of a headache.

However, technology is getting more sophisticated with each passing hurdle. It wasn't long ago that display impressions were not targeted enough to be considered an option for lead generation. Or that it was a significant challenge to connect the dots between event attendees, whitepaper downloaders and website visitors. Now, we are not far off being able to link those who have seen a digital outdoor placement with a direct opportunity... without a unique promo URL. We have found a way to overcome every barrier we have been presented to create sales opportunities. Except one. **Meaningful and effective ABM.**

Mirza Fur,
director, co-founder,
Kingpin



The lines between programmatic ABM and demand gen are blurred, but they shouldn't be. Programmatic ABM, whether one-to-one, one-to-few or one-to-many, is still ABM. It implies that you have worked cohesively across teams, created an agreed target list, processes for how to monitor, track and follow-up on engagements and applied stakeholders that take ownership of these processes.

In the B2B world, buying teams sit within an organization and consult purchase decisions with the input and authority to accelerate or block a purchase. A recent example of this was when Kingpin, our small business, decided to roll out a new financial system. There were four individuals involved – two from finance, one that would deal with Salesforce integration, and myself to sign the check. All of us were equally relevant in the decision-making process. On an ABM level, our engagements were minimal. Combined, however, it would have been apparent to anyone looking that Kingpin was in market for a new financial system. On a demand gen level, not one of us would have scored high enough for a follow-up.

To embrace ABM, focus must shift towards measuring account-based engagements or marketing qualified accounts (MQAs) and away from individual-based engagements or marketing qualified leads (MQLs). Despite the lessons of years gone by and the advancement of technology and data access, there are still too many organizations trying to activate with one strategy and measure by the other.

Part of the issue is that mainstream automation platforms and CRM systems aren't structured on an account level. Kingpin has been banging this drum for over 10 years, and even developed its own analytics platform – Argus (named after the all-seeing Greek god). Argus' purpose is simple: to help you identify those 'accounts that matter', based on what they are doing.

Essentially, using the correct tools, marketers should be implementing a combined strategy for accounts, incorporating sales, customer retention and product teams. Thanks to the catalysed industry-wide change we saw last year, as well as the availability of data, the ABM versus demand gen argument should be a thing of the past.

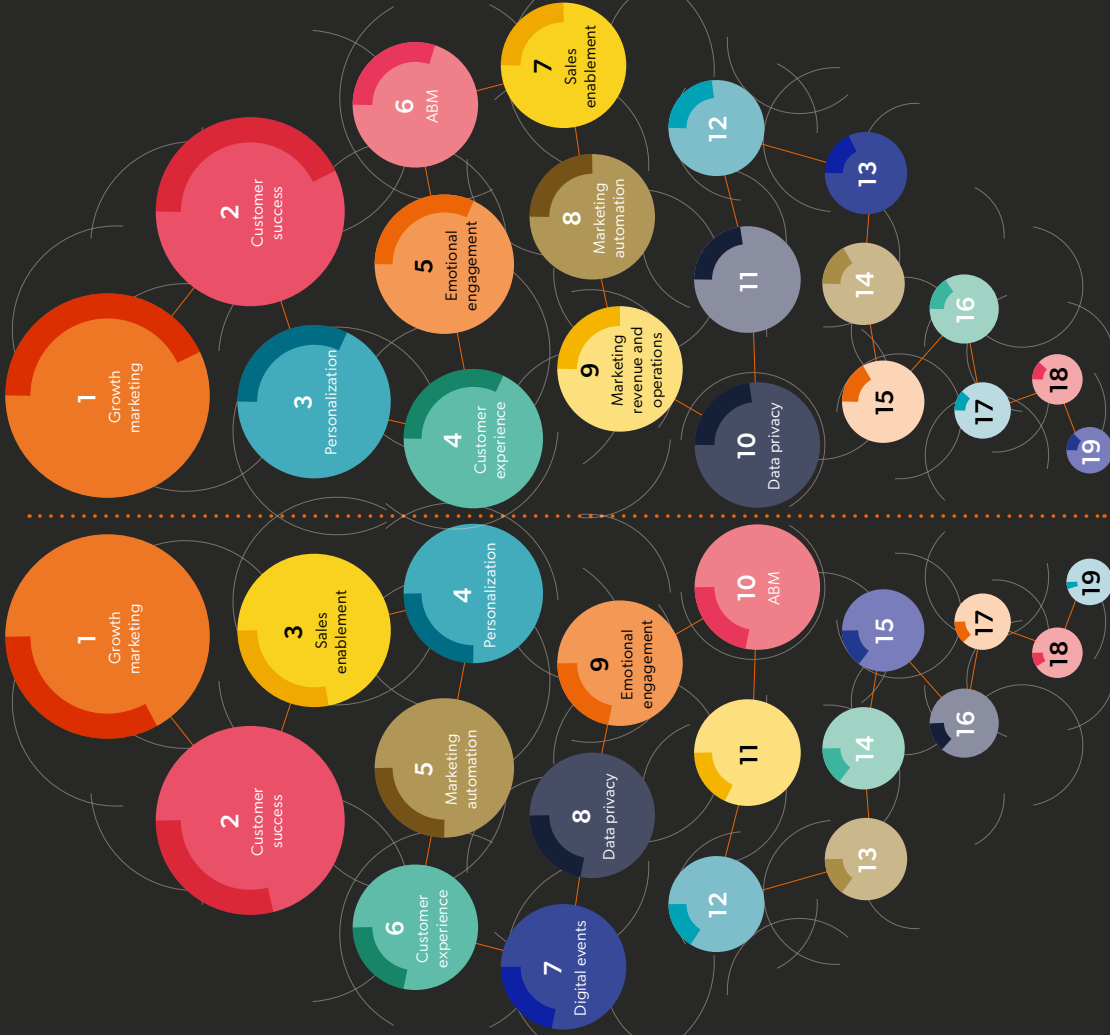
The 2021 B2B Marketing Trend Tracker: The B2B mind

Client-side

1. Growth marketing 33.1%
2. Customer success 28.9%
3. Sales enablement 27.7%
4. Personalization 25%
5. Marketing automation 24.7%
6. Customer experience 22.3%
7. Digital events 22.3%
8. Data privacy/data governance 22%
9. Emotional engagement 21.7%
10. ABM 21.7%
11. Marketing and revenue operations 17.5%
12. Performance marketing 16.3%
13. Transformation 15%
14. Martech stack 14.5%
15. Channel marketing 14.5%
16. Brand purpose 13.9%
17. Agile marketing 12.7%
18. Customer data platforms 9%
19. Influencer marketing 5.4%

Agency-side

1. Growth marketing 42.8%
2. Customer success 42.8%
3. Personalization 32%
4. Customer experience 32%
5. Emotional engagement 31.9%
6. ABM 30.4%
7. Sales enablement 28.3%
8. Marketing automation 24.6%
9. Marketing and revenue operations 24.6%
10. Data privacy/data governance 24%
11. Brand purpose 23.2%
12. Performance marketing 22.5%
13. Digital events 23%
14. Transformation 18.1%
15. Agile marketing 16.7%
16. Martech stack 15.9%
17. Influencer marketing 12.3%
18. Customer data platforms 11.6%
19. Channel marketing 10.9%



The 2021 Trend Tracker

What's at the front of clients' and agencies' minds this year? **David Rowlands** looks at the trends set to dominate the conversation in 2021

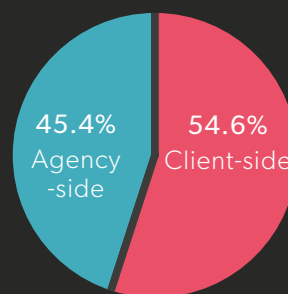
Each year, B2B Marketing conducts a survey to understand what marketers will be focusing on for the year ahead. Conducted with Cogniclick, the survey presented 19 topics to participants, and asked them to consider how focused they will be on each one in 2021.

For each topic, the participant could select one of the following: very highly focused; highly focused; somewhat focused; slightly focused; or not at all focused.

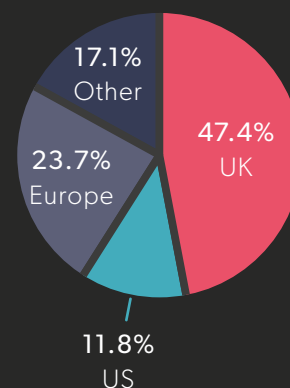
For the purposes of this feature, we will be looking at those that replied 'very highly focused' to gauge what's really got the attention of B2B marketers this year.

With more than 300 client and agency-side respondents, we can see which areas are grabbing the limelight, and which are fading into the background.

Percentage of agency versus client respondents



Geographic location of respondents



How have the trends changed from last year's report?

Last year, the top four trends were: customer experience (CX); growth marketing; account-based marketing (ABM); and revenue operations.

This year, growth marketing has jumped into first place, with 37.5% of our audience saying they are very highly focused on it this year. As many of us will know, the exact definition of growth marketing is not always clear, so, for clarity, we defined growth marketing in our survey as: "strategies and positioning of marketing as the engine-room of business growth." It appears, therefore, that marketers are continuing to assert themselves as a driver of real business goals, and totally distance themselves

from the 'coloring in department' of yesteryear.

CX, meanwhile, has fallen to fifth place, with 26.6% of our survey participants claiming it's something they are going to be very highly focused on this year. However, it is interesting to note that customer success – a new entry into the Trend Tracker – has taken second place, with 35.2% very highly focused on it. Ultimately, customer success and CX are closely linked, so, despite CX's slight decrease in share of attention, the focus on the customer first remains front and center of marketers' minds.

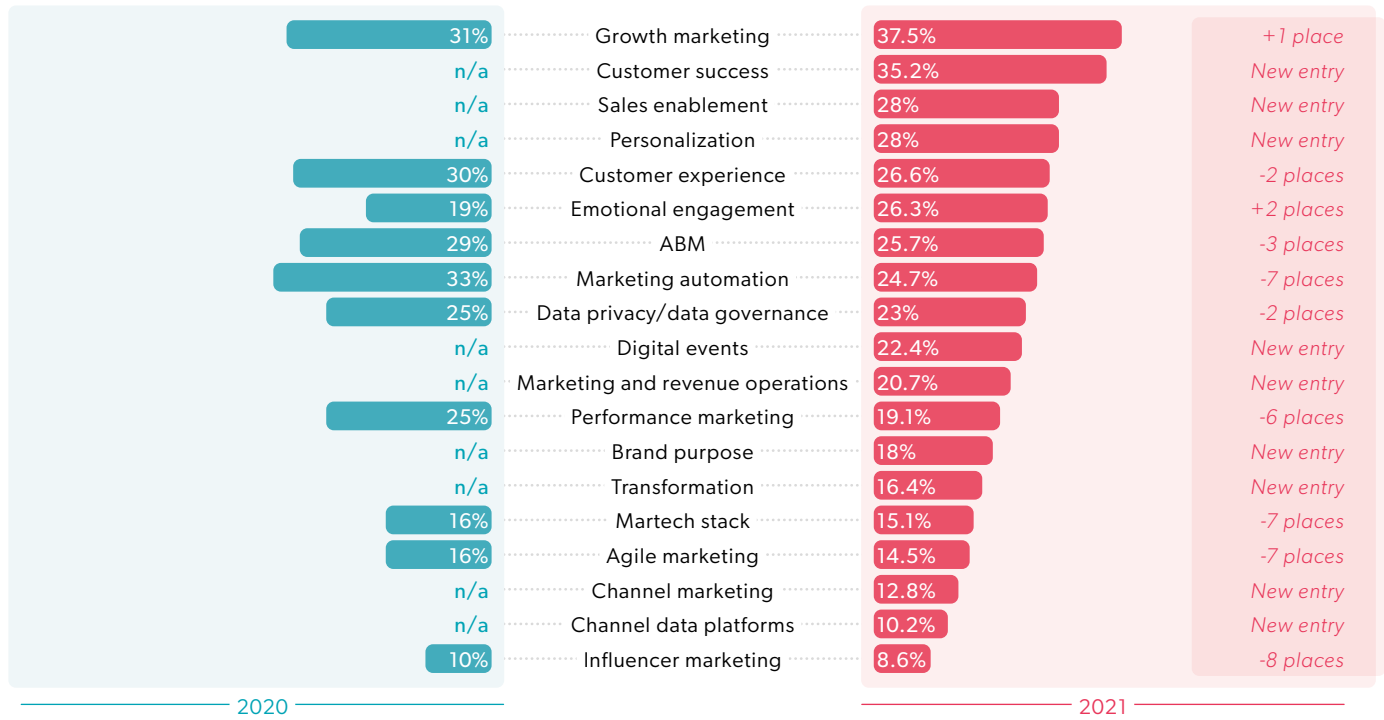
To add to this point, sales enablement and personalization – both of which are new entries – came joint third place (28%). Despite having the word 'sales' in the terminology,

at the heart of sales enablement is a need for marketing to understand what the customer requires, and then provide sales with the tools they need to win their continued business. Personalization, of course, also necessitates a deep understanding of what the customer is interested in.

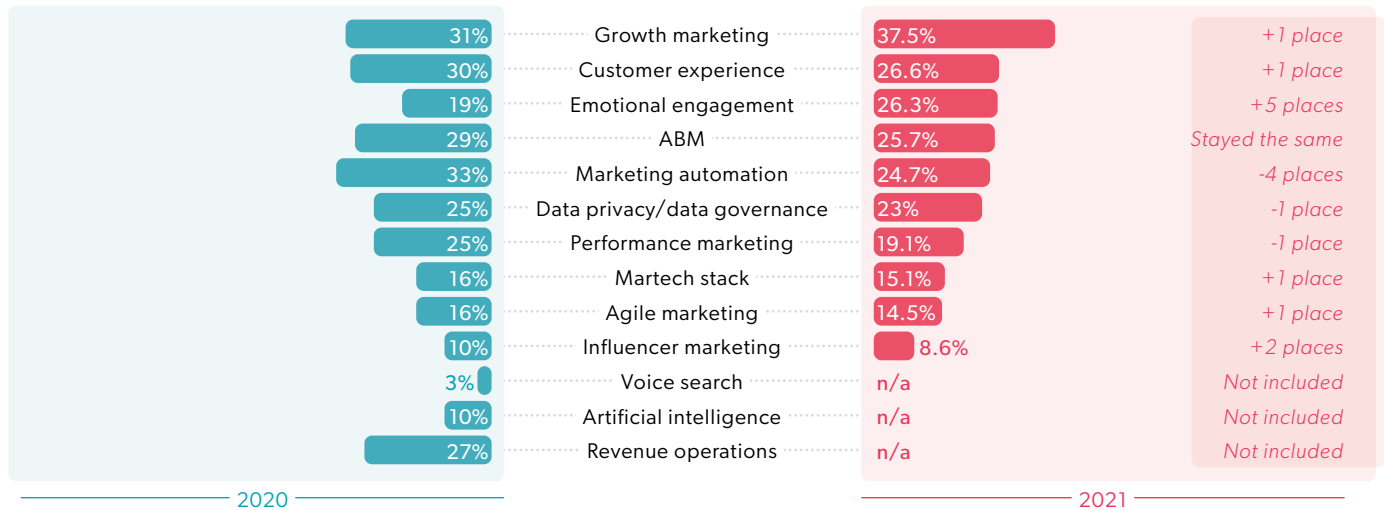
With this in mind, it's interesting to see that three of the top four trends for 2021 include a much greater focus on the customer than the product, channel or martech.

Revenue operations has, of course, dropped out of the top spots. Although we did not include this exact trend this year, we did include 'marketing and revenue operations', which now sits at 11th place. It is also crucial to note that ABM, although sitting in seventh

Topics in order of how many people selected 'very highly focused' for 2021 (agency and client-side combined)



Comparison of data with last year's trends only (agency and client-side combined)



place in this year's report, would be fourth place, were it not for the new entries. It's also worth noting that sales enablement, growth marketing and personalization are core tenets of ABM, and so, although the term itself may have dipped in popularity, its key marketing DNA remains as fundamental as ever. Perhaps we are simply seeing a shift away from account-based marketing, and towards account-based everything.

Do agencies and clients share the same priorities?

Unsurprisingly, agencies – whose bread and butter is the ability to deliver world-class marketing campaigns – were more highly focused on nearly all trends, with two exceptions: marketing automation and channel marketing.

However, due to the fact that agencies will undoubtedly be more

focused on each of the trends, the key thing to compare is positioning.

Growth marketing remains in number one spot for both client-side and agency-side, suggesting a sincere desire to position marketing as a business driver on both sides of the coin. Interestingly, sales enablement, for all of the hype, is seventh place amongst agencies, but third amongst clients.

Customer success, however, remains in second place among both agencies

and clients, so customers, rejoice! There's even more reason for buyers to celebrate, as CX is fourth among agencies and sixth among clients.

It is also interesting to note the rise of emotional engagement in our Trend Tracker. It has risen two places overall since last year's report, ranking

fifth amongst agencies, but still ninth amongst clients. Either way, it is not a stretch to suggest that 2020, a year in which striking the right tone with your customers was even more crucial than ever, has led to B2B marketers thinking in a more emotionally intelligent way. Regardless, it appears

agencies are leading the way on this front, with client-side marketers needing to play catch-up.

Unsurprisingly, influencer marketing has continued its descent amongst both client-side and agency-side marketers, ranking bottom for both.

It's interesting to see that three of the top four trends for 2021 include a much greater focus on the customer than the product, channel or martech

Top three trends this year

First place:

Growth marketing (+1 place YoY)

As discussed earlier, growth marketing is the concept that marketing should be positioned as a key driver of business growth. It is more philosophical than, say, performance marketing, which focuses more on the methodology to drive conversion (and typically on a short-term basis).

As with anything philosophical, it is broad by nature, and arguably encompasses many of the other topics listed in the survey.

Regardless, its rise indicates a continued perspective-shift among marketers.

Whilst marketers of 20 years ago may have received a marketing budget from a siloed member of the leadership team, and considered what interesting and engaging campaigns they could run with it, growth marketers put the business first, and ask themselves: 'how can marketing position itself to deliver business growth?'

The fact that both client-side and agency-side marketers have seen growth marketing as the thing they're most focused on 2021 is fascinating, especially when compared to something more conventional like, say, the martech stack (15th place in the combined agency/client results).

Second place:

Customer success (new entry)

Although it would be interesting to see how every topic compares YoY ad infinitum, it makes sense to simply remove some topics and enter new ones each year. After all, I doubt anyone would be all that surprised to see fax machines at the bottom of any marketer's priority list.

With that in mind, the award for second place in this year's Trend Tracker goes to customer success – another new entry.

We defined customer success as: "Ensuring your customers achieve desired outcomes when using your products or solutions, and are less likely to churn."

In short, there is not much fun to be had generating 10 new customers each year, if you also lose 10 existing customers. With prospective buyers often carrying out their own research online for weeks or months before revealing themselves to an organization, making the sale can be difficult. Ensuring existing customers are happy is, therefore, crucial to long-term success.

It is not rocket science to understand that if a customer doesn't get what they paid for, or is underwhelmed with the product or service, they're unlikely to renew or recommend your solution. Fortunately, marketers are in the perfect position to ensure customer success, and so it's reassuring to see this topic has landed in second place.

Third place:

Sales enablement (new entry)

Although sales enablement is by no means a new topic, it took real strides forward in 2020. As the number of martech solutions tailored for sales enablement has grown steadily, marketers now have a host of tools at their disposal to implement this optimized approach to marketing and sales.

In addition to this, Covid-19 ruled out face-to-face events and meetings, and generally made prospective buyers harder to reach. As a result of this, marketers – armed with banks upon banks of data – have had to step forward with solutions to help their sales colleagues get deals across the line.

Given that it was not even deemed a worthy entry in last year's report (and yet voice search was, would you believe), the fact sales enablement now sits boldly at third place suggests it has now broken through from 'interesting background topic' to 'serious marketing strategy'.

Of course, whether or not sales enablement will become a widespread marketing strategy remains to be seen. There's reason to be optimistic, however, as our report on sales enablement last year indicated 28% of marketers already had an agreed and documented sales enablement program, and 45% were in the process of developing one.

B2B Marketing

IGNITE USA 2021

Ignite USA is about giving you a truckload of fresh, practical, super-smart tactics and strategies for the rebound and beyond.

Join the B2B community virtually for two trail-blazing days of B2B marketing strategy, inspiration, actionable takeaways, and networking on June 2–3.

Why you can't miss this

If you are serious about using your marketing to drive business growth, upskilling yourself and your team, getting inspiration, and unlocking the key to marketing transformation, Ignite USA is the only place you need to be.

b2bigniteusa.com • June 2–3, 2021 • [#B2BIgniteUSA](https://twitter.com/B2BIgniteUSA)

Developing emotional capital to overcome hyper fragmentation and audience inattention

Tom Stein explains how emotional capital is the key to getting your customers to pay attention

‘Pay attention!’ It’s the most familiar of commands issued to notoriously inattentive kids. Today, it also turns out to be an expression that vividly states a very real challenge for marketers: how do we earn our audience’s attention when it is the scarcest of commodities?

As media and channels have fragmented and re-fragmented over the past 25 years, attention has become increasingly difficult to come by. As content marketing has become prevalent and every brand everywhere has become a prolific content producer, the sheer volume of information competing for customers’ attention across a multiplicity of channels continues to explode.

Now put all of the above into the current context.

With the pandemic, digital has gone from ascendent to absolute. Professional and personal demands on attention have dovetailed and grown, as well.

The result? Inattention has grown. So, what’s a marketer to do? How can we make an impact when the deck is stacked against it? Here are six interrelated answers:

1. Take a hard look at your positioning

Customers’ lives are more oversaturated than they have ever been. As a brand owner, you need to demonstrate genuine understanding of your audiences, and you must be crystal clear about your value (and values).

Tom Stein,
chairman, MSQ B2B, and
chairman and chief client
officer, Stein IAS



There simply is no time in a customer’s day or space in a customer’s mind to parse complexity or struggle to understand what’s different and why that matters.

2. Listen constantly

Customers are living in an uncertain world. Market dynamics change and change again. Mindsets change along with them. Leverage the tools that exist for more active, real-time listening. Earn a greater share of customer attention by gathering new and more powerful insights.

3. Connect more deeply

We humans are emotionally driven. So, campaigns need to be, too – especially B2B campaigns where emotion is still unexpected and under-leveraged. Put humanity at the heart of your campaigns and content experiences – and not just at the top of the funnel.

4. Create experiences that are attention-worthy

People are starved for experience. There is a massive opportunity to achieve impact through more dynamic and inventive digital experiences.

5. Build communities of interest

This is a two-step process and not something that can be done overnight. The first step: define and identify your total addressable market (TAM). The second: turn your TAM into a community of interest that you help convene by providing real value based on a deep understanding of its needs.

6. Connect brand to demand for a joined-up CX

While marketers may, customers do not discern between brand and demand. All they care about is a joined-up experience that is reflective of their needs, aspirations and expectations.

The thread that runs through it all: consistently behave in a way that customers will genuinely value. That’s the marker of a business brand enriched and enlivened with superior emotional capital – a brand that translates this hard-won capital into competitive advantage. And, by the way, that’s what MSQ B2B can uniquely enable you to do.



CALLING ALL CHANGE AGENTS

Let's level up
together

Modern marketing calls for
fresh perspective

From brand strategy to omnichannel execution, we're driven to help marketers move from *status quo* to *standout*. Together, we'll bring your vision to life with fresh insight and relentless optimization. Independently owned since 1989, we keep our head on a swivel and our eye on the prize—strategizing, developing and deploying integrated programs that drive maximum impact. What will you see with a new view?

Visit LoSasso.com to learn more.

LOSASSO
INTEGRATED MARKETING

Changes in technology and consumer behavior have opened up a new opportunity for B2B marketers

David Fabbri explains why 'connected TV' could be your next big focus area

From the c-suite down, businesses are adjusting to unexpected challenges and opportunities resulting from the pandemic. This provides an opportunity to take a fresh look at ways to speed up growth and evolution. Keeping marketing in sync with changes in business strategy and buyer behavior is a critical challenge for every CMO. Among the trends accelerated by the pandemic, disruption to the traditional television landscape presents some exciting opportunities for B2B.

While the Super Bowl has long been the advertising event of the year for large consumer brands, it may surprise you that the streaming audience for this year's game increased a whopping 65% to over 5.7 million viewers per minute. This aligns with the accelerating trend of consumers cutting the cord on traditional cable and satellite and opting instead to get programming through connected TV (CTV) platforms.

The importance for B2B is that the ecosystem evolving to support CTV delivers: new inventory; sophisticated, data-rich, digital targeting; and enhanced buying flexibility. Combined, this is making TV, which was once ineffective and cost-prohibitive, a viable option for the B2B integrated marketing mix.

David Fabbri,
chief strategy officer,
LoSasso Integrated
Marketing



More targetable, more affordable

B2B advertisers want performance and efficiency, and don't often have large media budgets. With CTV, brands and their agencies can place ads programmatically – like other online media – buying a specific audience rather than a program, network or time slot. Demographic, firmographic and psychographic parameters and other first-party data can be used to build robust B2B target profiles. That means you can put ads in front of the people that matter and leave out the rest.

This strategy was highly effective for our client TransUnion last year in building awareness and adoption of their new ShareAble for Hires product. We targeted small business owners and hiring managers in specific sectors, in metros that were reopening for business. Real-time adjustments can be made to optimize performance based on response or other dynamics, such as changes in local regulation. With limited investments, we were able to drive measurable results using a medium that was previously impossible to leverage in this way. And this is just the beginning.

Cross channel optimization

Since you know who these viewers are, you can target them across the digital landscape for maximum impact. Tracking performance across channels yields a better understanding of the target's typical path to purchase, better attribution against budgets, and stronger program optimization.

Surprised to see you

Because CTV is still relatively new, consumers are not used to seeing niche B2B players from the industries they work in on television. This presents a first-adopter advantage that can increase impact and can help your brand stand out.

Opportunity knocks

All this adds up to a unique opportunity for B2B marketers. A powerful new tool in the integrated marketing toolbox has become available and affordable, and it is one of the many reasons we love the continuous challenge and excitement of B2B marketing.



WE'RE AT THE CENTER OF B2B.

Two Rivers Marketing is a fully integrated B2B marketing agency. We believe that the connection between brand relevance and sales revenue in B2B is the 2 — a real relationship between your brand and your customers. If you're ready to own the 2 in B2B marketing, come partner with us.

STRATEGY & PLANNING

CREATIVE & BRANDING

CONTENT MARKETING

DIGITAL & MEDIA

CHANNEL MARKETING

PUBLIC RELATIONS

TWO RIVERS
MARKETING

TWORIVERSMARKETING.COM/B2B-GUIDE

Why knowing your audience is more important than ever

Brad Olson explains why knowing your audience is crucial to building strong campaigns in an ever-fragmented media landscape

Much is made of the ever-fragmenting media landscape and the increasing number of outlets where brands can connect with customers and prospects. Which social channels should you have a presence on and support with advertising? What trade shows should you attend and perhaps sponsor? Which publications or digital properties should you advertise in? What about TV, satellite radio and podcasting?

With budgets always under scrutiny and marketers (and their agencies) being asked to do more with less, how can brands make an impact with strong campaigns, given this array of places to try to connect with your audience? How do you know where to go and if you are successful?

The answer is the same as it has always been: know your audience.

Many companies have had epiphanies over the past decade like ‘we need to put the customer at the center of our business’, or some similar sentiment. But effective marketing campaigns, as they always have, involve a great idea that connects to an audience need. And, if you don’t understand your audience and their needs, it doesn’t matter where you put your advertising, because your audience will tune it out or miss it altogether.

Good news: there are more ways than ever to learn about your audience. Obviously, there are the traditional methods of surveys and interviews, and syndicated data abounds in certain categories. There are a multitude of ways to collect behavioral data

Brad Olson,
vice president,
Two Rivers Marketing



online (though those are becoming more challenging via regulation). Companies attempt to get their sales teams to populate databases with customer information, though few manage to do it successfully.

There’s also a lot of focus on creating audience personas, mapping customer journeys and improving user experience. In addition to all the other newfangled terms and approaches, these are all just the same thing: know your audience.

The fundamentals of building that relationship with a customer or prospect haven’t changed. Know who they are, what they care about, and where they go for information

When you do understand and know your audience, you can develop compelling creative work that drives meaningful engagement in your brand. With that great campaign idea, content or video, you can then activate a truly effective marketing campaign in as little or as much of the media landscape as you need. Rather than being a daunting challenge, it becomes easier if you know your audience and where they are. Instead of being limited by three major networks and a daily newspaper, media has a smorgasbord of options with which to launch a campaign.

Today’s media landscape enables marketers to be as targeted or as broad as they like when launching a campaign into the world, but the fundamentals of building that relationship with a customer or prospect haven’t changed. Know who they are, what they care about, and where they go for information. Provide them with an idea that meets their needs (whether rational or emotional), and let them come to you.

When you build that relationship with them by demonstrating that you get them and reach out on their terms, it’s hard not to succeed.

MERKLE
— B2B —

B2B Inspiring.

Creativity strikes like a lightning bolt but without research & insights, data & technology and performance media behind it? Its impact would be fleeting. That's why we purpose-built our agency to help B2B brands create experiences that matter to the people who matter most. See how we're creating B2B like never before at merkleb2b.com.

MERKLE
data and technology

MERKLE
DWA
performance media

gyro
A Merkle Company
creative & brand transformation

B2B International
research & insights

digital
marketing automation

Which emerging or 'fringe' channels will break through in B2B in 2021?

Michael McLaren takes a look at the major changes that have occurred to businesses this past year, and explains which channels will benefit as a result

Disruptive changes in business operations, remote work and digital workflows have left an indelible mark on B2B customers worldwide. We are now relying on online engagement to a much greater extent than we used to, which means new channels are constantly being added to the marketing mix.

With more customers conducting in-depth research before making a final purchase decision, they are bound to come into contact with a vast amount of content during the purchasing process.

As a result, rich content marketing will continue to explode. Buyers need high-quality content that is more personalized and interactive than ever before.

Another channel that has picked up steam over the last year is B2B social. The reliance on social media, particularly LinkedIn and Facebook, to create informal communication channels among peers in other businesses and industries has made them a go-to for information-seeking decision-makers.

With the rising number of people doing their own homework on companies, search engine optimization (SEO) has become a powerful tool by bringing people relevant content based on their organic search. It is imperative that you fine-tune your existing content and make it discoverable through search engines.

With new online opportunities emerging daily, today's B2B buyers are now completely immersed in a self-serve environment. They can make decisions, conduct all necessary research, and even carry out transactions on their own time, at their convenience.

Michael McLaren,
global CEO,
Merkle B2B



A study by WARC found two-thirds of B2B marketers globally in the tech and telco sectors intend to increase their digital audio budgets in 2021^[1].

With so many people setting up home offices, B2B buyers are soon going to expect to be able to engage with prospective businesses through voice search and personalized voice experiences that redefine the way employees get work done.

Video is also poised to become a game-changer for many B2B organizations. According to a Cisco study, in 2021, video is predicted to make up 82% of consumer internet traffic, making it by far the dominant media of choice for audiences in the digital ecosystem, and yet so few B2B companies truly understand how video can be better used to tell their message^[2].

Smart agents, or chatbots, are expected to become standard on websites, with the goal of directing customers to the content that's going to be the most valuable to them in the least amount of time. From scheduling virtual demo appointments to resolving tech issues, the opportunities for B2B brands using chatbots to accelerate the B2B sales and marketing process are plentiful.

Finally, virtual events will become a mainstay of our working lives. When the time comes to meet in person again, it is going to be incumbent on us to make virtual events consumable in an entertaining way by focusing on connection, emotional engagement, and user interaction through features such as one-on-one videos, breakout rooms, roundtables, and other tactics.

To reach your sales goals in a truly connected world requires ecommerce enabled digital business platforms. Ecommerce can help companies facilitate smarter buyer decisions through an enablement track without relying on a physical, linear buying process.

The dominance of digital and the need to reach more diverse audiences have triggered the need for new approaches to channel planning. Now is the time to experiment and embrace the ubiquity of these real-time platforms.

^[1] WARC, 'B2B comes of age as marketers find new opportunities', 03 February 2021.

^[2] Cisco, 'Cisco Annual Internet Report (2018–2023)', 09 March 2020.

Moments your buyers can't miss. Momentum that won't stop.

At Quarry, we build demand with experiences that spark, enable, mobilize and accelerate buying journeys. That's why our top-ranking team is trusted by marketers from some of North America's leading tech enterprises.

We're experts in demand, exclusive to B2B tech.

quarry.com @Quarry

DEMANDREACTION™

**QU
AR
RY**

© 2021 Quarry Integrated Communications Inc. DemandReaction is a trademark of Quarry Integrated Communications Inc.

Bringing your 'A' game to ABM

Meredith Fuller,
MD, demand strategy,
Quarry



Meredith Fuller outlines three areas where ABMers can bring their A game in 2021 and beyond

With B2B marketers doubling down on ABM as a major priority this year and beyond, how can marketers get the most of that investment? Here's three ways ABMers can up their game:

1. Augment contact coverage across buying groups

B2B marketers understand that large B2B buying decisions are made by groups of people with different roles and responsibilities. Despite that understanding, too many contact 'hot lists' for ABM programs focus exclusively on the c-suite or senior executive level.

Engaging top executives makes sense, but let's not forget the rest of the demand unit. Augment your account-level contact coverage to encourage both push and pull demand. Cast as wide a net as possible in terms of buying group members. Directors and managers who oversee the use of your product or solution, as well as those team members who will use it daily, are critical contributors to the buying decision. Generate desire and advocacy with those who will derive the most benefit from the right choice – and who will experience the greatest frustration with the wrong choice.

2. Activate account-centric scoring models

Decades of lead scoring have led to systems, data and processes built upon this individual-centric model. The result is that, despite the ABM practice of targeting accounts and their associated buying groups, it is still often individual leads that are tracked through the buying journey.

Developing new, account-centric scoring models and reconfiguring processes and systems to support them takes time and effort. To get there, we are seeing some organizations adopting a crawl, walk, run approach.

Start crawling by aggregating lead engagement at the account level. For example, a marketing qualified account (MQA) may be defined as an account that has three marketing qualified leads (MQL). Get to walking by applying relative weightings to the title/function of buying group members based upon their level of involvement in the buying decision. And you'll be running when you start tracking discrete buying groups that represent a single demand unit, allowing for more complex routing rules that can encompass primary buyer roles, as well as influencers and users.

3. Adopt an always-on mindset

Focused, time-bound campaigns will always play a dominant role in the ABM-sphere, particularly for one-to-one and one-to-few campaigns. That said, 'always-on' programs that keep your brand top-of-mind, particularly with accounts in the one-to-many ABM tier, will help elevate them – based upon heightened intent or increased engagement – to a threshold that supports a more targeted ABM effort. Always-on channels and tactics may include flighting targeted media at a set cadence throughout the year, sending emails at regular intervals, and promoting a recurring webinar, podcast or blog series.

Advanced always-on efforts create account-based demand engines that never turn off, such as Windstream Enterprise's 2020 Elevation Award-winning program, MyCampaign. Created by marketing, but controlled by sales (right from the CRM), MyCampaign helps sales scale their account-based efforts by providing on-demand access to launch relevant and highly personalized, multi-channel and multi-touch experiences targeting multiple accounts and contacts concurrently. The tool has delighted sales reps and prospects alike, all while driving major pipeline and revenue.

Here's to stepping up your 'A' BM game in 2021 and beyond.

Services selector

Agencies were asked to select three options that best reflect their primary services

	BBN International	Godfrey	Iris	Kingpin	LoSasso Integrated Marketing	MarketReach	Merkle B2B	MSQ B2B	Quarry	Red House	The Mx Group	TriComB2B	Two Rivers Marketing
ABM				✓					✓				
Branding	✓							✓					✓
Campaign and creative execution	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Channel marketing			✓			✓							
Content marketing services <i>(including video)</i>					✓					✓		✓	
Customer experience management (CXM)							✓						
Demand generation <i>(including telemarketing)</i>				✓									
Digital <i>(e.g. mobile, social media, SEO/PPC, web design/development, etc)</i>		✓			✓			✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Marketing planning/strategy			✓								✓		✓
Martech <i>(deployment and/or management)</i>	✓								✓				
Media planning/buying				✓			✓						
PR		✓											
Sales enablement						✓							

Section 3:

Agency profiles

BBN International	60	MSQ B2B	74
Godfrey	62	Quarry	76
Iris	64	Red House	78
Kingpin	66	The Mx Group	80
LoSasso Integrated Marketing	68	TriComB2B	82
MarketReach	70	Two Rivers Marketing	84
Merkle B2B	72		

BBN International

Philosophy

The best agencies are built on the entrepreneurial spirit of their founders and senior agency executives. Leaders who put the client and the quality of their work first – not the requirement to meet holding company profit targets by reducing agency costs.

With over a thousand B2B specialists working in over 50 offices across 30 countries, our entrepreneurial approach is principal led. The result? Better work that generates significantly improved economic value for our clients, fostering a longer-term client-agency relationship that is built on mutual trust, value and respect. Our matrix structure provides delivery teams that consist of in-depth industry experience, technical and creative expertise and extensive geographic coverage. Together, we are adept at responding to client challenges, providing insightful, effective strategies that are carefully tailored to the regions in which they operate. This unparalleled access to a variety of highly specialised skill sets is critically important in delivering end-to-end solutions and results which connect with all target audiences, wherever and whenever required, while giving our clients a one-agency experience.

Awards

Winner, Best content marketing	<i>B2 Awards 2020</i>
Winner, Creative agency of the year	<i>Ace 2020</i>
Gold, Online video for Mitsubishi Electric	<i>The Communicator Awards 2020</i>

Sectors



Energy and utilities



Financial services



Pharmaceuticals and life sciences



Technology and telecoms

Clients

Adobe

Axios Industrial Services

Corteva Agriscience (Pioneer)

Mitsubishi

MSD Animal Health

Sandvik

Year founded:
1987

Website:
bbn-international.com

Contact email:
ed@bbn-international.com

Twitter:
@BBN_B2B

Address:
401 N. Michigan Ave, Ste 1900,
Chicago, Illinois, 60611



A selection of BBN success stories. Adobe: Learning platform housing tools for Educators; Axios: Corp brochure and digital campaign; Mitsubishi Electric: Brand campaign; MSD Animal Health: Preventative veterinary consultancy campaign; Corteva Agriscience: Pioneer Seed campaign; Sandvik: Social sales driving campaign.

Godfrey

Philosophy

We've mastered the art of marketing in complex industries. B2B marketing isn't just about selling products. It's about offering real-world solutions that make it easier for people to live and work.

But B2B marketers have a challenge. On the corporate side, they have way more complexity than they know what to do with, from communicating with multiple decision makers and influencers to navigating intricate buying cycles. And every day, a new marketing trend springs up to solve these problems, but most marketers don't have the time to keep up.

That's where Godfrey comes in. We understand the client's industry, so we'll sync up with their team right away. We understand – and speak – the language of their customers, whether they're engineers, architects, chemists or operations managers. And that ever-changing toolbox of marketing practices? We get that, too. We can engineer an experience that feels just right for each and every client.

Awards

Top 200 B2B agencies	<i>Chief Marketer 200 (2020)</i>
Perfect Partner Award	<i>Worldwide Partners 2019</i>

Sectors



Industrial, manufacturing and engineering



Pharmaceuticals and life sciences



Property and construction

Clients

Avantor

Graham Packaging

JLG

Johnson Controls

Pixelle

SKF

Year founded:
1947

Website:
godfrey.com

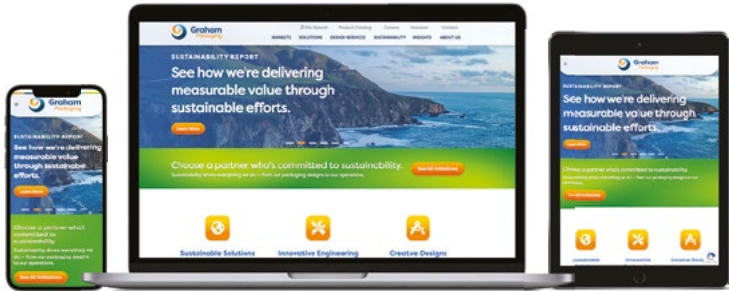
Phone number:
717-393-3831

Contact email:
jalbert@godfrey.com

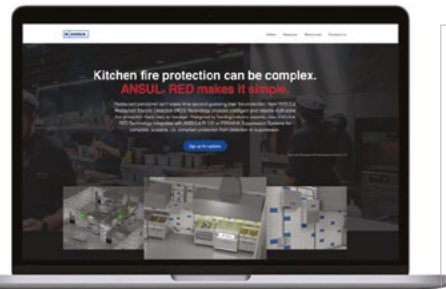
Twitter: @GodfreyB2B

Address:
40 North Christian St.,
Lancaster, Pennsylvania, 17602

GRAHAM PACKAGING IDENTITY AND WEBSITE DESIGN



JOHNSON CONTROLS ANSUL® RED FIRE SUPPRESSION



PIXELLE SPECIALTY SOLUTIONS™ OMNILUX PACKAGING



HYPERTHERM "THE POWER OF YES" CAMPAIGN



From identity and website design to print ads, public relations and digital campaigns, Godfrey provides full-service B2B marketing that gets results.



Iris Worldwide

Philosophy

We are Iris – a creative, strategy and innovation company that uses the power of participation to move your business forward.

The participation era is here – customers are in control and every brand is a step away from rejection. Businesses must, therefore, urgently evolve to keep up with customers’ rising expectations.

Participation brands deliver disproportionate levels of excitement and involvement, and they outperform the competition.

Our purpose is to excite progress for our clients, people and the wider world. We hustle to make change happen. We create visions that galvanise. We work together in exciting ways. All to build ideas that will move a business forward.

We harness the power of participation to create genuine leaps forward.

Our specialisms in B2C and B2B enable us to: create brands, products, experiences and services; connect your offering into your audience’s lives; and convert new customers and profit potential.

Iris, moving your business forward.

Awards

Winner, print advertising campaign *Global Ace Awards 2019*

Winner, proprietary event marketing *Global Ace Awards 2020*

Winner, photography/illustration *Global Ace Awards 2020*

Sectors



Financial services



Industrial, manufacturing and engineering



Professional services



Technology and telecoms

Clients

Alcon

Alight

PayPal

Samsung

Year founded:
1999

Website:
iris-worldwide.com

Phone number:
+1 312 239 0187

Contact email:
jill.smith@iris-worldwide.com

Twitter: @irisworldwide

Address:
168 N. Clinton, Second Floor,
Chicago, Illinois, 60661

**Open for business.
Safe for business.**

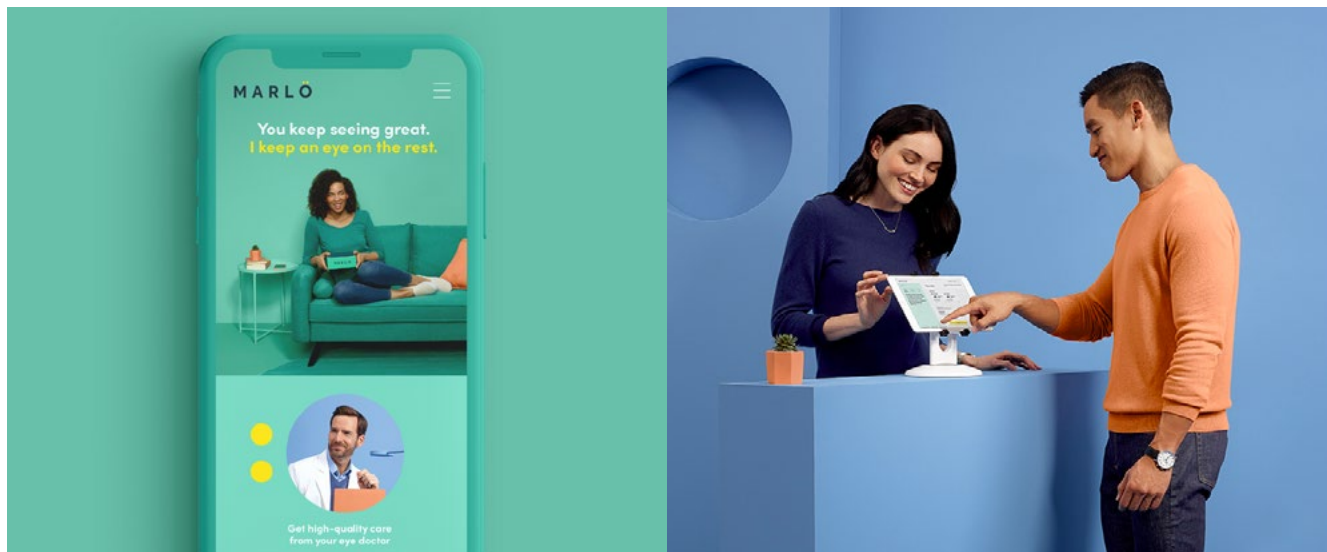


**A safe business
is good for business**

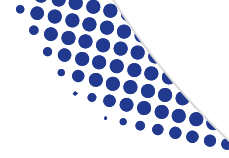


Introducing touch-free payments.
The safe way for your customers to pay.

Shop Safe
with **PayPal**



Select work from top to bottom: the PayPal, Shop Safe campaign; the Samsung showroom created as part of the Home Appliance Builder campaign; and lastly, the launch campaign for Marlo, an Alcon brand.



Kingpin

Philosophy

Kingpin accelerates growth for B2B technology brands through data-driven marketing programs that reach, engage, influence and convert business customers. Everything we do is underpinned by data, insights and actionable intelligence into how B2B customers behave, research and purchase.

Understanding the complex journeys, buyer groups and business challenges and priorities is the key for delivering measurable results.

We are more than just a service provider. We are partners, consultants and friends, working with our clients day-in, day-out to produce exceptional campaigns that deliver exceptional results.

Awards

Grand prix	<i>The Drum Digital Advertising Awards Europe 2020</i>
B2B	<i>The Drum Digital Advertising Awards Europe 2020</i>
Best use of data and insights	<i>The Drum Recommends Awards 2019</i>

Sectors



Technology and telecoms

Clients

- Microsoft
- Quest Software
- Salesforce
- SonicWall
- Slack
- Trend Micro

Year founded:
1997

Website:
kingpincomms.com

Phone number:
415 793 8370

Contact email:
hello@kingpincomms.com

Twitter: @KingpinComms

Address:
135 Madison Ave, 5th Floor,
New York, New York, 10016

Actionable Intelligence.



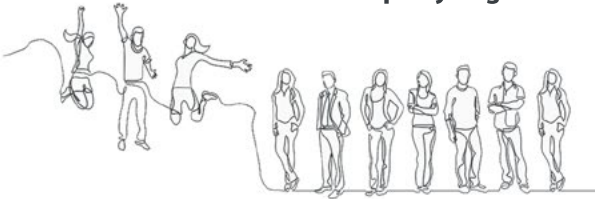
Measurable Results.

How are decision makers researching in lockdown?

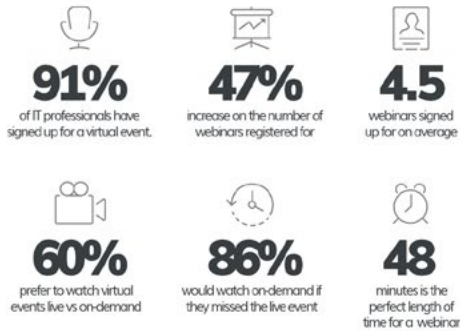
In the absence of live events, which of the following would be your preferred information sources for when you are researching new technology solutions and services for your business?



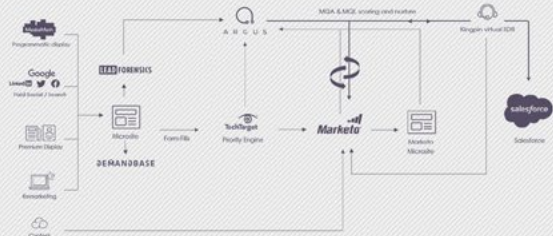
Only 3 in 10 sales / marketing professionals think their departments are completely aligned



How are IT decision makers engaging with virtual events since lockdown?



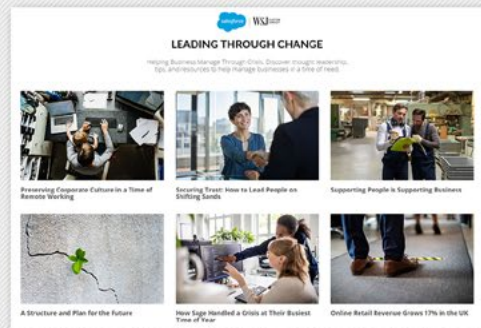
An account-based demand engine that drove 613% ROI for BAE Systems



A global ABM demand gen programme that reached and engaged 2375 unique target accounts for Slack



A highly-targeted UK brand awareness campaign, delivering a 6.5x above benchmark CTR for Salesforce



A small selection of the actionable intelligence and measurable results that Kingpin has delivered for its clients over the past 12 months.

LoSasso Integrated Marketing

Philosophy

We're at our best working with marketing leaders on a mission. Change agents driven to take it to the next level — motivated by a passion for progress and pressure to perform. We deliver the fresh perspective, technical expertise and creativity they need to help hone their vision and move from *status quo* to *standout*.

Our deep experience with B2B and high-consideration consumer brands means we dial in quickly to complex products and buyers' journeys, activating the right combination of deep, in-house capabilities to complement your team and drive results.

Founded in and independently owned since 1989, we've been around the block a few times and, on every trip, we notice something new. From evolving channels and elevated consumer expectations to new opportunities for integration of data and technology, changes affecting marketing continue to accelerate. If you're pushing for smart evolution, we'd love to share some fresh perspective and help you leverage change to keep you one step ahead.

Awards

Gold, HEIDENHAIN
'Imagine' integrated
brand campaign – Brand
Momentum

AMA BrandSmart Awards
2020

Silver, B2B video campaign:
HEIDENHAIN engineer
spotlight videos

Telly Awards 2020

Gold, Lindsay Corporation:
global website

The Davey Awards 2020

Sectors



Financial
services



Industrial,
manufacturing
and engineering



Professional
services



Technology
and telecoms

Clients

CNA Insurance

HEIDENHAIN Corporation

John Deere/21st Century
Equipment

Lindsay Corporation

North American Association
of Food Equipment
Manufacturers (NAFEM)

TransUnion

Year founded:
1989

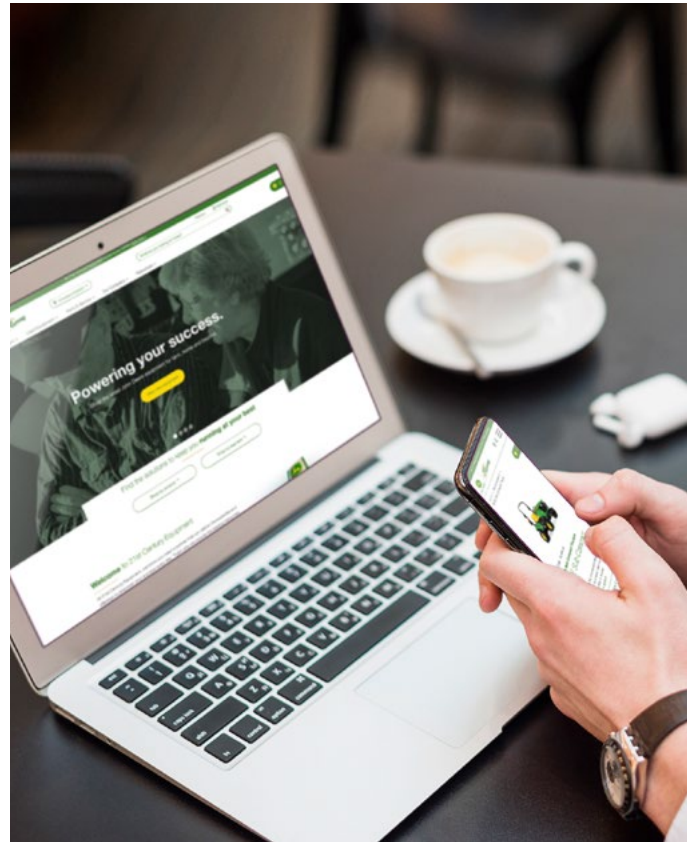
Website:
losasso.com

Phone number:
773-271-2100

Contact email:
jparisot@losasso.com

Twitter: @losasso

Address:
4853 N. Ravenswood Ave,
Chicago, Illinois, 60640



Clockwise from top left: TransUnion PRO campaign; John Deere Dealership, 21st Century Equipment website; The NAFEM Show promotional art; HEIDENHAIN Imagine campaign.

MarketReach

Philosophy

Since 1994, it has been our privilege to provide B2B technology leaders with the marketing materials and experiences they need to bring their solutions to market. We got our start providing tech companies with event-management services and helping to implement partner marketing programs. With the advent of social and mobile, our clients' thirst for content grew, and so did we. We recruited all sorts of talent in video, design, web-development, writing and project-management, and grew into an award-winning creative production shop, with nearly 100% of our work serving technology marketers. We've always had a client-centered work philosophy. We've never insisted on our own brilliance. And we invest considerably in our relationships – gaining a deep understanding of each client's unique needs, processes, likes and dislikes. While every client is unique, there are challenges common to all technology marketing. With our specialists' knowledge of common tech marketing challenges, project types, terminology, solutions, and channels, we come to every project with a head start. For our clients, this makes us easier to hire, easier to ramp up, and easier to work with.

Awards

Platinum award, Video and video creativity	2020 dotCOMM
Platinum, Digital media – web content	2020 MarCom Awards
Platinum, Electronic media – motion graphics	2020 Hermes Creative Awards

Sectors



Professional services



Technology and telecoms

Clients

Dell Technologies

Hewlett Packard Enterprise

Juniper Networks

NetApp

UiPath

VMware

Year founded:
1994

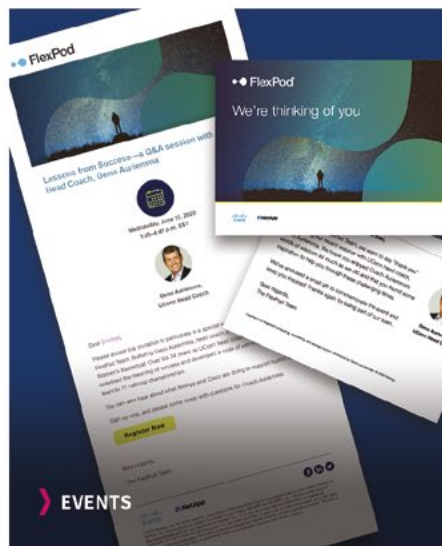
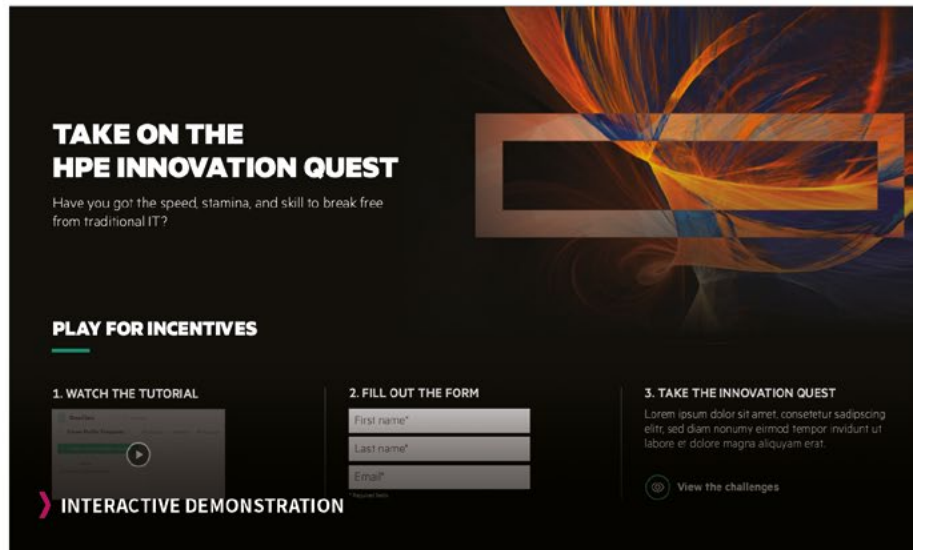
Website:
mreach.com

Phone number:
603 645 1300

Contact email:
inquiry@mreach.com

Twitter: @MarketReach

Address:
410 Amherst Street, Suite 110,
Nashua, New Hampshire, 03063



MarketReach creates award-winning marketing materials and experiences for some of the biggest names in technology.

Merkle B2B

Philosophy

B2B marketing is in the midst of a profound transformation. The old sales playbook isn't going to work anymore. The customer, the marketing environment, and the competitive landscape are changing. B2B marketers have to think differently in this new environment.

Today's B2B customers expect it to be easy to access the information they want. They expect brands to know who they are and where they are in the journey, for conversations to be picked up cross-channel, and for experiences to be anticipatory.

We believe the future of B2B marketing will be increasingly personal, informed by data, enabled by technology and powered by creativity, which is why we have created a new agency – Merkle B2B.

A global, purpose-built agency to deliver the world's first end-to-end, fully integrated B2B solution, Merkle B2B combines the strengths of Merkle, Merkle | DWA, gyro, B2B International and Digital Pi, uniting capabilities across data, technology, research, media, creative and marketing automation.

Our vision is to architect the ultimate B2B customer experience and be an indispensable growth partner to the world's leading B2B brands.

Awards

Top 200 B2B agencies	<i>Chief Marketer 200 (2021)</i>
Fastest growing agency	<i>Adweek 2020</i>
Finalist, B2B agency of the year: Large	<i>ANA B2 Awards 2020</i>

Sectors



Financial services



Industrial, manufacturing and engineering



Pharmaceuticals and life sciences



Technology and telecoms

Clients

Cisco

FujiFilm

Grainger

JLL

Transamerica

Workday

Year founded:
2020

Website:
merkleb2b.com

Phone number:
973-743-0679

Contact email:
letsgo@merkleinc.com

Twitter: @Merkle

Address:
7001 Columbia Gateway Drive,
Columbia, Maryland, 21046



From powerful brand storytelling, to dynamic sales enablement, to highly engaging content, learn how Merkle B2B is delivering world class customer experiences through data-driven, insight-led, humanly relevant ideas.

MSQ B2B

Philosophy

At a time of transformative change, the challenge and opportunity for B2B brands are the same. Discover how customers really feel in order to engage emotionally and empathetically. Be aware of your strengths and face up to your weaknesses. Provide consistent, coherent brand experiences at every touch point. Be ethical, respectful and on the level at all times. That's what MSQ B2B is uniquely suited to help you do, helping to develop the superior emotional capital you need to get closer to your customers and create lasting advantage.

With end-to-end capabilities all joined up to meet any need, MSQ B2B provides the most advanced brand-to-demand offering in the world. Insightful. Impactful. Adaptable. Our more than 800 people across nine agencies and 12 offices give B2B marketers scale and agility, breadth of capability and depth of expertise – together with a flexible approach to configuring and delivering exactly what's needed.

Awards

Agency of the year	<i>ANA 2020 B2B</i>
Martech strategy agency of the year	<i>B2B Marketing Martech Awards 2020</i>
Agency of the year	<i>The Drum 2020 Agency Business Awards</i>

Sectors



Financial services



Industrial, manufacturing, engineering



Pharmaceuticals and life sciences



Technology and telecoms

Clients

BP

Duracell/Procell

Elanco

Ingredion

LabCorp/
Covance

Vodafone

Year founded:
1973

Website:
msqpartners.com

Phone number:
646 467 7078

Contact email:
info@msqpartners.com

Twitter: @MSQpartners

Address:
71 5th ave, Floor 8, New York City,
New York, 10003



Engage your audiences emotionally and rationally. Create advantage through data and technology. Connect brand to demand, insights to outcomes. Turn superior emotional capital into competitive advantage with MSQ B2B.

Quarry

Philosophy

Multiple voices. Opposing views. Mountains of information. Mounting regret.

The sheer number of obstacles facing today's B2B buyers have made buying journeys much tougher – and longer – than they should be.

At Quarry, we're on a mission to change that. To create moments your buyers can't miss with momentum that won't stop. To Demand Reaction™.

Experts in demand and exclusive to B2B tech, Quarry sparks, enables, mobilizes and accelerates buying journeys. And we do it for leading enterprise marketers across North America.

Hire our top-ranking team of insight specialists, strategists, experience designers and marketing technologists when you need to:

- › Understand buyers and ideal accounts
- › Claim your Unique Buying Proposition®
- › Plan for demand
- › Activate in market
- › Scale with modern martech
- › Optimize performance
- › Align sales and marketing

Intrigued? Let's chat.

Year founded:
1973

Website:
quarry.com

Phone number:
519 664 2999

Contact email:
hello@quarry.com

Twitter: @Quarry

Address:
1440 King St. N., St. Jacobs,
Ontario, NOB 2N0

Awards

Winner, Best use of account-based marketing *The B2B Marketing Elevation Awards 2020*

Winner, Best lead generation or nurturing campaign *The B2B Marketing Elevation Awards 2020*

Finalist, ABM category *2020 Global ACE Awards, ANA Business Marketing*

Sectors



Financial services



Industrial, manufacturing, engineering



Professional services



Technology and telecoms

Clients

Chevron

FIS

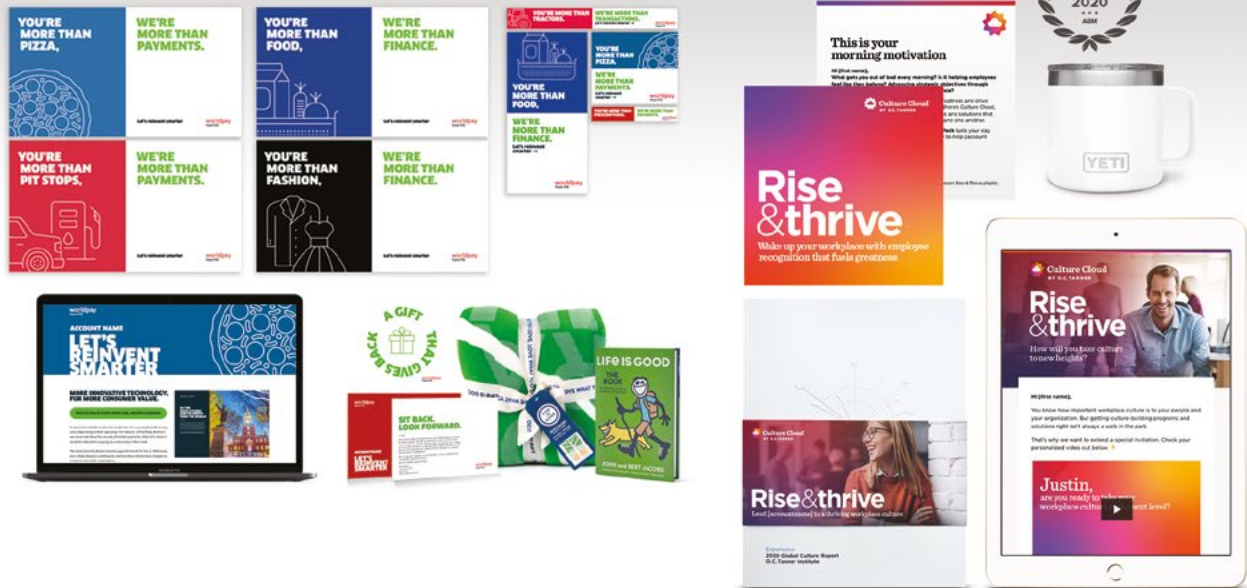
Oracle

SAP Concur

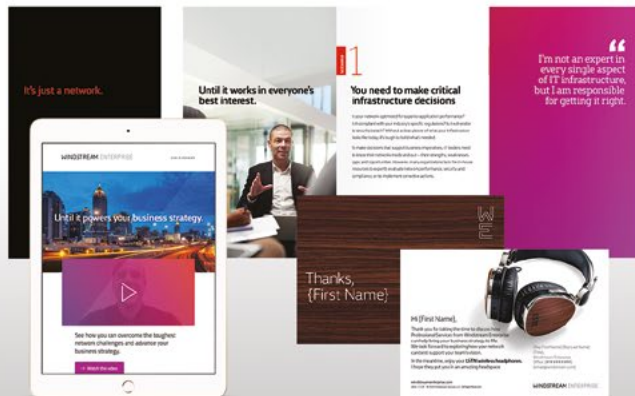
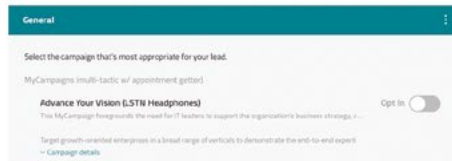
Windstream Enterprise

ZS Associates

INTEGRATED ACCOUNT-BASED CAMPAIGNS



SALES & BUYER ENABLEMENT



CONTENT EXPERIENCES



Quarry are experts in demand, exclusive to B2B tech. Here's a glimpse of their award-winning client work.

Red House

Philosophy

Red House was founded in 2001 to help B2B marketers achieve their goals through integrated marketing. We believe the solution to your marketing problem should be equally driven by strategy and creative, so we spend considerable energy understanding your prospects' buying process. Then, we develop strong messaging and memorable, creative executions.

If your programs span multiple internal departments, we're comfortable collaborating across brand, corporate, product and field marketing, as well as sales and IT. We can develop the data strategy and technical requirements to ensure a seamless workflow, and we're experienced with industry-standard CRM, marketing automation, and analytics platforms.

We're a full-service firm offering solutions that include account-based marketing, content and digital marketing, as well as services such as analytics, automation, creative and website development. Our team has decades of experience in marketing, data strategy, technology and sales, and our expertise includes financial, healthcare, manufacturing, mobility, supply chain and technology.

Awards

Top 200 B2B agencies	<i>Chief Marketer 200 (2021)</i>
Top demand gen agencies	<i>Chief Marketer 200 (2021)</i>
Agencies to watch	<i>Medical Marketing & Media 2020</i>

Sectors



Industrial, manufacturing, engineering



Information services (i.e. publishing)



Medical device and healthcare technology



Technology and telecoms

Clients

Cognizant

Hitachi Vantara

Mayo Clinic

McKesson

Mercer

Spectrum Enterprise

Year founded:
2001

Website:
redhouse2b.com

Phone number:
770 475 2103

Contact email:
steve@redhouseusa.com

Twitter: @RedHouseUSA

Address:
11675 Rainwater Drive, Suite 175,
Alpharetta, Georgia, 30009

ClinicalKey

Because now, more than ever, she needs trusted information

ClinicalKey gives your residents access to Elsevier's trusted answers and deep insights, helping them to think more critically even in the most difficult situations.

In addition to the enormous challenges your residents would normally encounter, they're facing an unexpected one that will immediately test their ability to think clearly, critically, and quickly.

ClinicalKey can play a vital part in helping residents develop their diagnostic skills, especially crucial given the role of comorbidities in COVID-19's progress.

By providing fast, anywhere access to Elsevier's world-renowned content — featuring continuously updated journals, reference books, drug monographs,

procedure videos and more — ClinicalKey delivers the evidence-based content they'll need most to:

- help build their foundational and core medical knowledge
- advance their critical-thinking skills
- improve their procedure competencies

Which means ClinicalKey will do more than help prepare them for board certification. It will also enable them to make more confident, informed decisions.

Learn more at elsevier.com/clinicalkey-gme.



Be Ready for the Elective Surgery Backlog with SPD Process-Ready Analysis.

SPD Process-Ready Analysis
Data-driven workflow tracking that optimizes instrument usage, staffing, and reporting.



Learn more ▶

Operate with Greater Precision.™

AESCULAP

MERCER

emerge stronger

Benefits costs have reached 30% of compensation. Manage them with minimum employee impact.

get our latest perspective



MERCER

absence: it's manageable

Comply with today's extra-challenging workforce leave needs and changing laws.

get our latest perspective



MERCER

time to change the narrative

Lower retirement plan costs and investment management fees.

get our latest perspective



Data. Driven. December.

Learn how to power your IT architecture to increase your data's agility, availability, and security at @AdVantage 2020.

LEARN MORE

HITACHI
Inspire the Next

Stay in the Know with the Latest COVID-19 Business Resources

Lake County Partners

Discover Lake County Resources News About Us Blog Join Us Contact

We're Built for Business.
Manufacturers Make All the Right Parts in Lake County.

Discover.

Accelerate Healthcare Network Integration with Managed SD-WAN

More mergers means more need to integrate systems

Healthcare is the most active sector for mergers and acquisitions – a trend that is expected to continue.¹

\$118.3B
The size of the healthcare mergers and acquisitions market in Q4 2020, up 113% from Q4 2019.²

Longitudinal research published in 2019 by the Physicians Advocacy Institute shows a significant trend of physicians leaving private practices to become employed by hospitals and health systems.³

94,700 to 168,800
Six-year growth in the number of hospital-employed physicians.

Why SD-WAN for network integration

Patient care never stops so integrating new and existing facilities needs to happen quickly. With Managed SD-WAN from Spectrum Enterprise you can:

- Weave multiple locations together into a single unified network fabric regardless of internet access type.
- Utilize, extend or replace existing WAN solutions.
- Deploy quickly and easily.

Primary care practice

Managed SD-WAN

Telehealth

Red House's solutions include strategic planning, ABM and content marketing. The agency offers services such as automation support, content development, creative and analytics. Visit redhouseb2b.com to learn more.

The Mx Group

Philosophy

At The Mx Group, our mission is to impact the marketplace for companies that impact the world.

Our impact is the result of well-honed insights gathered over 30 years of B2B experience. We believe every customer experience is unique, and requires a unique combination of services and solutions to come to life. We call this 'The Power of X': the seamless connection between strategy, creative, demand generation and digital development that turns big ideas into seamless connections between brands and buyers.

The Mx Group is one of the largest integrated B2B agencies in the country, and we continuously win creative, digital and company culture awards. We're privately owned and located in the greater Chicago region.

Interested? Let's talk.

Awards

Best in category corporate and B2B websites	<i>Horizon Interactive Awards 2020</i>
Bronze award, Best interactive sales tool	<i>ANA B2 Awards 2020</i>
Best integrated campaign	<i>Demand Gen Report's Killer Content / Finny Awards 2020</i>

Sectors



Automotive



Business services



Industrial, manufacturing, engineering



Technology and telecoms

Clients

Cummins

Grundfos

Holly Frontier

Tempur Sealy

vAuto

Zekelman Industries

Year founded:
1989

Website:
themxgroup.com

Phone number:
800 827 0170

Contact email:
start@themxgroup.com

Twitter: @MxGroup

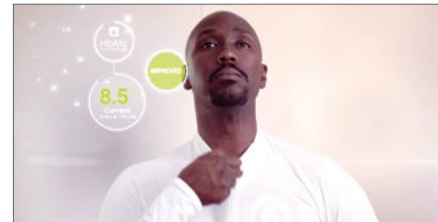
Address:
7020 High Grove Blvd.,
Burr Ridge, Illinois, 60527

DEAR AMERICA, LET'S MANUFACTURE A BETTER FUTURE.

Let's get back to looking for "Made Right Here" on the things we buy. Let's bring back domestic manufacturing. Let's build the factories and warehouses, large and small, that build community, that give the recent grad a shot at a new career and the family down the street a decent paycheck with real benefits—the kind that benefit us all. Let's give our economy a shot in the arm. And let's take care of the environment while we're at it. Let's all join in. The reshoring conversation is happening all around us. Let's commit. Let's take care of each other. Let's make it here.

Get involved.
zekelman.com

 Zekelman Industries
Life Reinforced



The Mx Group

WE IMPACT THE MARKETPLACE FOR COMPANIES THAT IMPACT THE WORLD.

No matter the industry, no matter the medium, no matter the moment, The Mx Group aspires to create work that matters. These messages and more have appeared in print, digital and out of home.



TRICOMB2B

TriComB2B

Philosophy

TriComB2B is unabashedly devoted to industrial and technical B2B marketing, helping clients to design simple, effective ways to connect with audiences, no matter how complex their stories. We take B2B from table stakes to inspired – without a lot of fuss. No complex theories, jargon or pretentiousness. We just want our clients to do great B2B.

That means bringing the outside perspective to help them see a problem differently. It means helping clients understand that emotion drives decisions in B2B and finding the personal values that connect with their customers. It means delivering big ideas underpinned by sound strategies and content that's on point. These are big promises we keep by staying completely focused on what we do best: B2B.

And while that focus is important, we know there's a lot more to making the client-agency relationship work. If you need a quick project or a one-off, we're probably not your agency. Our clients are in it for the long haul, and so are we. We're successful when we exchange honest opinions and advice. And we do whatever we can to be a source of excitement and a bright spot in their day.

Awards

Top 25 B2B brand engagement agencies	<i>Chief Marketer 200: Top Marketing Agencies of 2021</i>
Platinum, Cummins G-Drive	<i>2020 AMCP MarCom Awards</i>
Best places to work	<i>Dayton Business Journal 2020</i>

Sectors

-  Energy and utilities
-  Industrial, manufacturing, engineering
-  Pharmaceuticals and life sciences
-  Technology/IT

Clients

- American Electric Power (AEP)
- Cummins
- Emerson
- Flowserve
- Honeywell
- Intelligrated
- Stirling Ultracold

Year founded:
1984

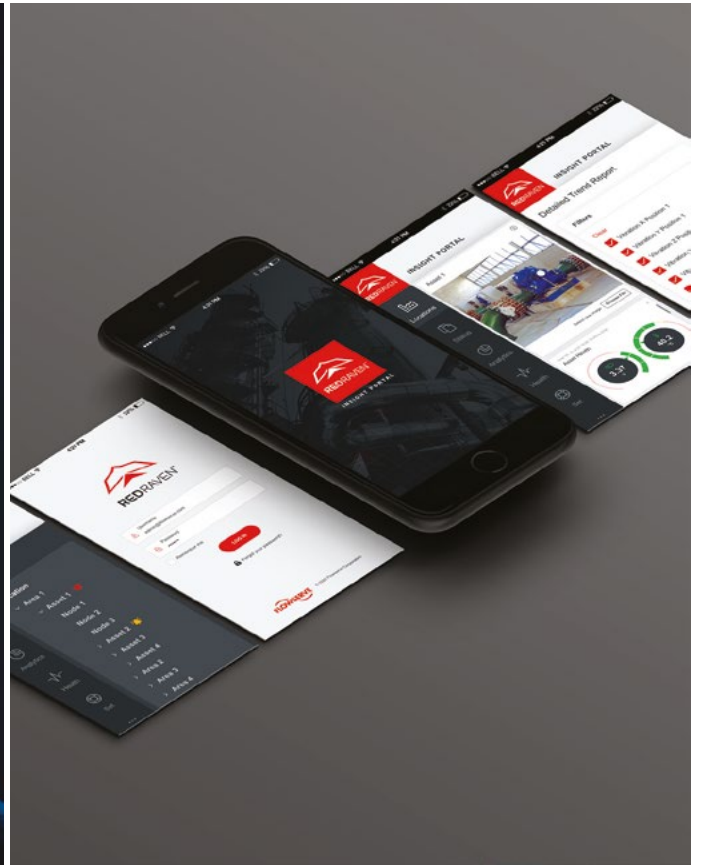
Website:
tricomb2b.com

Phone number:
937 890 5311

Contact email:
chris.eifert@tricomb2b.com

Twitter: @tricomb2b

Address:
109 North Main St., Suite 700,
Dayton, Ohio, 45402



Clockwise from top left: Honeywell Intelligrated DC Next campaign; Flowserve RedRaven Insight portal UI; American Electric Power Q&AEP platform; Cummins G-Drive launch video.



Two Rivers Marketing

Philosophy

At Two Rivers Marketing, we believe that the connection between brand relevance and sales revenue in B2B marketing is the '2' – a real relationship between your business and your customers. While we're experts in the Bs – like industrial manufacturing, construction, transportation, energy, financial and agriculture businesses — we particularly excel at the 2. 2 is the connection. 2 is the challenge. 2 is where the real transformation happens.

Two Rivers Marketing can help you own the 2 – and connect with your customer in a deeper, more meaningful way. We create insightful, integrated, data-driven B2B campaigns that make brands and their complex products relevant in their customers' lives – creating long-term partnerships and sales revenue. As B2B specialists, we understand complex, technical information. Our enthusiasm for immersing ourselves in your business and our ability to speak your industry's language makes us the experts at finding the best way to communicate your unique story. We dive deep to understand your customers and their true needs. Then we deploy the right people, the right processes, and the right resources to efficiently solve your toughest marketing challenges, bring your unique value proposition to life, and deliver a powerful ROI – with measurable results. Come partner with us.

Awards

PRSA PRIME Award	<i>Public Relations Society of America 2020</i>
Best of NAMA national award	<i>National Agri-Marketing Association 2020</i>
Gold ADDY	<i>American Advertising Association 2020</i>

Sectors



Agriculture



Energy and utilities



Industrial, manufacturing, engineering



Construction equipment

Clients

Briggs & Stratton

Danfoss

Pioneer

Sunbelt Rentals

TE Connectivity

Volvo
Construction
Equipment

Year founded:
2000

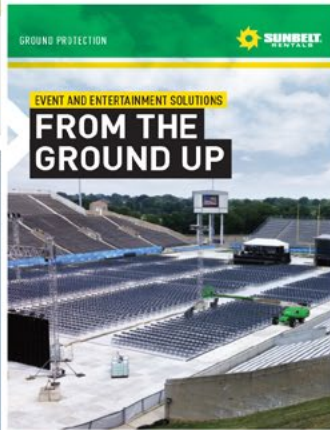
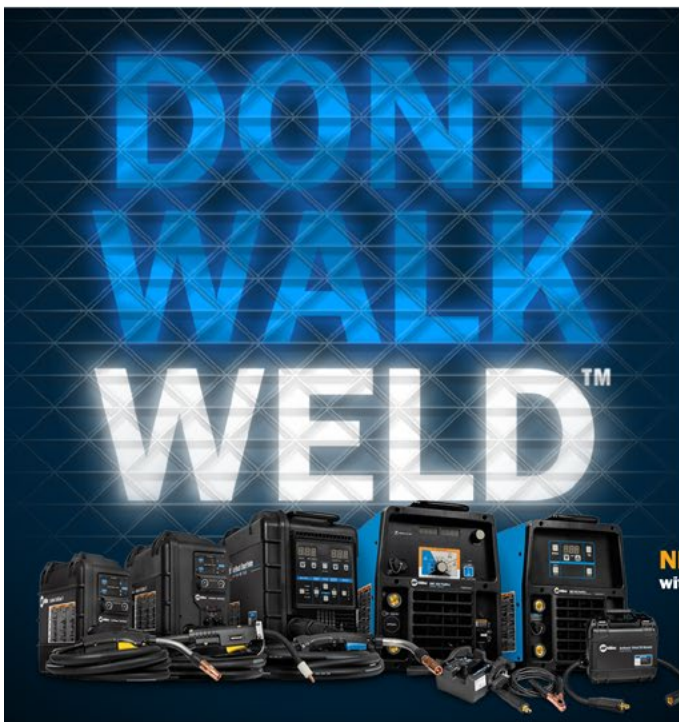
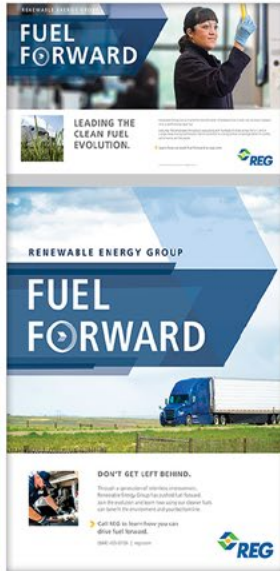
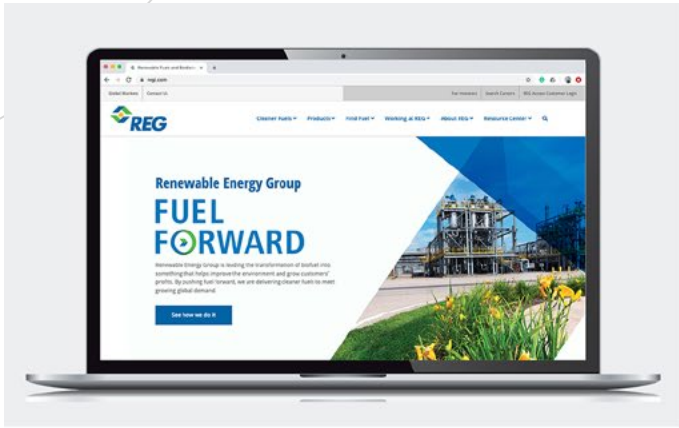
Website:
tworiversmarketing.com

Phone number:
515-557-2000

Contact email:
brado@2rm.com

Twitter: @tworiversmktg

Address:
106 East 6th Street,
Des Moines, Iowa, 50309



Two Rivers Marketing delivers smart, compelling content. The agency communicates to its clients' customers with an integrated approach through a variety of channels, as demonstrated with this showcase of work.

Want to feature in the 2022 B2B Marketing US Agencies Benchmarking Report?

Make sure you're
in the industry's go-to
guide covering the
top agencies

Register your interest
bit.ly/USABMR2022Reg

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 that remains as strong and clear today: to provide marketers at business brands with the tools, insight and inspiration they need to grow and succeed – as both individuals and businesses.

We're proud to serve as the focal point for the B2B marketing sector, and to be a force for greater connectivity, enabling marketers and leaders to share experiences and learn from one another.

b2bmarketing.net

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





B2B Marketing

Insight · Intelligence · Connection

Contact us

B2B Marketing
700 Commerce Drive,
Suite 500, Oak Brook,
Chicago IL 60523, USA

Tel: +1 (312) 371 2643
info@b2bmarketing.net
b2bmarketing.net

US

2021