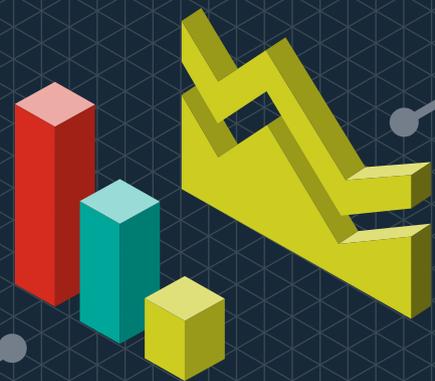**A Metia Report**

Marketing Trends 2015

metia

Trends

We interviewed Metia's team of experts to identify key trends in customer engagement that will impact marketers around the globe in 2015.

Your customer is the hero of the story

Steve Ellis
Group CEO

Some things change frequently, some remain constant

We started this business with some simple goals: do great marketing, get fantastic results, and make our clients successful. We knew that if we achieved this, our clients would keep coming back to us. Twenty five years later that mission hasn't changed, and I don't think it ever will.

> What remains eternally true is that the customer is at the heart of every business' success.

While many aspects of marketing have changed, the foundations of good practice remain the same:
- Conduct an authentic, intelligent interaction with your audience;
- Via an appropriate, innovative method of delivery, with a creative end-product;
- And always – always – design with a measurement strategy at the outset.

One other aspect has not changed: We remain obsessively focused on better serving our clients' customers. They are the center of every story, and the beneficiary of every marketing activity. If the goal is to help you move your customers quickly through a customer lifecycle, the first step is to understand them in detail. Sounds obvious but in our experience, it isn't.

Successful marketers take a rounded view of their customer audiences, considering their industry sector, job roles, jargon, challenges, threats, pain points, aspirations and opportunities.

Clearly marketing is becoming increasingly complicated. It requires strategies to engage diverse stakeholders through multi-stage sales cycles, while conducting an informed dialogue, and making a reasoned case to time-strapped audiences. Marketers must engage customers through different channels, and in many contexts: at home, at work, at a desk, on the go.

To help you navigate these challenges, we've analyzed industry trends and interviewed top minds in our business.

What remains eternally true is that the customer is at the heart of every business' success. This year's marketing innovations, whatever they may be, will all need to be applied in support of that core tenet.

User experience and customer engagement

Have you considered your UX strategy for wearables yet? People won't consume content on watches and bands – they will instead communicate and control things from them.

Technology and design further entangle
Technological advancements are having a greater impact on design and user experience than ever before, including a renewed focus on intricate visuals and typography, enabled by advancements in display technologies such as high resolution and curved screens.

Designing for the Internet of Things
The biggest trends will be in wearable technology and the Internet of Things (IoT), which drive greater demand for data visualization to make sense of the surge in information that these connected devices provide.

First computer mice and keyboards were augmented with gesture control, now we have multiple input devices that are outside of the traditional computing paradigm. The IoT will usher in new complications for UX design. Wearables are convenient control devices, rather than consumption interfaces like smartphones, but people won't consume content on watches and bands – they will instead communicate and control things from them.

Wearable technology is in its early days, with fitness devices performing better than computing devices like Google Glass. Brands that ignore this greater array of technologies will be left behind.

Tech brands that ignore wearables may be left behind
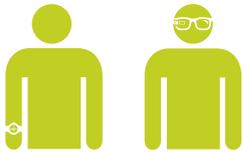
Forecast for wearable device
market for 2018:

$12,642,000,000

Source: www.statista.com/topics/1556/wearable-technology/

Google Glass annual sales
forecast for 2018:

21,148,611 units

Share of U.S. consumers interested
in buying a smartwatch:

40%

Mobile's impact on the desktop

Customers will increasingly look for a return to
device- and interface-specific designs. Rather
than a mobile-first approach, we'll see more
experience-first strategies. Mobile-first design,
if applied broadly across the web, makes poor
use of desktop screens and technology. As the
technology has matured, it's become clear that
devices are used in flexible ways, depending on
context and environment.

Information architects should consider a more
complex view of the customer and the best
ways to surface content. Although interfaces
have frequently been compromised to serve a
mobile experience, we can now apply the right
design and the right content to the right device.

One trend that will simplify interface design is
the use of mobile navigation patterns on the
desktop. Flyouts and hidden navigation have
been widely adopted for smartphones and
are well-understood by most users; they will
emerge on desktop view ports, freeing up more
real estate for content.

Additionally, mobile interfaces have proven that
users can function without constantly exposed
navigation, so we expect websites to lose the
chrome and make even more space for content.

It's absolutely natural to scroll

66%

of attention on a normal
media page is spent
below the fold

76%

of people use the
scroll bar

22%

scroll all the way to the
bottom, regardless of
page length

The most clicked on link of TMZ.com is at
the very bottom.

Source: uxmyths.com/post/654047943/myth-people-dont-scroll

Is your site ready for device diversity?

Screen resolution	Display ratio	Usage	Screen size/type
1366 x 768	16:9	**19.1%**	14" Notebook/15.6" Laptop/18.5" monitor
1920 x 1080	16:9	**9.4%**	21.5" monitor / 23" monitor / 1080p TV
1280 x 800	8:5	**8.5%**	14" Notebook
320 x 568	9:16	**6.4%**	4" iPhone 5
1440 x 900	8:5	**5.7%**	19" monitor
1280 x 1024	5:4	**5.5%**	19" monitor
320 x 480	2:3	**5.2%**	3.5" iPhone
1600 x 900	16:9	**4.6%**	20" monitor
768 x 1024	3:4	**4.5%**	9.7" iPad
1024 x 768	4:3	**3.9%**	15" monitor
1680 x 1050	8:5	**2.8%**	22" monitor
360 x 640	9:16	**2.3%**	
1920 x 1200	8:5	**1.7%**	24" monitor
720 x 1280	9:16	**1.6%**	4.8" Galaxy S
480 x 800	3:5	**1.1%**	
1360 x 768	16:9	**0.9%**	
1280 x 720	16:9	**0.9%**	720p TV

Source: www.rapidtables.com/web/dev/screen-resolution-statistics.htm. 2/2014.

"Marketers who have been constrained by bullets and feature lists can finally give compelling stories the center stage."

Scroll baby, scroll

In addition to updated navigation patterns, mobile users proved that customers are willing to scroll for content, fueling the storytelling renaissance. Marketers who have been constrained by bullets and feature lists can finally give compelling stories the center stage. Mobile users proved that curious and engaged customers have an appetite for longer-form content.

Information architects and writers will be expected to collaborate to provide junction points and give users the ability to decide how deep their commitment to the story will be.

Fewer, better native apps

There was a palpable dip in interest in native applications in 2014 as marketers sought out the efficiencies of web apps. In the meantime, the technology and skills required to produce native apps have become simpler, and the advantages of native apps have been missed.

The demand for native apps will continue to decline as users demonstrate a preference for browser-based content, but the time, energy, and investment required to produce a native app are dropping sharply.

A few years ago, many marketers had an overly simplified mobile strategy focused on iPhone apps. Now the mobile strategy is more complex, including mobile web, device-specific content strategies, and native apps.

Content strategy
and story telling
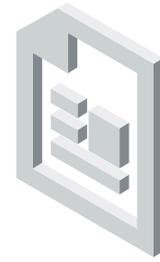
'Promotional content' became a dirty word in 2014, and marketers will be challenged to give every story a narrative arc. The appetite for interconnected content with an emotional core will give rise to experiments with online storytelling, whether via text, visuals, or animations and videos.

Experiments with narrative structures

As designers and marketers experiment with how they tell stories, they will fuel the resurgence of video, which will be explored further for the sake of emotional connection with customers.
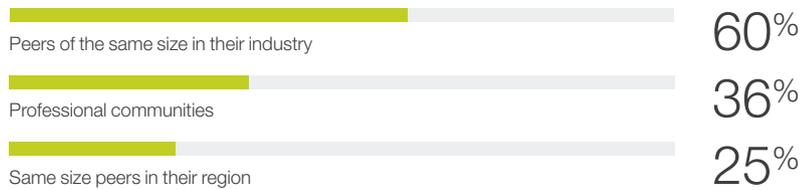
Successful content-driven campaigns may require customers to schedule their consumption of long-form content the same way they schedule movies and book clubs. We've already witnessed brands experimenting with calendar invitations, and there will be more bookmarking and scheduling techniques applied to content marketing strategies.

Social media is less free than ever
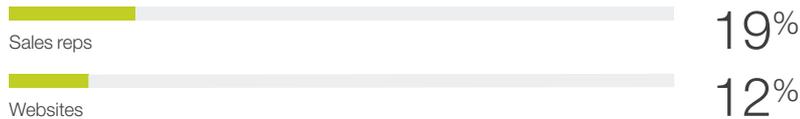
Marketing and media are in the midst of a head-on collision. The defining line between marketing and advertising is getting exceptionally blurry outside of traditional media (TV, radio, OOH).

Organic reach through social media will be extremely difficult to achieve, particularly for promotional content. Brands will have to buy ads on social sites if they want their content to reach anyone.

How buyers learn about technology providers

Peers of the same size in their industry — 60%

Professional communities — 36%

Same size peers in their region — 25%

Company sources of information

Sales reps — 19%

Websites — 12%

Source: blogs.gartner.com/hank-barnes/2014/01/28/will-2014-be-the-year-of-advocacy-marketing/

Advocacy moves center stage

Businesses have woken up to the power of customer advocacy programs, and they are linking that content more effectively to other marketing efforts.
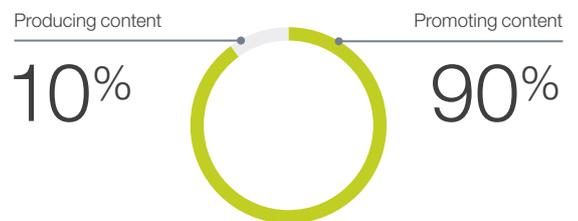
Where customer advocacy programs have been isolated and primarily used as an engine for sales collateral, customer stories are increasingly in demand for bigger content-marketing initiatives that squeeze additional value out of the content in innovative ways. The baked-in authenticity of customer stories will help marketers to cut through the content noise.

The marketing *of* stories, and the abuse of 'content'

There's been a long-standing rule in content marketing that 90% of your budget should be focused on promoting content and the remaining 10% should be spent producing the content. This rule came about during a time when there were limited distribution channels and promotion was expensive.

It's time to rethink the ratio. As media spends are cheaper, content must become richer and better targeted. Successful marketers will transition to a 60/40 split and dramatically increase their investment in the content they produce. The good news is that the costs to promote content are down, so this shift has a bigger impact on process and content philosophy than it does on budgets.

Traditional content marketing model:

Producing content — 10% Promoting content — 90%

Successful marketers will transition to:

Producing content — 40% Promoting content — 60%

Content marketing dominates marketing agendas

72%
of marketers think that branded content is more effective than magazine advertisements

69%
say it's superior to direct mail and PR

60%
of companies today use content marketing on a weekly basis

84%
of companies report hiring for content marketing is 'somewhat difficult' or 'difficult'

78%
of CMOs think content is the future of marketing

7.8x
higher year-over-year growth in unique site traffic for content marketing leaders compared to followers

Source: kapost.com/content-marketing-facts/

The boom and bust of ad campaigns is nearly over

Unlike traditional campaigns, content marketing doesn't have tidy start and stop dates. Content marketing may spike around an event, but is otherwise ephemeral. The old model of one-and-done advertising has been replaced by an integrated earned/purchased approach that leans on new tools and stronger internal alignment. Further, the ways to measure a social ad campaign have changed.

Immediate results don't define long-term outcomes because the social media followers engaged through content marketing can create deeper, lasting customer relationships. The advantage to these longer engagement cycles is that marketers have more opportunities to collect data that can inform future campaign strategies.

Social campaigns happen in three stages:
1. Launch: produce and release promoted content.
2. Monitor: evaluate reaction
3. Optimize: evaluate the campaign and test/tweak to increase engagement.

Animation is back

The real-time world needs to have a sense of immediacy, and video content tricks the brain into thinking it's seeing something in real time.

When Flash died, the animated web nearly died with it. Marketers have been making do with HTML5 and Silverlight before it, but video is easier to stream, its production is easier to achieve, and it's mobile-friendly.
• Over six billion hours of video are watched each month on YouTube – that's almost an hour for every person on Earth
• YouTube is localized in 61 countries and languages
• YouTube reaches more US adults ages 18–34 than any cable network.

Video does a better job of telling complex stories, and it requires a thoughtfulness that isn't needed for static images. Video will elevate the communication quality yet again.

Facebook has finally killed organic promotional posts. But it hasn't been a swift death, it's been drawn out over the past couple of years. Any brands that have built a strategy around organic posts have been naïve or poorly advised.

Facebook algorithms now differentiate between promotional and value-adding content, with promotional content being suppressed unless its reach is paid for. 'Social media' has become just 'media'. If Facebook's move results in increased revenues rather than brands turning away, we can expect similar changes from other major social platforms.
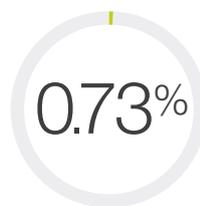
- Social media has overtaken pornography as the number one activity online.
- Interesting content is one of the top three reasons people follow brands on social media.

Brands need to consider their facebook strategy

2%
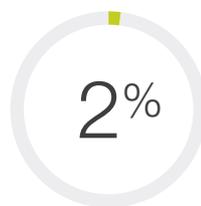
Facebook post
fan reach

Source: Ogilvy

0.73%

Top brand fan
engagement per post

Source: Forrester

## Digital advertising to overtake TV ad spending in two years

Digital won't usurp TV because of big brand advertisers taking their commercial money and redirecting it toward YouTube and Facebook. There will be some cannibalization of TV budgets, but the bigger contributing factor will be an influx of new money dedicated to digital because marketers are able to prove that digital works, said Forrester analyst Shar VanBoskirk.

"Any brands that have built a strategy around organic posts have been naïve or poorly advised."

Volunteer marketing armies

One of the few ways to scale content marketing is to share the effort across a bigger team. Expect to see a resurgence of internal communications and branding efforts. Non-marketing teams are a hidden asset that marketers will revisit for the first time in years. Marketers will be tasked with providing better, faster, and more transparent communication to employees and customers so they are ready to be a voice for the brand.

The developer is king
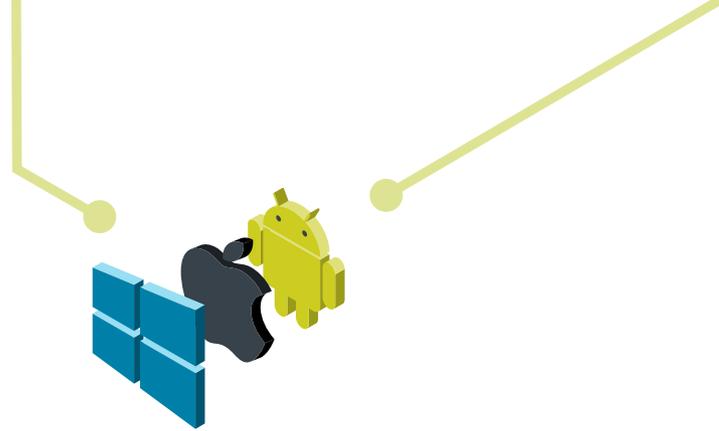
Devs are the new rock stars, and emerging tech brands are the groupies. Tech-savvy businesses have known for years that they must market to those who influence a brand's customer experience the most – application developers.

What is your IoT strategy?

15%

of large companies already have an IoT solution in place

82%

of businesses plan to have a connected solution by 2017

Source: Forrester Consulting/ Zebra Technologies June 2012

Developers are the gatekeepers to new channels with the potential to scale businesses massively, and the groupies have gathered. In addition to the inevitable technology and startup players, developer ranks are now swelled by organizations in retail, banking, government, automotive, energy, and healthcare.

This new class recognizes the potential for developers to reinvent their offerings by using APIs or integrating web services into mobile apps, business applications, and consumer services.
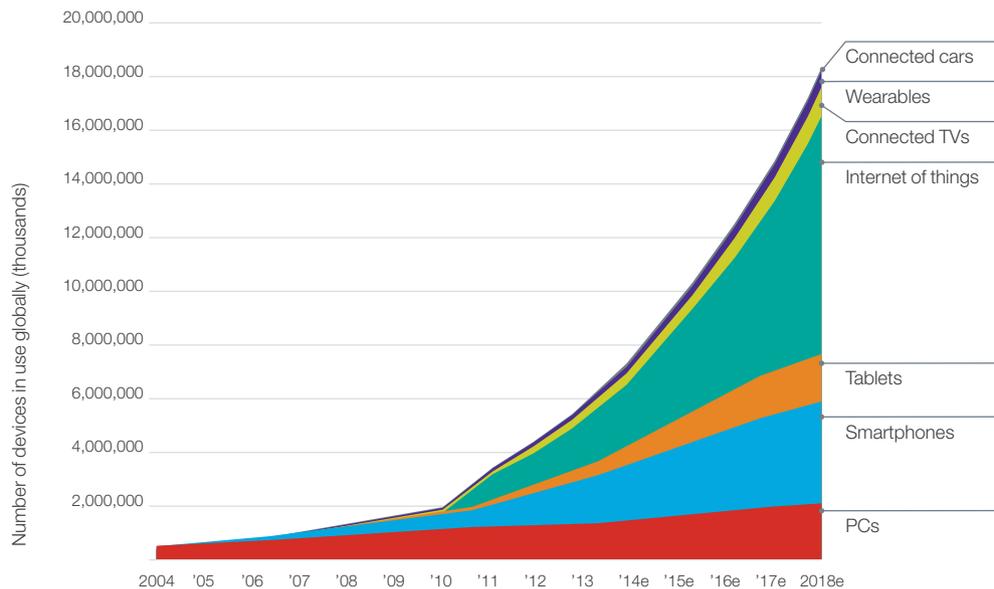
Global and U.S. custom application development (CAD) services spending reached an estimated $39.2 billion in 2013, and global demand for CAD services was estimated to grow at 4.6 percent in 2014, according to IDC. Increasing mobile application and cloud services, as well as new development opportunities created by the Internet of Things, are key drivers.

The jargon of the development processes will present a barrier to nontechnical marketers, but that isn't the biggest challenge. Developers simply behave unlike other customer types, and marketers must be prepared to adjust their approach appropriately.

- The wearables, connected car, and TV markets will equal the tablet market by 2018.
- By 2020, there will be 50 billion things connected to the Internet.

The internet of everything

Number of devices in use globally (thousands)

20,000,000
18,000,000 — Connected cars
16,000,000 — Wearables / Connected TVs
14,000,000 — Internet of things
12,000,000
10,000,000
8,000,000
6,000,000 — Tablets
4,000,000 — Smartphones
2,000,000 — PCs

2004 '05 '06 '07 '08 '09 '10 '11 '12 '13 '14e '15e '16e '17e 2018e

Source: BI Intelligence Estimates

Frankentech: the decline of invention and the rise of innovation

Expect to see a surge in companies that harness and combine established social and analytics technologies to solve new problems. We have the 'winner' in each category of social media, and now we are reusing their tools to get something novel out of existing products.

The trend is already well-rooted in the dev community, where physical and virtual technologies are hacked to create new products and services every day. The biggest opportunity is to combine existing ideas to give users something at once different and familiar.

"The biggest opportunity is to combine existing ideas to give users something at once different and familiar."

For example, Twitter's alliance with IBM will open doors in the enterprise if the speculations regarding sentiment data as a predictive tool for B2B and enterprise decision-making bear out.
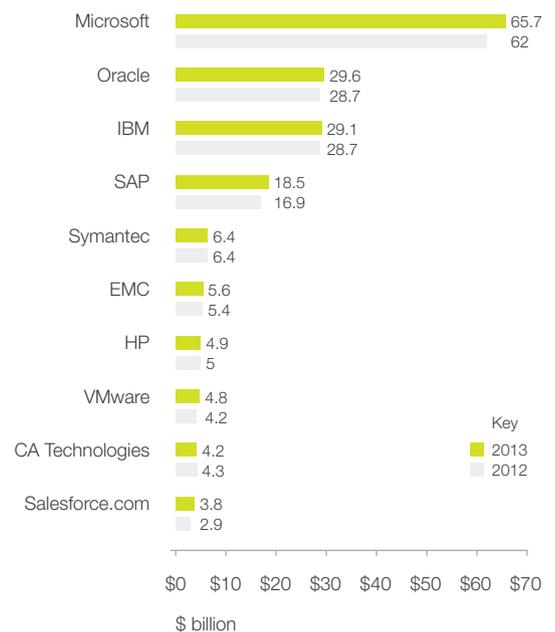
B2B2B

Back to Business-to-Business

There was a lot of buzz around the consumerization of the enterprise app heading out of 2013, but it didn't play out because (not surprisingly) people need different things in different contexts.

Just as gamification wasn't the revolution in the enterprise that people once thought it would be, consumer-style apps aren't necessarily the silver bullet for line-of-business applications.

Although professionals are accustomed to entertainment experiences in their personal time and on their personal devices, the utmost expectation from enterprise users is that the application meets their immediate business needs.

Enterprise software revenue: Global top 10

Company	2013	2012
Microsoft	65.7	62
Oracle	29.6	28.7
IBM	29.1	28.7
SAP	18.5	16.9
Symantec	6.4	6.4
EMC	5.6	5.4
HP	4.9	5
VMware	4.8	4.2
CA Technologies	4.2	4.3
Salesforce.com	3.8	2.9

Key
■ 2013
□ 2012

$0 $10 $20 $30 $40 $50 $60 $70

$ billion

Source: Gartner. April 2014

Trends in branding

As ever, domain availability drives brand naming, which may justify a link between direct names and misspelled names. If the proper spelling of 'Lift' was available, there's a chance that we wouldn't be reading about 'Lyft'.

We'll see lots of startup companies with combined word names. The next most popular trend will be misspelled versions of familiar words.

We analyzed lists of top startups as identified by various media outlets, and broke naming styles into six categories.

Made up

Misspelled

Alliteration
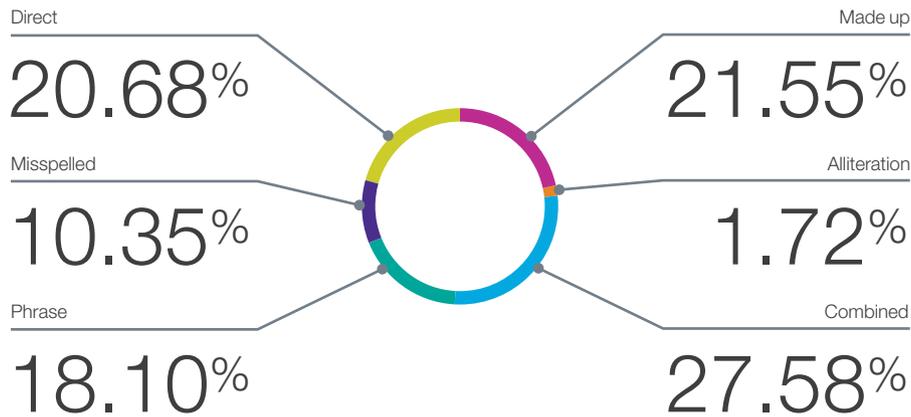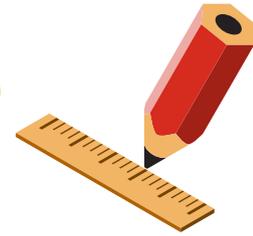

Direct

Combined

Phrases

Trends in brand naming

Direct	Made up
20.68%	21.55%

Misspelled	Alliteration
10.35%	1.72%

Phrase	Combined
18.10%	27.58%

Source: Independent Metia research

Measurement, tools, and technologies

Marketing automation will take root, but is also a point of frustration. The promise of marketing automation and CRM integration is a big one and has undeniable appeal for marketers.

The case for marketing automation

77%

of CMOs at top performing companies indicate that their most compelling argument for marketing automation is ROI

57%

of the purchasing process has been completed before a buyer ever talks to sales.

Source: kapost.com/content-marketing-facts/

Technology brands like Marketo, Pardot, and Hubspot are investing significantly in their publicity efforts, and a comprehensive automation program seems more tangible to marketers than ever. About a quarter of all B2B Fortune 500 companies are already using marketing automation, along with 76% of the world's largest SAAS companies. So far though, the automation vision has been oversold in terms of simplicity and capacity, and early adopters are frustrated.
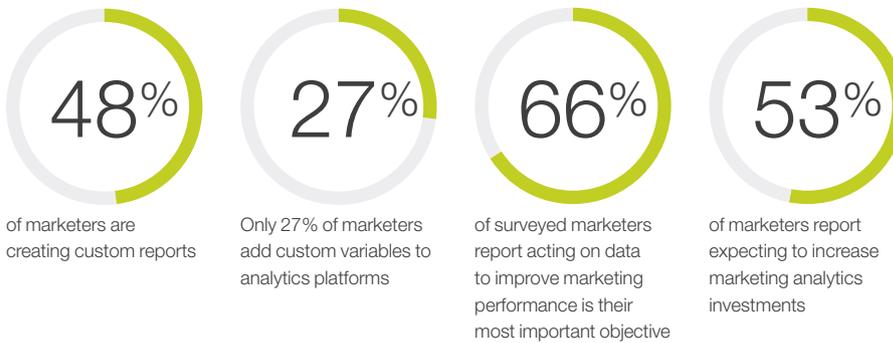
Not new, still true – data, data, data
Between CRM tools and the IoT, we'll see more real-time data than ever before – and marketers will have even less of an idea of what to do with it. The industry has plenty of data gathering and visualization tools, but the big challenge will be insight and smart action.

The analysis that has been presented as a possibility at the intersection of CRM and Big Data requires an intense amount of resources and expertise, which is too expensive for most businesses.

There are only a handful of companies that are legitimately poised to see real benefits from intense analysis. Therefore, the opportunity to put Big Data to use as part of the day-to-day marketing operation is still a long way off for most companies

Further, the out-of-the-box dashboard interfaces too frequently misdirect marketers' attention by putting meaningless but easy-to-understand statistics like visits or likes front and center while burying important metrics about engagement and conversion.

Analytics is a growing priority for marketers

48%
of marketers are creating custom reports

27%
Only 27% of marketers add custom variables to analytics platforms

66%
of surveyed marketers report acting on data to improve marketing performance is their most important objective

53%
of marketers report expecting to increase marketing analytics investments

Source: www.marketingsherpa.com/article/excerpt/2013-marketing-analytics-benchmark-report

Marketers will be expected to overcome the glut of data as a no-excuses approach to campaign performance analysis takes root. The abundance of measurement tools means that marketers can no longer get away with unmeasured initiatives. They must have a plan to align marketing activities with business objectives, and to then report on their outcomes.

Engagement rate metrics are tracked more often than revenue-based metrics – 50% or more surveyed marketers tracking KPIs such as open rate, clickthrough rate, unsubscribe rate and deliverability; only 28% report tracking ROI.

There are two critical obstacles to successful campaign measurement:

- The social networks change their analytics and measurement tools so frequently that it's hard to measure a program's progress over time. For example, Twitter provided (shaky) metrics for reach until they launched a new and different metric (that is just as shaky).
- Too many marketers lack the skills and confidence to produce their own measurement strategy. For example, posts with images achieve higher engagement on Facebook, but too many marketers forget the goals of their posts, so these published images achieve Facebook engagement but do not drive actions that benefit their business. In other words, without a solid measurement strategy, they pursue interactions, but not outcomes.

Contributors

Steve Ellis
Group CEO

@steveellis

"Our clients' customers are the center of every story, and the beneficiary of every marketing activity."

Andrew Martin
President

@andrewcm

"The easy thing is to scale content. The hard thing is to scale it well so that it's consistent and manageable."

Paul Burcher
Creative Director

"Wearables are control devices. We aren't going to consume a website – we are going to communicate and control from them."

Deborah Hanamura
Director of Marketing

@Debhanamura

"Every marketer needs to experiment and challenge habits."

Rich Blackwell
Design Lead,
Seattle

@BlackwellRich

"People scroll.
It's not a hurdle.
They get it."

Marc Roberts
Technical Lead,
London

"Now everything
is getting an API
– even things that
don't need one."

Mark Pinsent
Managing
Director, London

@MarkPinsent

"Content
continues to
be the biggest
challenge."

Dan Brooks
Regional Vice
President, Austin

"Customer
stories must
be told in
new ways."

Sean Donovan
Regional Vice
President, APAC

"We'll see more
real-time data
than ever
before."

Peter Morgan
Social Lead,
London

"Analytics
technology has
reached a whole
new level."

About Metia

In business for 26 years, Metia is a leading marketing strategy, design, and development firm with global offices in London, Singapore, Seattle, and Austin.

We know the technology sector: the innovators; the trends; their applications; the use cases; their business and cultural implications.

Metia delivers programs that influence key decision makers, deliver fantastic user experiences, develop deep customer relationships and build vocal communities of advocates.

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