

FUTURE OF ADVERTISING

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TRUST

How to build trust in a crisis

The coronavirus pandemic appears to have accelerated the erosion of trust, but there is an opportunity for brands that can show leadership and focus on doing what is right

Josh Mcloughlin

Trust has never been more important or in shorter supply. Advertisers and marketers used to think winning loyalty was the ultimate campaign aim. But if the public does not trust a brand to begin with, building the loyalty needed for long-term success is that much harder. "Trust is the fundamental reason brands came into existence and why they became so valuable", says Matt Waller, creative director of London-based advertising agency Recipe. Yet trust in many public institutions is declining. This year's *Edelman Trust Barometer* found that confidence in government (-8 points), the media (-6 points), NGOs (-6 points) and business (-3 points) was down as the pandemic, protests and politics polarised opinion. In the resulting "infodemic", trust in all information sources slumped to record lows.

The advertising industry specifically is also struggling with issues of trust. Advertising executives are once again bottom of a list of trusted professions, below landlords, estate agents and politicians, according to Ipsos Mori's *2020 Veracity Index*. This decline in trust is now seen as such a problem that the industry body the Advertising Association has made it the focus of its work.

Despite these numbers, there are signs of how business can turn this around. Trust in business may be down, according to Edelman, but it is now the only institution that is actively trusted; people are neutral on NGOs, government and the media. And many companies have shown during the pandemic that they can take a leading role in society, whether it is BrewDog making hand sanitiser or Leon donating food to key workers.

"Lack of trust in news sources, governments and healthcare systems has created an opportunity for brands to step in, build trust with their consumers and ultimately drive loyalty," said Lea Bernetic, head of brand and marketing at freelance hub UnderPinned.

But how do brands build confidence in a crisis, especially when trust in the advertising industry and those who work in it is so low. The numbers suggest that rather than telling people what they are doing through advertising, businesses need to show people the positive impact they can have.

History shows us how some of the most trusted brands built their reputations by acting with integrity in hard times. John Deere, the agricultural manufacturer, was founded in 1837 and nearly 200 years later it



remains the top tractor brand in the UK with 28 per cent of the market and customer loyalty of 77 per cent, according to a survey of farmers by *Farm Equipment* magazine.

That loyalty has been earned through building trust, especially in difficult times. During the Great Depression, for example, farmers faced ruin as crop prices collapsed and incomes evaporated, but John Deere refused to repossess farm equipment, unlike other manufacturers. Then, during the Second World War, the company joined the war effort by making tractors, aircraft parts and ammunition for the armed forces.

"People remember how you treat them when the chips are down," says Barnaby Benson, managing director of the copywriting agency that carries

his name and who advises on brand language. "Now is the time to do good and earn trust for the long term."

There are other examples of brands earning trust despite difficult situations. In March 2011, a huge earthquake and tsunami hit Japan, killing 16,000 people and leaving millions destitute. Convenience store chain Lawson delivered 200,000 meals to victims and covered the cost of lost stock and damaged buildings for franchisees. In October, the company posted its highest profits for the first half of a fiscal year, to the end of August.

Japanese companies have become good at surviving crises in part because they understand the key role trust plays. In the wake of the same disaster, locally based Yakult faced

a 30 per cent market loss. Instead of cutting jobs, the company gave \$300 to each of its "Yakult Ladies" delivery staff and provided food and shelter to employees and locals.

This helps explain why Japan is a world leader in long-term corporate success. Around 40 per cent of companies in business for more than 300 years are based in the country, according to research by Dr Hirotaka Takeuchi, professor of management practice at Harvard Business School. These companies show that longevity is built on trust and achieved by helping customers, workers and the community when they need it most.

In a time of global crisis, companies should demonstrate largesse, looking after their employees and the wider public. Brands should invest in doing good and build advertising campaigns around action, not rhetoric. "In an age of greenwashing and marketing spin, it has never been more important to build trust," says Ben Parker, co-founder of creative agency Made Thought.

Ensuring communications are grounded in real actions is key. In 2017, Pepsi faced widespread criticism and was forced to pull an advert that appeared to appropriate an image of the activist Iesha Evans's arrest at the Baton Rouge protests in 2016. Aaron Hanaphy, semiotics and cultural insights manager at McCann Central, says: "Consumers are equipped with extremely sensitive, in-built bulls' eye detectors."

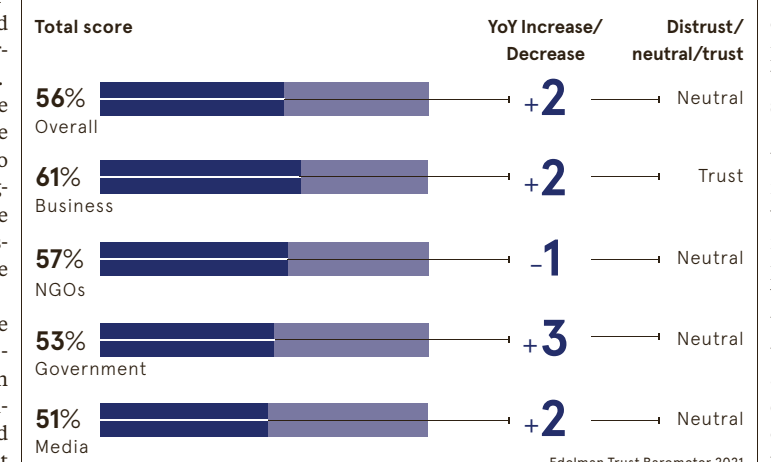
Brands risk a backlash if they capitalise cynically or hypocritically. Freddy Taylor, art director at Wieden + Kennedy, warns: "It has got to start internally before brands start putting messages about any of those movements in their adverts."

This means businesses must get their own houses in order by, for example, closing the gender pay gap, ensuring equal opportunities for black, Asian and minority ethnic staff, or eliminating discriminatory hiring, promotion and dismissal processes, before sounding off publicly about social justice.

How will the public remember a brand's response to the pandemic in 100 years? Which companies will survive as consumers demand more from the business they buy products and services from. As Yakult and John Deere show, building trust is even more important when times are difficult. And as the world looks beyond the pandemic to rising inequality, political upheaval and climate change, these are difficult times. ●

BUSINESS IS THE ONLY TRUSTED INSTITUTION

% of consumers who say they trust each institution to do the right thing



AGENCIES

The evolving role of the ad agency

The marketer's remit has become more complex over the past year and agencies have had to evolve to keep up. So what does the new client-agency relationship look like?



MaryLou Costa

Having spent the first 15 years of his career as a marketer for brands including Unilever, Coca-Cola, Nokia and Orange, Justin Billingsley knows how complicated the life of a chief marketing officer can be and how that's escalated.

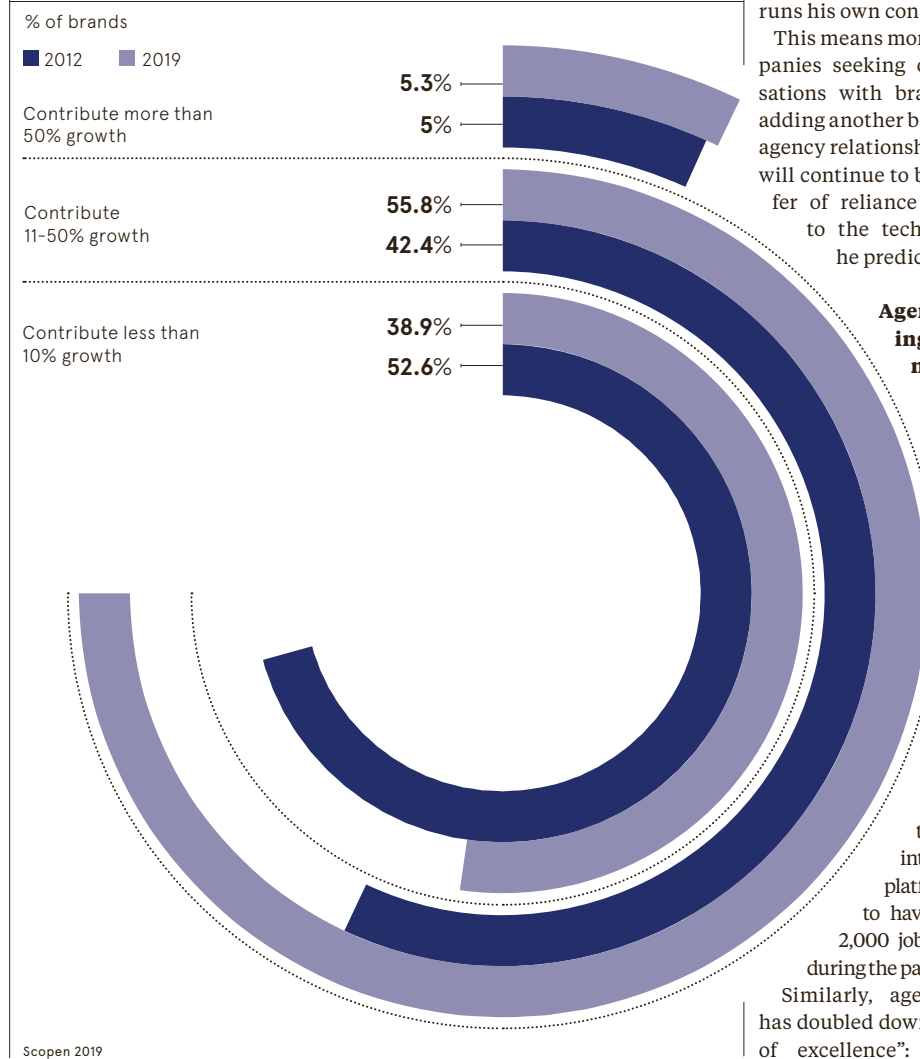
"As a senior marketer, thinking about advertising and media was probably only about 20 per cent of my life. I only had around five channels to worry about and only about three or four agencies," Billingsley, now chief marketing officer at agency network Publicis Groupe, recalls.

"In the ten years since I've been a client, the fragmentation of how to reach people and considering things like whether you're spending money effectively, investments in tech and whether you need to own it or 'rent' it, and who my partners should be, that level of complexity has increased exponentially."

Those challenges, of course, become the challenges of advertising agencies, whether they're heartland is in media or creative. They are being put under more pressure to justify why they shouldn't be squeezed out of an equation where brands are taking more ownership of everything from sales channels to data, customers and tech partnerships.

"Brands are splitting into two categories: the direct-to-consumer brands that have flourished and have always had less reliance on a media agency because they have the capabilities in-house, or legacy brands, like Unilever and Procter & Gamble, that are developing direct-to-consumer channels and increasing their ecommerce expertise, which is bringing in-housing into play," observes Charlie Crowe,

AGENCIES INCREASINGLY CONTRIBUTE TO BUSINESS GROWTH



founder of the Festival of Media and former industry editor who now runs his own consultancy.

This means more technology companies seeking out direct conversations with brands, Crowe says, adding another barrier to the brand-agency relationship. "It's clear there will continue to be a massive transfer of reliance from the agency to the technology platform," he predicts.

Agencies innovating to develop new models

The response from Billingsley and the leadership team at Publicis Groupe has been to develop new agency models to meet more client needs. For example, the Le Pub bespoke hub developed for Heineken, the Le Truc creativity centre and the Marcel internal employee platform, which claims to have saved more than 2,000 jobs within the group during the pandemic.

Similarly, agency group VCCP has doubled down on its "four areas of excellence": communications,

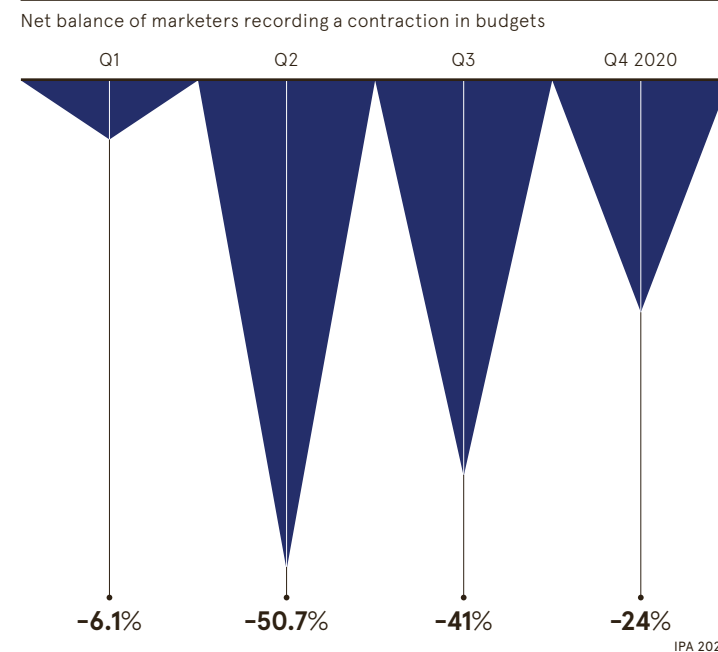
media, experience and data. This comes as rising demand for app development, user experience and user interface expertise has seen it become more agile at working to multiple scenarios, says chief strategy officer Michael Lee.

"Some of our clients have needed more agency time than ever given the sheer scale of work that needs to be done or redone," he says. "It's a combination of many things, dependent on the client and their situation: reducing budgets, the need for transparency and flexibility, in-housing, a crowded digital space, to name a few.

"It's the holy grail to develop brand platforms that deliver a seamless, consistent brand idea across advertising and experience. Those who can interpret the firehose of customer and media data we get, and turn that into actionable insights to become great creative ideas, are going to be valuable."

“Our job is to work with a client and help them find growth. The future of the business is in solving high-level client problems

BRANDS' ADVERTISING BUDGETS ARE COMING UNDER INCREASING PRESSURE



Putting the spotlight on agility and collaboration

So what is the perspective of client-side marketers? Heightened agency agility has been key for Andrew Smith, global marketing director at pet nutrition brand YuMOVE, who last April delivered a TV campaign from brief to broadcast in three weeks, thanks to remote working. It's this swifter pace and more direct collaboration with creative teams he wants to continue post-pandemic.

"We actually had more regular access to the creative teams, and we've had to work more collaboratively through screens and get as much as we can from each other, rather than be one or two steps removed through planners and account managers," he says.

A closer working relationship has also become more valuable for Ross Farquhar, marketing director at ice cream brand Little Moons, who took on the role in October 2020, hiring a new creative and media agency. He decided to abandon the traditional, and arguably arduous, pitching process of brief, presentation and selection in favour of a more chemistry-based approach.

"It was purposefully not a pitch," he says. "We said we just want to have a session to get to know you and work out whether we have good chemistry. I'm going to give you a brief so you can give me your instinctive hypotheses. But I don't want to see the answer, because I want to work with whoever we're going with to get there. I just want to see how you think and where you might go fishing. So it felt fairer and more respectful."

Meanwhile, Page & Page and Partners client Fresenius Kabi, a healthcare company, has worked more closely with the agency to use insights to better reach its audience, which naturally has gravitated online.

"One of the challenges that has emerged is getting that cut through in a crowded digital space. I'd expect this to play into brands' expectations for agencies going forward, looking for the blend of knowledge, design and creativity that can really make them stand out," says Lyndsay Woodall,

senior contract services manager at the company.

Publicis Groupe's Billingsley also gives the example of Marriott, which the agency works with on not just its loyalty programme and booking platform, but the wider customer experience and journey. This is indicative, he says, of that wider trend of brands wanting to own their customer relationships.

Future of agencies as strategic business partners

With briefs becoming more business oriented, Billingsley ventures that the agency is no longer playing solely in the advertising space. The growing scope for solving wider client business problems opens the door to become "purveyors of growth", he believes.

"We are not an advertising agency or media company, we're also not a consultancy. They happen to be things we do. Our job is to work with a client and help them find growth in a platform world. The future of the business is to be able to solve those high-level client problems," says Billingsley.

But is it realistic for agencies to play this role, in a world where consultancies like Accenture now have a stake in the creativity game through its purchase of agency Karmarama?

Crowe agrees media agencies have the talent and data to successfully become more consultative businesses, but he questions whether they or their creative counterparts have the ear of chief executives in the same way the "Big Four" do.

Billingsley is convinced that by becoming growth enablers, agencies like his can help more chief marketing officers (CMOs) get into the C-suite and this will be paramount in coming out on top.

"Our job is to help our CMOs get up to the top table, where they can be the voice of their customers. If you're responsible for knowing who your customers are, then you're responsible for growth because you know where that growth is going to come from," he concludes. ●

Commercial feature



Brands find better trust and attention on the open web

As marketers increasingly focus on building consumer trust and aligning with safe, suitable content, the open web is as crucial to their advertising plans as search and social

The advertising duopoly built by Google and Facebook over the last decade reflects the reliance brands have placed on search and social to support their marketing. The ability to target consumers at a highly granular level via these platforms has enabled unprecedented audience segmentation and attribution.

In more recent years, however, as awareness of how people's data is used online has increased, many consumers have grown troubled by privacy and transparency issues. Apple and Google have responded by pledging to stop supporting third-party cookies on their browsers and operating systems. Trust in social media among consumers has also been diminished by concerns around the lack of control over unverified or dangerous content.

Increasingly wary of where their brands appear, many companies are revisiting advertising strategies and finding solace, and opportunity, in an old friend: the open web. In a study by digital ad verification firm Integral Ad Science, 83 per cent of consumers considered it important that ads are placed next to high-quality content,

“Eighty per cent of people consider ads on news sites to be more trustworthy than those shown on social

which is difficult to control on social. And 80 per cent of people consider ads on news sites to be more trustworthy than those shown on social, according to Taboola research.

"Brands have always been conscious of appearing in a brand-safe environment, but in the last 12 months there has been acknowledgement that one brand's tolerance to being next to political content, for example, might be very different to another's," says Stacey Delaney, UK country manager at Taboola, a leading platform in powering recommendations monthly to more than 500 million daily active users, continuously learning what content each individual is likely to engage with.

"Marketers are ramping up their contextual advertising now so that when third-party cookies are no longer possible for targeting, they will know how to optimise their use of this invaluable channel," says Delaney.

"People are very loyal to the publishers they engage with. They're an authority, especially now when readers rely on them as a source of reliable information around consequential issues. If an advertiser really cares about treating the consumer fairly, the open web is the best place to position themselves and the added attention is a bonus. Social and search have a place in the marketing funnel, but so does the open web and we'll continue to champion it for consumers, brands and publishers."

shown on YouTube and 13 per cent higher than on a Facebook feed.

When third-party cookies are finally phased out next year, contextual advertising through publishers that consumers trust will be even more essential. Taboola, whose machine-learning algorithm allows brands to target customers in a way that respects their privacy, works with top UK publishers, including *The Independent*, *MailOnline* and *The Mirror*, and more than 13,000 global advertisers. It serves over a trillion recommendations monthly to more than 500 million daily active users, continuously learning what content each individual is likely to engage with.

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For more information please visit taboola.com/advertisers



ROI

Proving the value of influencer marketing

As advertising accountability becomes more critical, questions around the return on investment from influencer marketing has marketers desperate to demonstrate its true worth

Tim Gibbon

Despite questions over fraud, a backlash over trips to Dubai and the coronavirus pandemic hitting advertising spend hard, influencer marketing continues to grow. According to influencer marketing agency Mediakix, an industry that was worth just \$500 million in 2015 could see spend of \$15 billion by 2022, if its higher forecast for investment proves true.

Yet this is an industry beset by problems for the brands that are investing. Ebiquty estimates that more than \$1 billion has been lost to fraud, while there are issues around unwanted brand exposure and public relations disasters when things go wrong, as they have on a number of occasions.

"Brands need to do due diligence for influencer marketing as they do across other media," says Angus McLean, director at Ebiquty. That

involves having the right contracts and service level agreements, as well as doing due diligence on the background of the people they work with. "The threat of an audit or someone checking can make a huge difference to outcomes," advises McLean.

Rahul Titus, Ogilvy UK's head of influence, agrees. "Our studies show one in four influencers in the UK have engaged in fraud against brands. We work to ensure we don't work with anyone who has engaged in any fraud over the past five years. When we work with influencers, we need to ensure they're brand safe," he says.

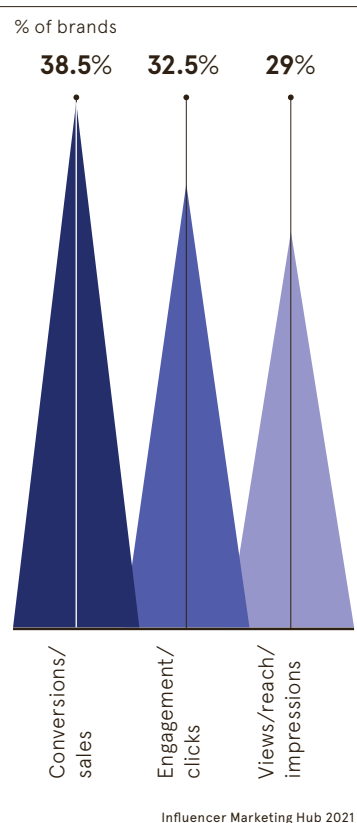
Brand safety is important, but so too is relevance. A report by research company GlobalWebIndex's indicates 68 per cent of consumers following influencers intend to keep following them to the same extent after the pandemic ends. But there has been a backlash against those posting what was deemed inappropriate content during a crisis.

"If COVID-19 has taught us something, it's that people want aspirational content which is in reach. If there are trips to Dubai when travel is not allowed, then you're not in tune with what the country needs. There are influencers who've made mistakes, but that's the advantage of influencer marketing, your feedback loop is immediate. Aspirational content absolutely works, but aspirational content which isn't achievable is definitely cancelled," says Titus.

This is a challenge some marketers are all too familiar with, including Darain Faraz, EMEA director of brand marketing at LinkedIn, who recognises how influencer marketing can be seen negatively. However, he believes investment is still worth it if brands can find the right people to work with. Its "Changemaker" campaign did just this. "We wanted to shine a light on a series of individuals



THE MOST IMPORTANT KPI FOR INFLUENCER MARKETING



LinkedIn's influencer campaign success

While influencer marketing might conjure up images of reality stars trying to flog sunglasses, it has also taken hold in the business-to-business sector. LinkedIn's "Changemakers" campaign used influencers to address issues heightened by the pandemic, including mental health, work-life balance and diversity.

LinkedIn's EMEA director of brand marketing Darain Faraz explains the approach to selection: "Established against authenticity and engagement

with some of the most talked about issues affecting the world of work. We identified topics that had virality on LinkedIn and other social platforms in the UK and set out to find these influencers," says Faraz.

"These people stood for a noteworthy cause and we saw they were migrating to LinkedIn from other platforms because they wanted these meaningful conversations and didn't want to be trolled. People weren't there to find fame or there to create a living. What we found were people who had causes they were passionate about."

Given the possible downsides, it is more important than ever for marketers to demonstrate the return on investment (ROI) across their spend, including influencer marketing. At the most basic level, brands can measure engagement, follows, likes, reach or shares. But linking this back to business performance is key.

Liisa Ennuste, influencer marketing manager at delivery company Bolt, uses a performance-driven approach. "We track and measure everything and benchmark influencer marketing against other acquisition channels, Facebook ads for example. Of course these channels are not entirely comparable, but you need to have a solid

“A lot of brands look at influencer marketing as upper funnel. The ones that are getting it right are using it across the whole funnel

four-week period drove a 148 per cent cumulative increase in Changemakers' followers on LinkedIn.

For the business, the launch drove statistically significant lifts in brand awareness around "community", up nine points, and brand perceptions around "trust", which grew by 13 to 20 points. Among those who saw the campaign, on-platform activity increased, with engaged feed sessions up 13 per cent and engagements rising by 21 per cent.

Participatory storytelling, meanwhile, draws on this move to

immersion and is proving to be an effective way to engage. In a study of Creative Effectiveness Cannes Lions entries, carried out by WARC, 50 per cent of work cited active consumer participation as a key creative strategy.

And despite the backlash against influencer marketing over its lack of authenticity and questionable return on investment, we've actually seen an emerging reliance on influencers. The space seems to be maturing and is actively driving brand loyalty and engagement.

Influencers have long been a useful way for brands to better connect with audiences. In 2019, 45 per cent of work entered into the PR Lions awards used celebrities, influencers or key opinion leaders, up from 20 per cent in 2017. Quite the shift. We've identified two recent trends that are disrupting the traditional influencer model to deliver visible brand value: superfans and participatory storytelling.

On the first trend, we are seeing creative companies cracking influencer brand engagement by unlocking access to a brand's superfans. Last year, I caught up with Chipotle chief marketing officer Chris Brandt for our *Progress Through Creativity* podcast. He said Chipotle "took the shackles off their digital agency partners", signalling the beginning of a much more engaging tone that embraced fandom and used influencers who were already huge Chipotle fans.

Their TikTok strategy has seen thousands of Chipotle fans organically advocate the brand and led to the birth of the #ChipotleSponsorMe campaign. The series, which received more than two billion views, successfully funnelled that superfan energy into further reach.

Droga's Bagelgate campaign for Kraft Heinz, which won three Lions, is another great example. Its Twitter poll and Change.org petition asking Apple to change its #SadBagel emoji to include a smear of Philadelphia cream cheese actively engaged with consumers and resulted in more than seven million social impressions.

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'Despite the backlash against influencer marketing, we've seen an emerging reliance on influencers'

The current climate calls for brands to demonstrate transparency and authenticity in everything they do, so it is no wonder influencer marketing is coming in for increased scrutiny.

At Lions, we've had a ringside seat on creativity for 67 years. Our archive of data allows us to understand what works and why, giving us a helicopter view of the industry landscape. We've recently mined that data for insight about what's happening in branded communications.

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Participatory elements can work well when they feed into natural human curiosity, as in the case of Budweiser's Tagwords where the brand asked people to discover the ending of the story themselves, or in Westworld's *The Maze* where fans were asked to "choose their own adventure" via an interaction with Amazon Alexa.

The United Nation's People's Seat campaign is another good example. Alongside seats representing individual nations, they created a physical seat – the people's seat – to highlight the importance of everyday individuals in the fight against climate change. In addition, they shared the *People's Address*, a speech written from raw testimonials crowdsourced from people around the world.

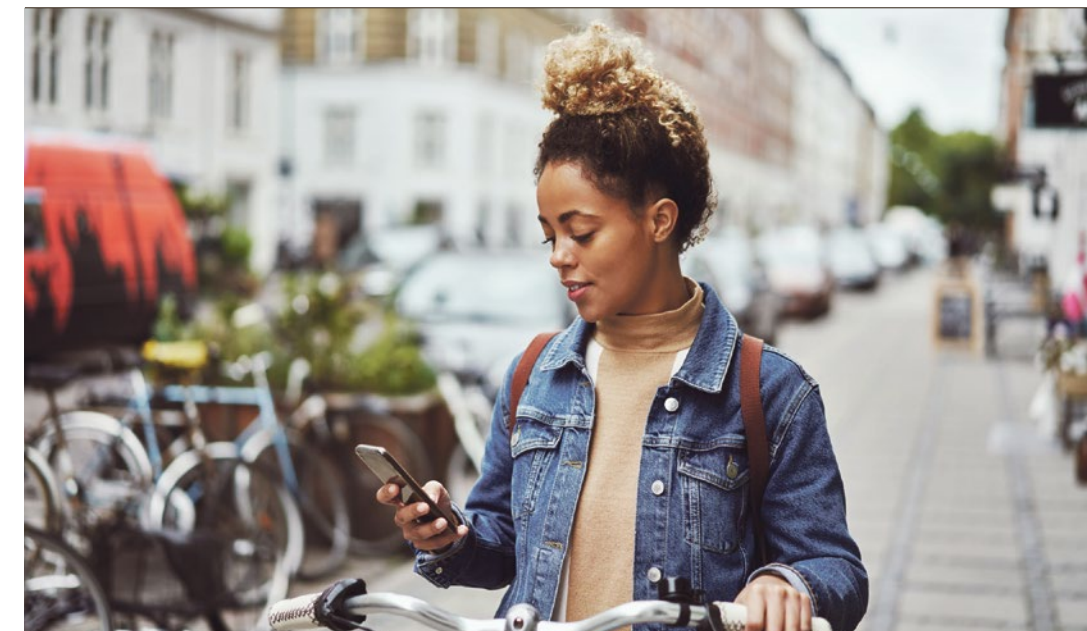
Over the past six months, we've seen a body of best-in-class work emerge from Europe, Asia and the Middle East. The learnings and insights coming from the work make a very powerful statement about the changing shape of creativity in the current climate. If brands are smart, they'll choose talent that naturally advocates for them while harmoniously telling the corporate responsibility story at the same time.

We look forward to seeing what else emerges from the work, at the Cannes Lions International Festival of Creativity in June, and whether we'll continue to see the rise and rise of the new influencer. ●



Simon Cook
Managing Director
LIONS

Commercial feature



The future of ads is no ads and AI is the enabler

Rapid advancements in creative technology, coupled with an evolving advertising landscape, are changing how brands connect with consumers in meaningful, useful ways

The days of a pair of shoes following you around on the internet for weeks because you briefly clicked on a link are, thankfully, coming to an end. The clickbait era, which lured consumers into an ecosystem of third-party cookies that was sold to brands in the form of targeted advertising, is set to be usurped by brand storytelling putting quality first.

Automation is the enabler. In the past, creative agencies crafted a single TV commercial and served it to millions of people. By understanding what is relevant to people, technology and artificial intelligence (AI) is now empowering creatives to create thousands of video versions that are tailored and contextual.

The result is generic ads are being replaced by content that grabs people's attention because it is genuinely useful. And it is turning brand storytelling on its head. Creatives can get back to what they are good at: being creative. The difference is this time they can scale their creativity to produce thousands of relevant ads that perform in the digital world.

"Clickbait might get click through, but will people ever click on your product again? Probably not, because they feel duped or worried about how you got their data," says Ger O'Meara, co-founder and chief executive of Spirable, a creative performance platform used by global brands and agencies to automate and optimise data-driven video ads. "By creating video content that is useful you get far more engagement, without misusing private data.

"The future of ads is no ads because they are so useful and relevant that they don't even appear to be selling something. It's a totally different experience and when people do click through, the results are much better because they are actually intending to engage with the brand. It's a value exchange; the customer is engaging with you, so giving them quality content makes them feel they are getting something back for their engagement."

Powered by creative AI and machine learning, Spirable's self-serve platform enables brands to attract, convert and retain more customers by creating personalised marketing without compromising data and privacy. That kind of tailored messaging wasn't possible until recently, but now, marketers can create, distribute and optimise tens or thousands of variations using contextual and first-party data. Allowing them to dynamically tell the most engaging and meaningful story in a highly efficient and cost-effective way, boosting return on investment.

To succeed in this new world of digital advertising, Spirable supports brands through several key challenges. Firstly, they need to deliver a lot of video creative, to capture attention across all the digital channels and formats on which consumers spend time online. Then they need to be agile and able to react quickly, and keep creative truly in the moment and contextually relevant. Finally, brands need to understand why one creative performs better than another for each audience; AI and machine learning fuel these insights. Supermarket chain Aldi's use of Spirable's platform demonstrates the

sheer power of contextual advertising. Keen to control footfall and alleviate people's concerns during the coronavirus pandemic, Aldi utilised dynamic templates, together with in-store traffic data, to inform customers how busy their local store is and promote quiet times to shop. Using Spirable's technology, Aldi automated the distribution and updating of Facebook and Instagram ads across 890 stores, each with their own localised, tailored creative.

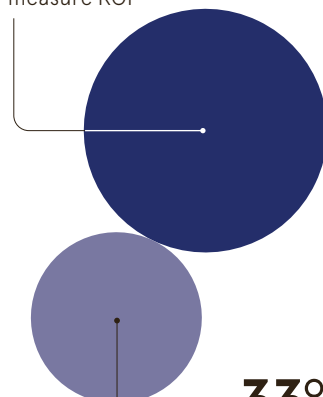
"Spirable's end-to-end workflow allows brands to create video content, drive it by data and distribute it to channels in an automated way," says O'Meara. "Our vision is to create video content that's useful; our mission is to automate the whole process with a real focus on the performance side of it. We enable marketers to create dynamic video templates connected to data and rules, and to automatically get all the versions to the right audience at the right time.

"The momentum in digital advertising is only moving in one direction. It's shifting towards quality over clickbait. It's shifting towards contextual relevance over the misuse of private data. And ultimately it's going to result in video ads that no longer look like video ads at all; they look like really useful, inspiring pieces of content."

For more information please visit spirable.com



67% measure ROI



33%

do not measure ROI

Influencer Marketing Hub 2021

THE CASE FOR CREATIVITY IN ADVERTISING

Advertisers have long believed that more creative work is more effective but this has been hard to prove because of the number of factors that go into creating the best campaign. However, there is now growing proof of the link between creativity and advertising effectiveness, and its impact on business performance. Yet advertisers are increasingly focused on short-term goals that don't drive long-term business success and failing to measure creativity.

38%

of marketers do not measure the effectiveness of their creative

Marketing Week 2019

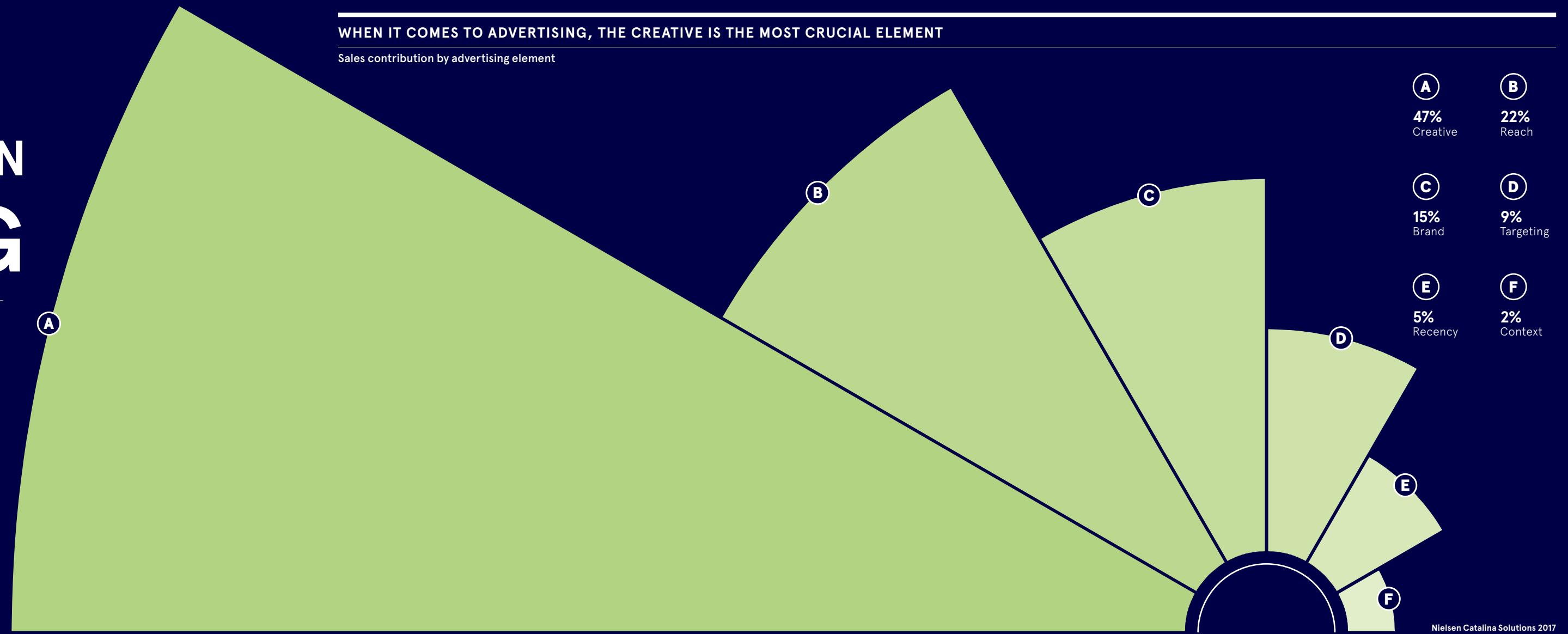
12%

of marketers do not measure the effectiveness of their creative or media

Marketing Week 2019

WHEN IT COMES TO ADVERTISING, THE CREATIVE IS THE MOST CRUCIAL ELEMENT

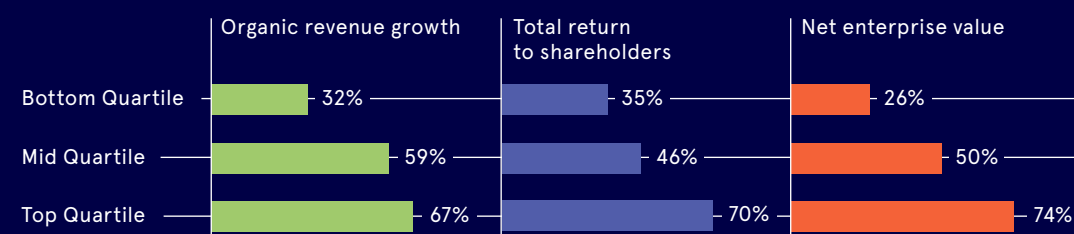
Sales contribution by advertising element



Nielsen Catalina Solutions 2017

CREATIVE LEADERS OUTPERFORM THEIR PEERS ON KEY FINANCIAL METRICS

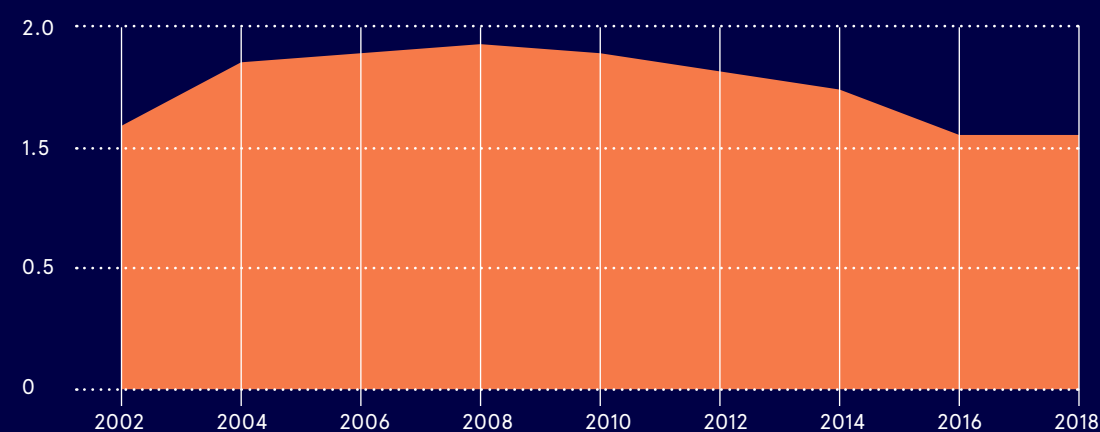
Likelihood that creativity score quality has above-average performance



McKinsey 2017

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF CREATIVELY-AWARDED CAMPAIGNS IS FALLING BACK

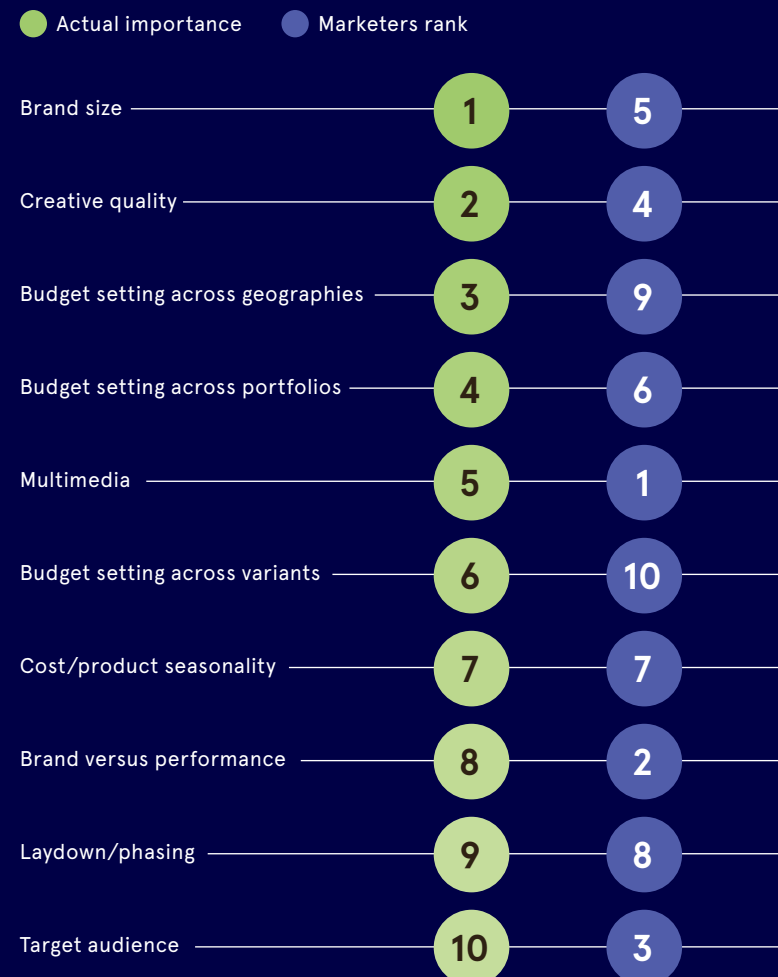
Average very large business effects (such as sales and share gains, price sensitivity, customer loyalty, penetration, profit) reported for winners of IPA Effectiveness awards, six years ending



IPA Databank 2019

MARKETERS UNDERESTIMATE CREATIVITY

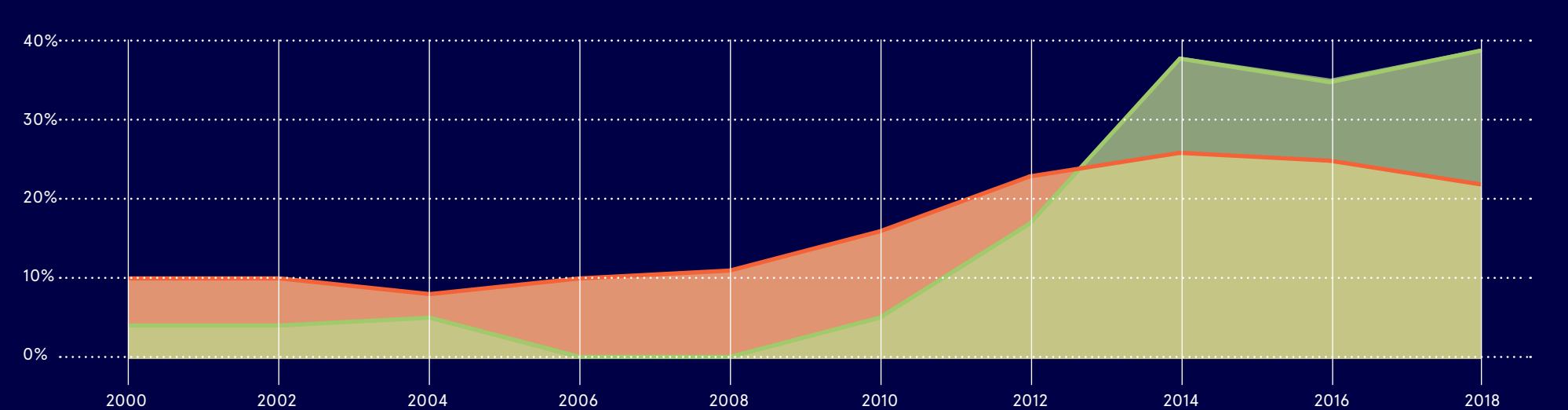
How marketers rank factors influencing the biggest drivers of brand profit



Kantar 2020

THERE HAS BEEN A DRAMATIC RISE IN SHORT-TERM AD CAMPAIGNS RECEIVING CREATIVE AWARDS

IPA Effectiveness award entries that focus on short-term goals (less than six months)



IPA awards entries reporting



IPA Databank 2019



Championing the open internet in a post-cookie world

As digital advertising enters a period of intense reinvention, the future of the open internet is at stake, but with the right approach, it can facilitate exceptional results for marketers

The open internet is essential to how we live and work. Five billion people rely on it for information, communication and entertainment, and while all the great content may appear to be free, it isn't; it's funded by advertising. And it's so lucrative that the US digital advertising market is larger than the GDP of more than two thirds of the world's countries.

Yet it isn't those that create the content – publishers, journalists and storytellers – who receive the lion's share of that money. Nearly 70 per cent of digital advertising spend is swept up by two corporations – Google and Facebook – that have built "walled garden" environments, despite not even accounting for the majority of time consumers spend online.

"Outside the artificially curated worlds of the walled gardens, the internet has become increasingly hostile for content producers," says Konrad Feldman, founder and chief executive of audience intelligence and measurement firm Quantcast. "The dominant platforms have a vice-like grip over the ability of publishers to access and create value from their audiences."

"It's tough for independent publishers and even harder for new voices to emerge. Our children won't thank us for reducing the diversity of trustworthy sources of information or for concentrating the power over that information into the hands of a small number of large corporations. A diverse open internet is a sign of a healthy society and, if we don't act, we risk handing our children an intellectual crisis in addition to an environmental one."

That's not to say marketers should invest in the open internet purely out of moral obligation. Though its high fragmentation meant reliably reaching a target audience was previously much harder than in the walled gardens, certain developments as well as new technologies are changing this, strengthening the business case of the open internet.

With the introduction in 2018 of the General Data Protection Regulation in Europe, and other similar regulations following around the world, consumer data privacy has risen to the forefront of mandating every part of the internet ecosystem. Meanwhile, the dominant internet browsers have signalled the end of third-party cookies, the foundation of targeted advertising online.

This has the potential to be another blow to publishers, but new innovation also brings new opportunities. For the open internet economy to really thrive in a post-cookie, privacy-centric world, alternative identifiers to the third-party cookie will be absolutely essential and the approach should be underpinned by three central pillars of identity, first-party data and consent.

The easiest way to understand if an internet user is a relevant prospect for a brand or campaign is through deterministic identifiers, allowing behaviour to be understood across browsers and devices over time without the need for cookies. This makes deterministic identifiers highly valuable in delivering advertising and measuring impact, but registration walls are increasingly unsuccessful at facilitating that.

Quantcast, which previously created the widely adopted consent management solution Quantcast Choice,

recently introduced Permisio, a portal that allows publishers' readers to create one deterministic login and apply their privacy preferences across all their favourite sites. This not only enables a more frictionless browsing experience, but also helps publishers to capture deterministic identity data and build deeper audience engagement.

"It is part of our journey towards a future where deterministic IDs are part of a consented first-party environment," says Feldman. "Then, to fill the gaps when deterministic data is not known, the open internet needs to lean on probabilistic identifiers. Quantcast Measure is the largest probabilistic model of the open internet, creating considerable value for publishers and marketers with insights from more than 100 million internet destinations."

"Combine these solutions with tools that facilitate planning, activation and measurement, such as the Quantcast Platform, and the open internet can offer advertisers the scale, performance and simplicity to rival the walled gardens, while publishers can capture a fair share of advertising spend to fund the diverse content we all enjoy. It's something we should all care about, but it requires publishers, marketers and tech companies to work together, as a rebel alliance, to make it happen."

For more information please visit [quantcast.com](https://www.quantcast.com)

Quantcast

GAMING

Game on as mobile playtime tempts brands

Accelerated by the appetite for new diversions in lockdown, gaming is morphing into a global entertainment phenomenon with profound implications for the marketing industry

Virginia Matthews

There may be naysayer brands that dismiss the fast-moving esports and gaming sector as a temporary fad among teenage boys, but shrewder heads believe its potential as a multi-demographic ad platform is now becoming apparent.

With what the industry calls the "gaming ecosystem" rapidly migrating from computers and consoles to the ubiquitous smartphone, creating a meaningful brand presence among gamers, whether through in-app advertising, brand characters, sponsorship or shoppable content, is becoming increasingly important.

That's the view of market intelligence house App Annie, which predicts

global spending on mobile games alone could be close to £85 billion this year, making it 50 per cent larger than all other gaming categories combined.

"Mobile advertising in general, much of it around games, kept the entire ad industry afloat in 2020 and so far in 2021. With the opportunity to return to the streaming of live events, the spend is likely to be far bigger still," says Lexi Sydow, senior market insights manager at App Annie.

"Gaming may be a new habit that many have adopted in 2020, but with the development of more innovative marketing techniques, particularly in our view, in-game customisable avatars, it will become a catalyst for other new behaviours too. Smart brands are recognising that phones are mini mobile consoles and getting into this space right now."

While hard-to-reach Gen-Z audiences adept at using ad-blocker technology are already in marketers' sights, the breadth of game genres now on offer, from first-person shooters and arcade games to electronic scrabble or ludo, for example, makes gaming "inclusive and accessible", she adds.

Budweiser, which recently launched Europe's first on-pack beer and esports promotion in partnership with UK-based professional esports organisation Fnatic, was an early convert.

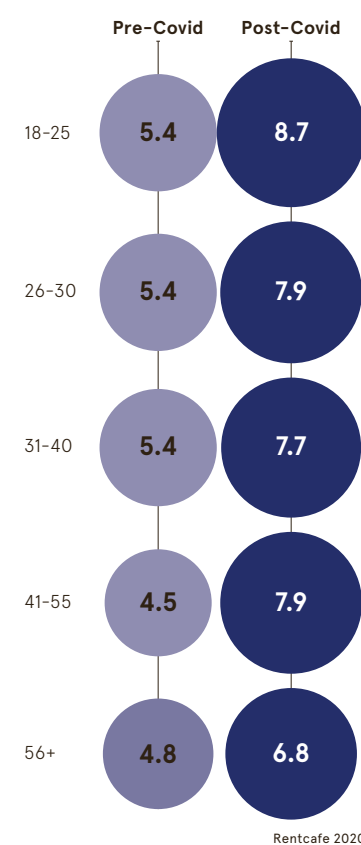
Aided by branded character the Bud Knight, as much as three quarters of Bud Light's total UK marketing spend was devoted to gaming and esports in 2020, up between 10 and 20 per cent in previous years.

An opportunity as big as football "Esports and gaming aren't a side hustle for us, we believe they are a genuine passion point for many consumers and have the capacity to become just as big as football and rugby one day," says Lourenço Arriaga, marketing manager for Budweiser and Bud Light in the UK and Ireland.

"With consumer attention in COVID switching from TV and other traditional media to gaming and the live streaming of esports events on

PEOPLE ARE SPENDING MORE TIME GAMING

Weekly time spent, in hours, by age



Twitch, I would advise other marketers with relevant brands to embrace the fact that this is a phenomenon which is here to stay," he says.

Launched in the midst of the pandemic last year, Dentsu's esports and gaming arm DGame, whose clients include Kellogg's and Cadbury, argues that the global gaming community, estimated to soar to more than 3 billion by 2023, is a new form of social media, offering multiple and profitable avenues for brand integration.

"Gaming attracts people looking for companionship, shared interests and, currently at least, an escape from lockdown. This adds up to an enormous opportunity for in and out-of-game sponsorship, in-app advertising, product placement and, ultimately, the development of original branded content," says Peter Jacobs, client partner at DGame.

"By continuing to spend the bulk of their budgets on traditional TV ads, the many brands out there looking to

“While gamers welcome brands into their world, brands have no right to be there unless they add real value

appeal to 18 to 25s may not actually be talking to their target market without even realising it," he adds.

Shifting perceptions

Despite the UK already boasting more than 37 million regular gamers, split fairly equally between men and women, Jacobs notes that many brands remain reluctant to dive into what is still a highly fragmented market.

"Brands are at different stages in terms of their journey into gaming and esports, and while some are already fairly seasoned, others are first movers or very keen to take that first leap, but unsure of how to do it," he says.

While Jacobs sees the sponsorship of live esports and music events as a natural and potentially lucrative entry point for newbie brands, particularly when attendance numbers return to pre-COVID levels, he agrees there are a number of obstacles in the path to gaming glory.

L'Oréal has openly declared an interest in developing gaming strategies, particularly for its female-leaning brands, yet the long-held perception that the sector remains predominantly male is proving hard to shift.

The complex world of intellectual property (IP) may well prove a bone of contention between games publishers and marketers as the latter seek to monetise their involvement further and this is an area in which IP lawyers

may be the eventual victors.

But it's the potential cultural clash between developers and brands that may prove the stickiest problem of all.

Understanding gamers

"Gamers are a highly protective community and while they welcome brands into their world, we have no automatic right to be there unless we add real value," says Arriaga. "If a brand or ad appears out of context, it can quickly backfire on a marketer via comments on social media."

While the immersive and interactive nature of gaming makes it highly receptive to brand messaging, App Annie's Sydow advises marketers to "respect and understand gamers" to keep audiences on-side.

"It really matters if your in-app ad is horizontal or vertical and so does avoiding any interruption to the flow of play," she says. "By collaborating with publishers and developers to create great ads that enhance rather than detract from the game, you can make an enormous impact."

With developers willing to open their doors to innovative marketing at a far earlier stage, there is much to play for on this still-new platform.

But whether it's Bud Knight on an in-app bus shelter ad or an option for gamers to purchase Louis Vuitton fashion for their avatars, brands will need to know their place as the market matures. ●



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DIGITAL

The first-party future for publishers

Publishers are seeking greater independence from Google by developing their own audience databases and selling direct to advertisers

Sean Hargrave

Publishers have long lamented that people come online to read their quality content and yet the "duopoly" of Google and Facebook hover around two in every three pounds spent on digital advertising in the UK.

To add insult to injury, publishers have accused the duopoly of routinely monetising their stories in search results and through social media sharing, without any reimbursement. It was this angst that led to Facebook blocking news content in Australia before reaching a compromise and agreeing to pay for it. The deal was struck as both Google and Facebook are in the middle of rolling out new sections on their UK services that, for the first time, will pay for content.

Having won the argument on the principle of getting paid for use of their content, publishers are now being proactive on grabbing their share of the UK's advertising pot. The timing is perfect with Google bowing to public pressure and preparing to drop the tracking cookies that aid advertising targeting but consumers have found intrusive.

As the old system of advertising comes to an end, the years ahead will see a huge amount of upheaval as publishers start making more use of their own first-party audience data. This will include identifying visitors' interests by content consumed and noting their email address, if they are logged in. Owning this data, and turning it into highly defined audience types, enables publishers to sell advertising direct to brands at higher rates, making media owners less reliant on Google's data and advertising platforms.

How data improves ad revenue Immediate Media, the owner of many special interest sites, including *BBC Good Food* and *Radio Times*, is an early adopter. Chief revenue officer Duncan Tickell says that concentrating on developing its own data, via a platform provided by data business Permutive, has helped its advertising rates more than double.

Tickell believes this extra slice of revenue is not coming from Google alone, but also the adtech



“ Publishers are clawing back some revenue from everyone behind what we call the 'tech tax' ”

providers that sit between an advertiser and publisher and “gobble up data and revenue”.

He points to a recent finding from a report by the Incorporated Society of British Advertisers and PwC which found only 51 per cent of the budget spend on an advertising campaign actually goes to publishers. The rest is sucked up by agencies, platforms and adtech vendors, including Google. The most worrying aspect is the report also found that 15 per cent of all campaign spending is completely unaccounted for.

“We're clawing back some revenue from everyone behind what publishers call the 'tech tax',” says Tickell. “It's not only Google, with first-party data and selling directly we can avoid a lot of these adtech businesses in the middle.”

Other publishers weaning themselves off cookies to prepare for a first-party future are reporting similar success. Robbie Bates, head of programmatic and data strategy at *Hello!*, says advertising for the latter half of 2020 was 56 per cent up on the same period the year before, meaning the publisher is “less reliant” on Google. He also claims brands can expect a 33

per cent lift in click-throughs on their adverts when audiences are highly targeted and bought direct.

Similarly, Anthony Hitchings, digital advertising operations director at *FT.com*, reveals the site ditched working with tracking cookies several years ago. Its most targeted audiences give the site a 44 per cent better yield.

Taking on Google

It all sounds like good news, and to a certain extent it is. However, there is a “but”, Alex Brownsell, digital marketing industry commentator and senior editor at media researcher WARC, points out.

“This is a real opportunity for publishers to step out of the shadows and take advantage of in-depth knowledge of great audiences, which is very attractive to advertisers,” he says.

“But collecting that data is very expensive and is probably only something a large publisher is going to do well. It's possible many publishers just won't have the resources and will keep on dancing to Google's tune. It owns Chrome so will set the future rules of engagement in advertising. It's a powerful gatekeeper.”

One option for publishers is to band together rather than fight alone. This is already happening for local media via 1XL, and national newspapers and magazines at the Ozone Project. Although they still need to invest in data-gathering capabilities, coming together allows them to offer advertisers vast scale through a single platform. It is necessary, Damon Reeve, chief executive at the Ozone Project, believes to help compete with the huge power Google holds over them.

“In the days of print, publishers earned money through advertising and distribution,” he says. “The problem now is Google is all powerful in advertising and it controls

distribution; around 80 per cent of the clicks a typical news publisher receives will come from Google and Facebook. We have a massive year of transition ahead of us because Google will make sure that whatever it does next will suit Google, not publishers.”

Improving targeting

As for brands, Pete Markey, chief marketing officer at Boots, believes publishers improving their understanding of audiences and dealing directly with advertisers can only be a good thing. The one aspect publishers need to improve on, though, is being more explicit with brands about what they are doing to improve targeting via direct deals.

“Brands will work with media owners whose own audiences fit well with those of the brand and therefore allow the chance to deepen relationships and provide a better experience overall,” he says.

“Media owners must start to promote the opportunity they present for brand engagement. Brands will gravitate to this opportunity as it removes some wastage from targeting; it's more laser focused.”

The switch to precision first-party targeting is gaining traction, but the feedback is publishers need to be more explicit with brands about the benefits of dealing direct.

Media owners probably have the best part of a year, while Google works on a replacement for cookies. By the time a new system is launched, however, the publishers will have had the chance to both refine their direct-selling capabilities and how they are presented to brands.

This generous timeline means, by the end of the year, a partial shift in the balance of power between Google and media owners is on the cards. ●

Personalisation gets Sky Bet's real-time ads to the right people

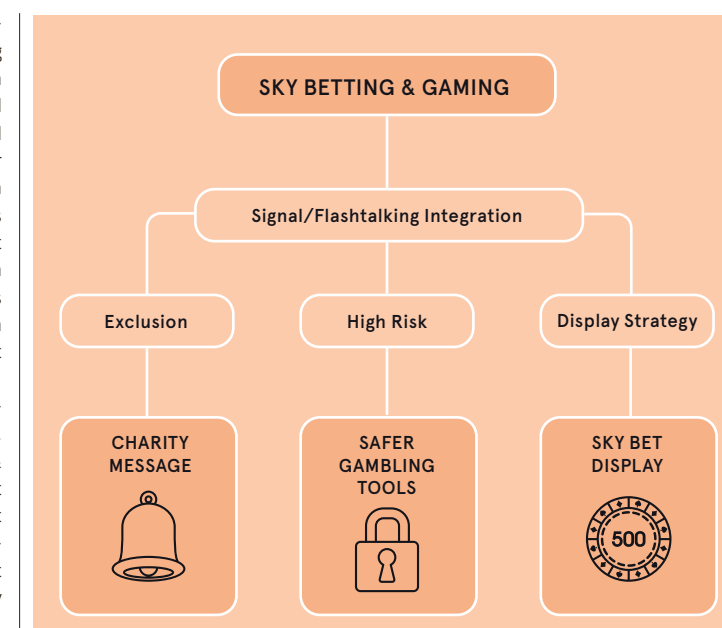
Sky Betting & Gaming has worked innovatively with adtech firm Flashtalking to personalise and filter its ad creatives to ensure messages are seen by the right people at the best time

The tightening of data-related regulations, including the General Data Protection Regulation and Transparency and Consent Framework 2.0, has prompted marketers to rapidly evolve their approach to personalised advertising. In the gambling world, which already faces more regulatory oversight than most sectors while also relying increasingly on real-time messaging online, operators have had to be especially innovative in delivering the right adverts to the right people at the right time.

In-play betting, in particular, has catapulted in popularity in recent years. Eighteen months ago, Sky Betting & Gaming, operator of Sky Bet and part of the global Flutter Entertainment group, was building all of its ads manually. Ensuring the ads were selected at the appropriate moment was a hugely time-consuming and complicated task, coupled with a need to ensure that any odds displayed are as up to date as possible.

Sky Betting & Gaming teamed up with Flashtalking, a data-driven ad management and analytics tech company, to transform its approach. Flashtalking's Power Feeds, which activate advertiser content by connecting application programming interfaces to drive real-time relevancy and personalisation at scale, allows Sky Bet to pull live odds into its creative in 15 seconds or often faster.

“The use of Flashtalking Power Feeds has been a game-changer for us and I don't use that term lightly,” says David Wood, digital marketing executive at Sky Betting & Gaming. “It has massively changed how we can operate our strategy. We've gone from spending the majority of our working week putting ads live to being able to put one creative live that pulls in the feed. Even better,



we can also pull back on ads that are no longer relevant.

“If, for example, a match is called off or a player is injured, the technology will realise an offer is no longer live and fall back to an always-on offer. It's definitely the unsung hero of our display strategy. The hours we've managed to save by implementing this has meant we have a lot more time now to focus on our strategy and higher-value tasks.”

Through its commitment to safer gambling, Sky Betting & Gaming wants to make sure personalisation works both ways, so it also utilises the technology to ensure the wrong creative doesn't go to the wrong people, in particular those identified as having a higher risk profile. Supported by Flashtalking and customer intelligence platform Signal, the operator can exclude people from seeing its ads, replacing them with creative promoting its charity partners.

“We work closely with the Gambling Commission to ensure our customers' needs are at the centre of our safer gambling strategy,” says Wood. “We proactively seek to ensure we are doing the right thing and keeping people safe. Our ability to filter at the top level, using all the data available to us, is hugely important. We don't market unless we're confident in the process and Flashtalking gives us that confidence.”

“As part of the world's largest online gaming business, we're well placed to demonstrate how consumer data and

digital technology can be used together to create a safe and sustainable method of advertising.”

Flashtalking's platform, which services billions of ad impressions globally, allows brands to create, activate and measure personalised digital advertising across desktop, mobile and connected TV. Its partnership with Sky Betting & Gaming has enabled it to apply its technology in a unique way that highlights the true value of automation.

“There's a common complaint that automation can lead to bland creative because people focus too much on automated versioning, scale and targeting, not leveraging the time it frees up to build engaging creative,” says Simon Thorne, Flashtalking's managing director in Western Europe. “Sky Bet is a great use-case for how it should be done. We provide the core tech and simplify the huge amount of data into a useable format, but the real magic happens when David and his team use the feed data to populate well designed, engaging and targeted creative.”

For more information please visit flashtalking.com

flashtalking

“ Consumer data and digital technology can be used to create a safe and sustainable method of advertising ”

PROGRAMMATIC

Digital advertising in a cookie-less world

With less than a year to go until the ad industry bids farewell to the third-party cookie internet and ushers in a new era of digital advertising, where are we now and what does the future hold?



Ellen Hammett

Third-party cookies have been the bedrock of digital advertising since the late-1990s. For more than two decades, they have allowed advertisers to follow internet users across the web and target them with ads, giving unique insight into how audiences behave in a way other forms of media simply cannot. But this has, many feel, been at the expense of people's privacy.

Things are about to change. Google's deadline to remove third-party cookies from Chrome by the end of this year is fast approaching, meaning the media industry is on the precipice of one of the single biggest changes to digital advertising in its history. The foundations on which digital advertising is built are crumbling.

With less than a year to go, and Google confirming it will not track people across multiple websites once cookies are phased out, there are questions over how prepared the industry is, who stands to benefit and what a "privacy-first" future might look like.

Race to evaluate

While Google is wrangling with adtech vendors and working groups about what a cookie-less future actually looks like, publishers are trying to work out what it means for their bottom line. Advertisers, meanwhile, need to figure out how to plug the cookie-shaped hole left in their digital marketing evaluation strategies. Crucially, advertisers need to develop new evaluation techniques to ensure their view of the consumer purchase journey is not limited to the last click.

"This is a big problem because some types of advertising are more likely to be the last click than others," says Dr Grace Kite, managing director of consultancy Gracious Economics. "Without cookies, advertisers are at risk of being misled into thinking that the end-of-journey type is more effective than it really is."

Retail brand Made.com is evaluating how to expedite its investment in modelling in a way that will enable it to make better media mix or optimisation decisions.

"While the depreciation of cookies challenges the ability to personalise

and measure digital media, it does not challenge the value of the medium itself," says Made.com's performance marketing director Matt Pollington.

"Importantly, marketers will need to invest in talent and work with partners who enable them to leverage their first-party customer and behavioural data insights to get the best outcomes from their media and digital advertising."

Control, context and collaboration

As publishers and advertisers seek to regain control of their first-party data and increasingly build their own walled gardens, advertisers will need to learn to reframe how they think about effectiveness. This means understanding that audiences are still valuable even if they cannot measure them in the same way.

"The biggest challenge is around resetting expectations because we have come so far along the road in using third-party cookies that we have expectations of what digital advertising delivers compared to other media," says IAB UK's head of

“The biggest challenge is around resetting expectations because we have come so far along the road in using third-party cookies

adtech Tina Lakhani. "Right now, it's fairly consistent in what you can do and expect in terms of reporting and measurement across the ecosystem."

"In future it will be around understanding the nuances of working in different environments and forming the right strategy and measurement approach off the back of those."

In line with the shift towards subscription models and logged-in environments, contextual advertising will continue to gain popularity as a privacy-friendly, brand-safe way for advertisers to work with publishers to reach niche audiences in quality environments and in an increasingly personalised way.

The industry was issued a stark warning last year when a study by the Incorporated Society of British Advertisers found 50 per cent of the money advertisers invest in programmatic advertising never reaches online publishers. A national newspaper investigation previously found adtech businesses were extracting up to 70 per cent of advertisers' money without being able to quantify the value they provide to the brand.

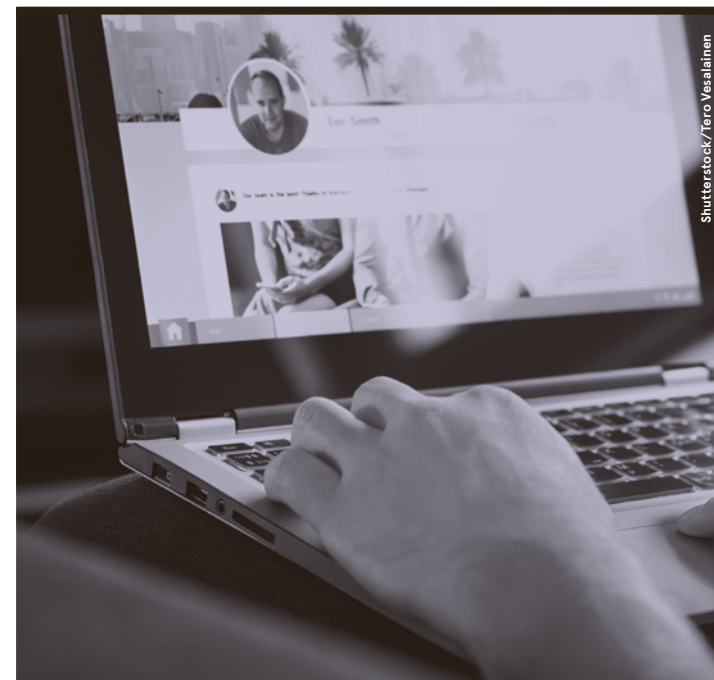
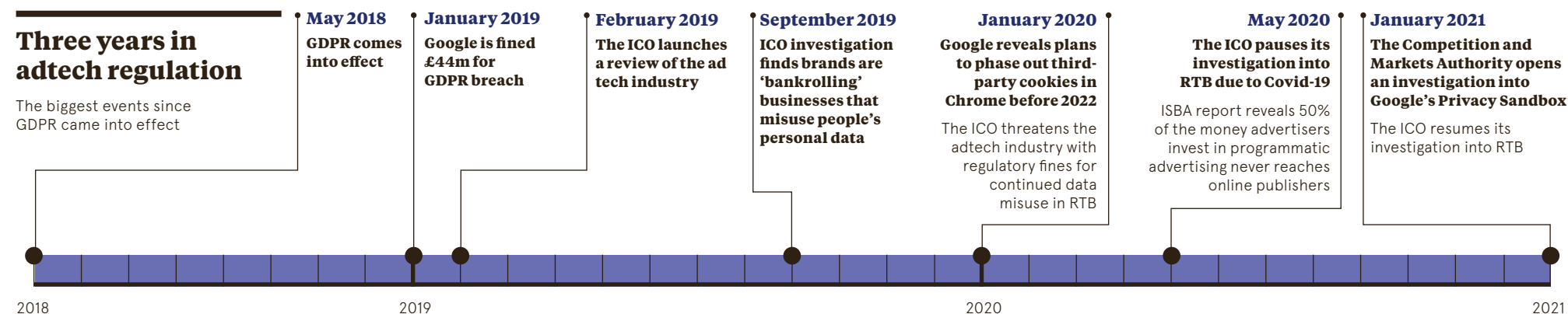
An internet without third-party cookies gives advertisers and publishers a crucial opportunity to collaborate to understand their audiences better and build a sustainable internet where every penny spent is accounted for.

Privacy and competition

Google's Privacy Sandbox alternative to third-party cookies is already being criticised for not being as privacy-friendly as Google would want you to think, given it will provide Google with more directly identifiable, personal information about its users.

Three years in adtech regulation

The biggest events since GDPR came into effect



Investigating adtech

The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) has resumed its investigation into adtech and real-time bidding (RTB) following a nine-month pause due to coronavirus. The data regulator has been reviewing the way people's personal data is being used since 2019.

It has shone a fierce spotlight on how the RTB system has been using people's sensitive data, which relates directly to health, sexuality or religion, to serve ads, at scale, without having their explicit consent.

Much of the attention has fallen on the role brands are playing in continuing to fund businesses that misuse people's personal data. The ICO issued a warning in January 2020 that it will issue heavy General Data Protection Regulation fines to brands that continue to engage in illegal practices, which are propping up an unethical, non-transparent digital ecosystem.

The ICO is taking a slightly different approach to its

investigation this time round in that its initial focus will be on auditing data-management platforms. It intends to find out exactly what data is being supplied for RTB purposes, where it is coming from and whether it is being shared in a regulatory compliant way.

It is not yet clear what impact the demise of third-party cookies will have on the misuse of people's personal data in the long term and we are a long way off knowing what the replacement will be. However, if the alternatives truly are taking a "privacy-by-design" approach, this should enhance privacy and compliance rather than detract from it.

In the meantime, the ICO has told all adtech organisations to assess how they use personal data as a matter of urgency. It is also continuing to work with the Competition and Markets Authority in considering Google's Privacy Sandbox proposals to phase out support for third-party cookies on Chrome.

It is important to remember that Google's fortunes are tied to online advertising, so it is not in Google's interests to break how online advertising works. Joseph Evans, head of tech at Enders Analysis, says there are a few key things Google is interested in stopping. These are the "leaky bits" of the data economy that allow people to be profiled or tracked without their consent.

"The proposals will put a stop to that but [Google] is not interested in stopping the whole principle of being able to serve ads to people based on who they are or what they've been doing online," says Evans. "If you see the privacy harm as consisting in that principle of online advertising, you won't be satisfied with what Google is doing."

Given Privacy Sandbox will effectively create a Google-owned walled garden, the Competition and Markets

Authority is currently investigating whether this will cause advertising spend to become even more concentrated on Google's ecosystem at the expense of its competitors.

Changes like this do tend to concentrate the market further and the bigger players that already have strong media fundamentals, those with high usage, massive reach and first-party data, will almost certainly be hurt to a lesser extent than smaller publishers on the open internet.

Amazon stands to emerge from this in an especially strong position from an advertising point of view, given everything happens within its walled garden. Facebook and Google are increasingly making similar moves to try and bridge the gap between an advert and sale so users never have to leave that environment. We can be certain this will only intensify as the fight for data in a cookie-less era goes on. ●



With the evolution of the ad industry continuing at pace, there is a golden opportunity for brands and retailers on the open web to ensure they have a more balanced and safer way to advertise online

The advertising industry has transformed enormously over the last decade. From the evolution of ad servers and booms in e-commerce and apps, to changing video and programmatic landscapes and the growing digitalisation of offline media channels, the pace of innovation has never been so fast. And coronavirus has accelerated it even further.

It is the tightening up of privacy regulations, however, and the end of third-party cookies, driven first by Apple in its Safari browser and, next year, by Google in its Chrome browser, that is having perhaps the greatest impact. With third-party cookies having been core to the open web's targeted offering to advertisers, powering precise ad performance measurement, their demise signals an urgent need for an alternative.

Finding one is crucial to ensuring the open web can compete with the "walled garden" platforms that seek to dominate advertising spend. Innovative solutions are forthcoming, fortunately, and competition rules are providing new opportunities for the open web to thrive. Conscious of the significant portion of advertising

70%

of global marketers say staying relevant to viewers' needs is important

State of Digital Advertising 2021, Criteo

\$15-20bn

estimated total addressable market for retail media worldwide

spend being accrued by walled gardens, advertisers are making deliberate moves to balance it with open internet players, according to recent research by Criteo.

"Advertisers still expect strong outcomes despite the redefinition of what online identity may mean," says Shruthi Chindalur, executive managing director, Europe, Middle East and Africa, at Criteo, a global tech firm powering brands with trusted and impactful advertising. "While companies are taking different stances, there is a positive unification of the industry to solve the issues."

"With a significant part of their lives now spent online and having experienced plenty of ads across many difficult platforms, consumers nowadays want more interesting and relevant experiences. At the same time, they are savvier about the content they wish to watch and want to understand the transparency of smart advertising and how much control they have. The real opportunity will be in the balance between all this."

Having previously pioneered cookie-based technology that helped brands be more targeted with their advertising, Criteo has been through its own transformation to adapt to the industry changes of recent years. It has responded by innovating once again to provide technology companies' need to better know and serve their customers.

Criteo has adopted new positioning with its Commerce Media Platform. It is present at every step of the consumer journey, offering brands and advertisers awareness solutions such as video and connected TV (CTV) campaigns based on its unparalleled online and offline commerce data knowledge, or with exclusive placement on an e-commerce website, for example. With the largest first-party commerce data set in the open internet, it is delivering success for world-leading brands without the need for third-party cookies.

The company also launched its Retail Media platform last year, giving retailers a single interface to grow their business, and allowing brands and agencies to invest in new advertising space on retailers' websites using standardised workflows and metrics.

Meanwhile, Criteo has partnered with The Trade Desk on the Unified ID 2.0 initiative, a consortium of actors that will collectively compete with the "signed-in environment" of walled gardens, and recently shared its plans to integrate its single sign-on solution so consumers can have unprecedented control over their personal data and ad experience.

"We want to empower users with more choice, transparency and individual control over their data," says Chindalur. "Unified ID 2.0 is the perfect example of how our industry is resilient and can collectively work together to preserve the philosophy of the open internet. Online identity should not be in the hands of any private company and, not least, with a dominant gatekeeper. We believe it should be in the hands of the consumer."

"The world is realising that digital gatekeepers can be a potential risk for the economy and our society. Our unique positioning, unparalleled access to first-party commerce data and premium commerce placement put us at the vanguard of modern advertising, balancing the scales. With user-centric, cohort-based, contextual targeting, we are ultimately creating a new, safe and open world for brands and retailers alike."

For more information please visit [criteo.com](https://www.criteo.com)



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