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MARKETING
MAVERICKS

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THE AI ERA: TRANSFORMING FULL-FUNNEL MARKETING TACTICS

Mr. Vipul Oberoi
Director of Marketing, CSR & Learning Solutions
Dun & Bradstreet India

As we step into an era dominated by artificial intelligence, marketers are presented with unprecedented opportunities to refine their strategies and enhance customer experiences. The rise of AI technology compels you to rethink traditional full-funnel marketing approaches, allowing for more personalized, efficient, and data-driven tactics.

For decades, marketing has been a linear journey, from awareness to consideration to purchase. We've meticulously crafted campaigns to guide customers through this funnel. However, the digital age has introduced complexities that challenge this traditional approach. The rise of social media, the proliferation of channels, and the increasing sophistication of consumers have made it difficult to predict their behavior.

The Role of AI:
AI isn't just a buzzword; it's a game changer. It offers you powerful insights into consumer behavior, enabling you to personalize experiences at scale. With AI-driven analytics, you can now predict customer journeys more accurately, tailor your messaging, and ultimately, create a seamless experience that resonates with your audience.

Rethinking at Each Stage:
Top of the funnel - Awareness: This is where we capture attention and spark interest. AI is revolutionizing how we do this. For instance, AI-driven tools can analyze vast amounts of data from social media, search trends, and online behaviors to identify emerging trends and audience interests.

A Dutch communication and entertainment company, aimed to boost customer acquisitions. They used broad match, an AI-powered keyword tool, that helped their ads appear when a customer searches for any variation of a term. This deep understanding of search intent led to impressive results: a 40% increase in conversions, significantly growing their new customer base.

Imagine being able to create tailored social media ads that resonate with different segments of your audience simultaneously. This not only enhances your brand visibility but also sets the stage for deeper connections. This is the transformative power of AI!

Middle of the Funnel – Consideration: This is where potential customers are evaluating their options. Here, AI can play a critical role in nurturing leads! At this stage, personalization is key. AI technology uses first-party data to predict what message should go to which customer to encourage consideration.

E-commerce giants in India implemented AI for personalized product recommendations, using customer data to suggest items that match individual styles and preferences. The brands reported a 30-40% increase in the time spent on the app and a corresponding increase in conversion rates, indicating improved customer consideration.

Imagine the impact you can have if you successfully guide your prospects through the consideration stage. By providing them with the information and resources they need, you can nurture them into loyal customers. AI empowers you to deliver that personalization effectively!

Bottom of the Funnel – Conversion: Finally, we reach Conversion—the most critical stage. Here, AI can optimize your sales processes and drive higher ROI. As the funnel narrows, AI shines by leveraging smaller data sets to predict outcomes with remarkable accuracy. This enables you to make informed decisions that enhance your marketing strategies and optimize customer engagement.

Dynamic pricing and personalized offers can increase conversion rates significantly. For instance, one of India's largest mobility platform implemented AI to enhance its dynamic pricing model and optimize ride recommendations, personalizing offers based on user behavior. This resulted in a 25% increase in ride bookings during peak hours, significantly boosting overall conversions.

However, conversion is just the beginning. The post-purchase experience is equally important for building customer loyalty and driving repeat business. Let's ensure that the customers feel valued, supported, and satisfied long after they've made a purchase.

In conclusion, rethinking full-funnel marketing in the age of AI is not just about adopting new technologies; it's about transforming your mindset. By embracing integration, personalization, and data-driven decision-making, you can create a marketing strategy that not only meets the needs of your customers but also positions your brand as a leader in innovation.

Let us move forward with a commitment to evolve, adapt, and succeed in this exciting new era!

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Dun & Bradstreet Economic Research

Conducting quantitative and qualitative economic research, econometric modeling, forecasting, analytics, commodity research, customized research and industry research across a wide spectrum of sectors. Areas covered under economic research include real sector, public finance, monetary and fiscal policy, external sector, and infrastructure & social sector.

SOLUTIONS

➢ Index, score card and gap analysis

➢ Economic research and analysis

➢ Thematic research & strategy

➢ Policy research & advisory

➢ Country Insight reports

➢ Sectoral risk rating

➢ Climate Economics & Sustainability Framework

RETHINKING
FULL-FUNNEL MARKETING
IN THE AGE OF AI

RETHINKING FULL-FUNNEL MARKETING IN THE AGE OF AI

I n the dynamic world of digital marketing, the integration of artificial intelligence (AI) is redefining how businesses approach full-funnel marketing. Traditionally, full-funnel marketing has been about guiding prospects through every stage of the customer journey, from initial awareness to final conversion and beyond. However, the advent of AI technologies is prompting a reevaluation of this approach, offering new tools and insights that can enhance the effectiveness of marketing strategies.

WHAT IS FULL-FUNNEL MARKETING

Full-funnel marketing is a strategic approach that aims to engage potential customers throughout their entire journey with a brand, from initial awareness to final conversion and beyond. This methodology focuses on guiding prospects through every stage of the marketing funnel, addressing their needs and behaviors at each step to optimize conversion rates and foster long-term customer relationships.

> " According to recent research of McKinsey & Company, Full-funnel strategies that focus on customer experience can increase retention rates by up to 25%, highlighting the importance of nurturing relationships beyond initial purchase. "

ELEMENTS OF FULL-FUNNEL MARKETING

1. Awareness: The awareness stage is the first touchpoint between potential customers and a brand. At this phase, individuals become aware of a problem or need, and they start looking for solutions. The primary goal is to capture attention and generate interest.

Strategies for Creating Awareness:

Content Marketing: Producing valuable content such as blog posts, infographics, and videos can establish a brand's authority while attracting potential customers.

Search Engine Optimization (SEO): Optimizing website content for search engines ensures that the brand appears in relevant search results, increasing visibility to potential customers.

Strategies for Creating Awareness:

Social Media: Leveraging platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter helps brands reach a broader audience and engage with them through shares and comments.

Paid Advertising: Using pay-per-click (PPC) ads, display ads, and sponsored posts can amplify reach quickly, ensuring that the target audience sees the brand.

Key Metrics:

Impressions:
The number of times the content is displayed.

Traffic:
The number of visitors to the website or landing page.

Engagement:
Likes, shares, and comments on social media posts.

2. Consideration: In the consideration stage, potential customers actively research and evaluate their options. They identify a problem and then look for the best solution. This phase is crucial for nurturing leads and building trust.

Strategies for Encouraging Consideration:

Educational Content: Webinars, whitepapers, and case studies provide in-depth information that helps potential customers understand their options and the value of brands' solution.

Strategies for Encouraging Consideration:

Email Marketing: Targeted email campaigns can nurture leads with personalized content and offers that align with their interests.

Comparison Guides: Providing side-by-side comparisons of products or services can help customers make informed decisions.

User Reviews and Testimonials: Showcasing customer feedback builds credibility and can sway potential buyers toward the offering.

Key Metrics:

Click-Through Rate (CTR):

The percentage of people who click on the content or ads after seeing them.

Time on Page:

Indicates how engaged visitors are with the content.

Lead Generation:

The number of leads captured through forms, subscriptions, or inquiries.

3. Conversion: The conversion stage is where potential customers take action, such as making a purchase, signing up for a service, or completing a desired goal. This is the culmination of the marketing efforts and is critical for driving revenue.

Strategies for Driving Conversion:
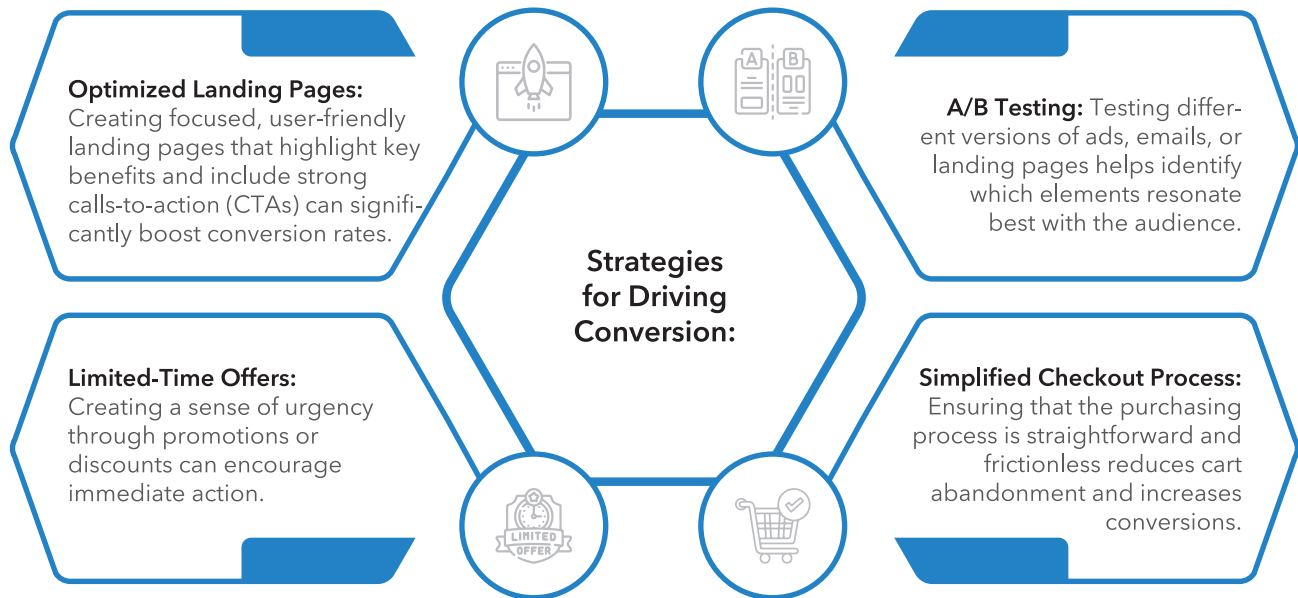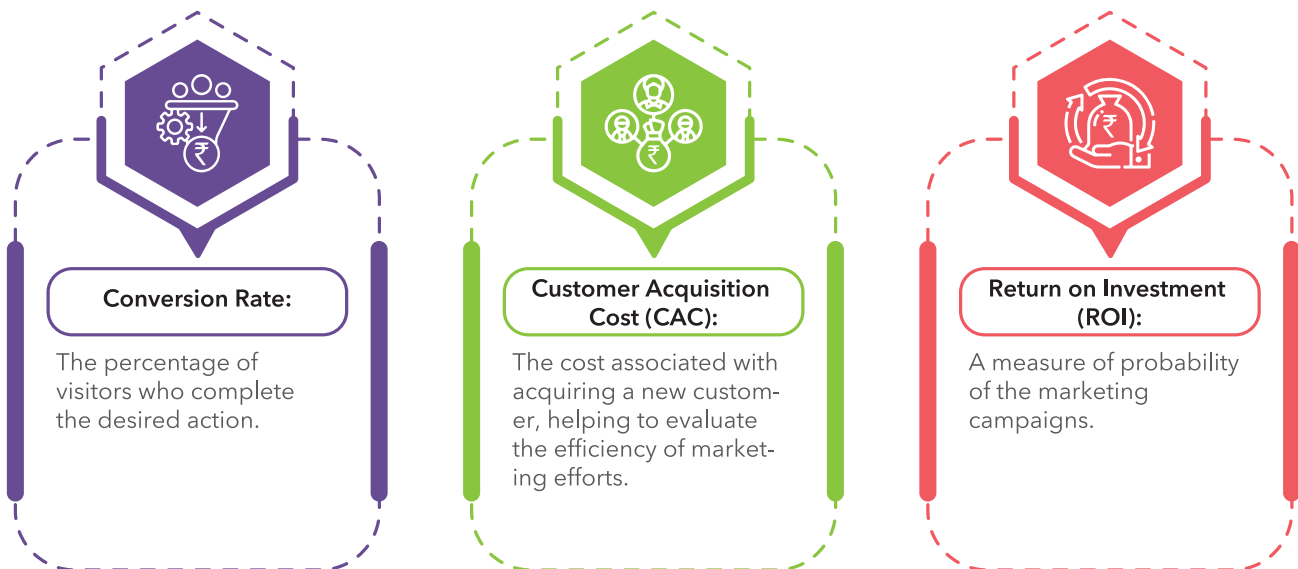
Optimized Landing Pages: Creating focused, user-friendly landing pages that highlight key benefits and include strong calls-to-action (CTAs) can significantly boost conversion rates.

A/B Testing: Testing different versions of ads, emails, or landing pages helps identify which elements resonate best with the audience.

Strategies for Driving Conversion:

Limited-Time Offers: Creating a sense of urgency through promotions or discounts can encourage immediate action.

Simplified Checkout Process: Ensuring that the purchasing process is straightforward and frictionless reduces cart abandonment and increases conversions.

Key Metrics:

Conversion Rate:
The percentage of visitors who complete the desired action.

Customer Acquisition Cost (CAC):
The cost associated with acquiring a new customer, helping to evaluate the efficiency of marketing efforts.

Return on Investment (ROI):
A measure of probability of the marketing campaigns.

APPLICATIONS OF AI IN FULL-FUNNEL MARKETING AT EACH STAGE:

Top of the Funnel (Awareness): In the awareness stage, AI-powered tools can identify and segment target audiences with remarkable precision.

Top Applications:

Applications of AI at ToFu (Awareness)

Predictive Analytics: AI can analyze vast datasets to identify potential audience segments based on behaviors, demographics, and interests, allowing marketers to tailor campaigns effectively.

Content Generation: Tools like natural language processing (NLP) can create engaging blog posts, social media content, and even video scripts, helping brands maintain a consistent online presence.
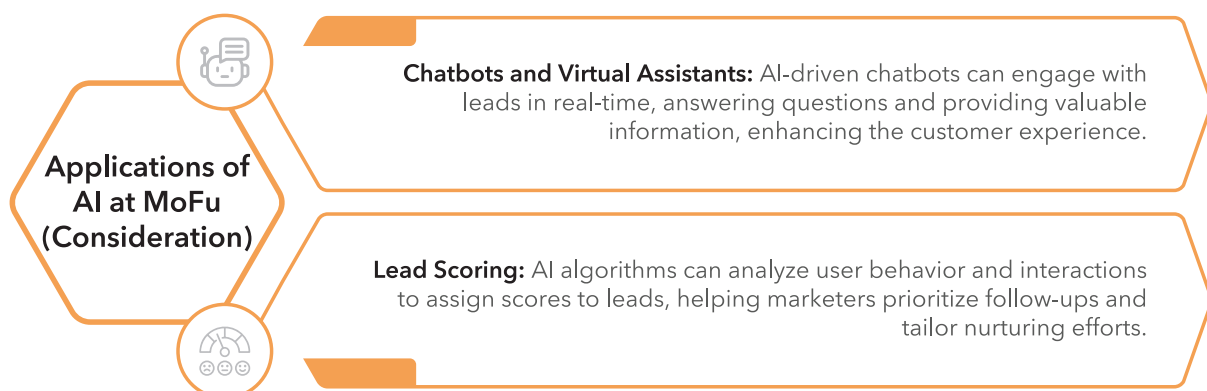
Key Benefits:
- Increased visibility through targeted outreach.
- Improved audience engagement due to personalized content.

Challenges:
- Ensuring data quality and relevance for accurate targeting.
- Managing content authenticity in automated generation.

Middle of the Funnel (Consideration): During the consideration phase, AI can enhance customer interactions through chatbots and personalized email campaigns.

Top Applications:

Applications of AI at MoFu (Consideration)

Chatbots and Virtual Assistants: AI-driven chatbots can engage with leads in real-time, answering questions and providing valuable information, enhancing the customer experience.

Lead Scoring: AI algorithms can analyze user behavior and interactions to assign scores to leads, helping marketers prioritize follow-ups and tailor nurturing efforts.
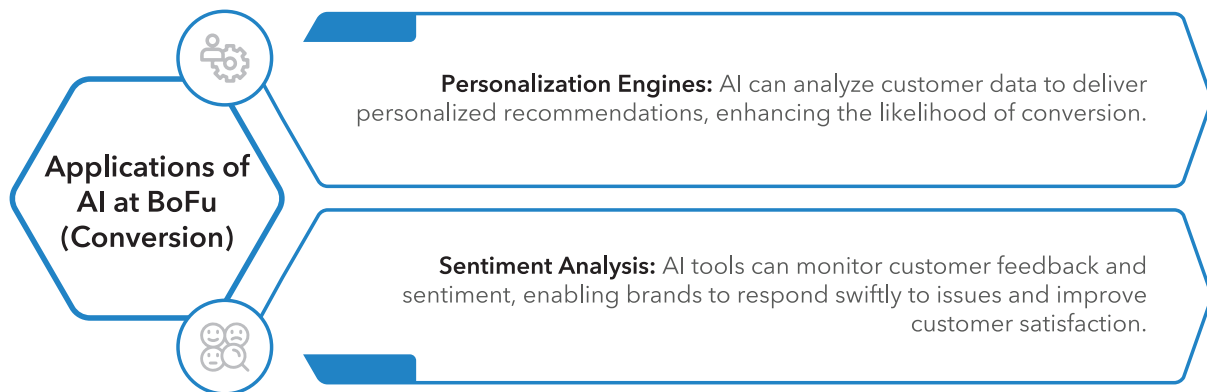
Key Benefits:

- Higher engagement rates due to timely interactions.
- More efficient use of sales resources by focusing on high-potential leads.

Challenges:

- Balancing automation with a human touch to avoid alienating potential customers.
- Integrating various data sources for accurate lead scoring.

Bottom of the Funnel (Conversion): In the conversion stage, AI tools can facilitate smoother purchasing processes.

Top Applications:

Applications of AI at BoFu (Conversion)

Personalization Engines: AI can analyze customer data to deliver personalized recommendations, enhancing the likelihood of conversion.

Sentiment Analysis: AI tools can monitor customer feedback and sentiment, enabling brands to respond swiftly to issues and improve customer satisfaction.

Key Benefits:

- Increased conversion rates through tailored experiences.
- Enhanced customer loyalty as brands proactively addresses needs.

Challenges:

- Protecting customer privacy and data security while using personal information.

> A prominent manufacturing vendor, Coca-Cola uses AI to analyze consumer data, allowing for personalized marketing campaigns that target specific demographics with tailored messages. This approach has increased engagement and brand loyalty.
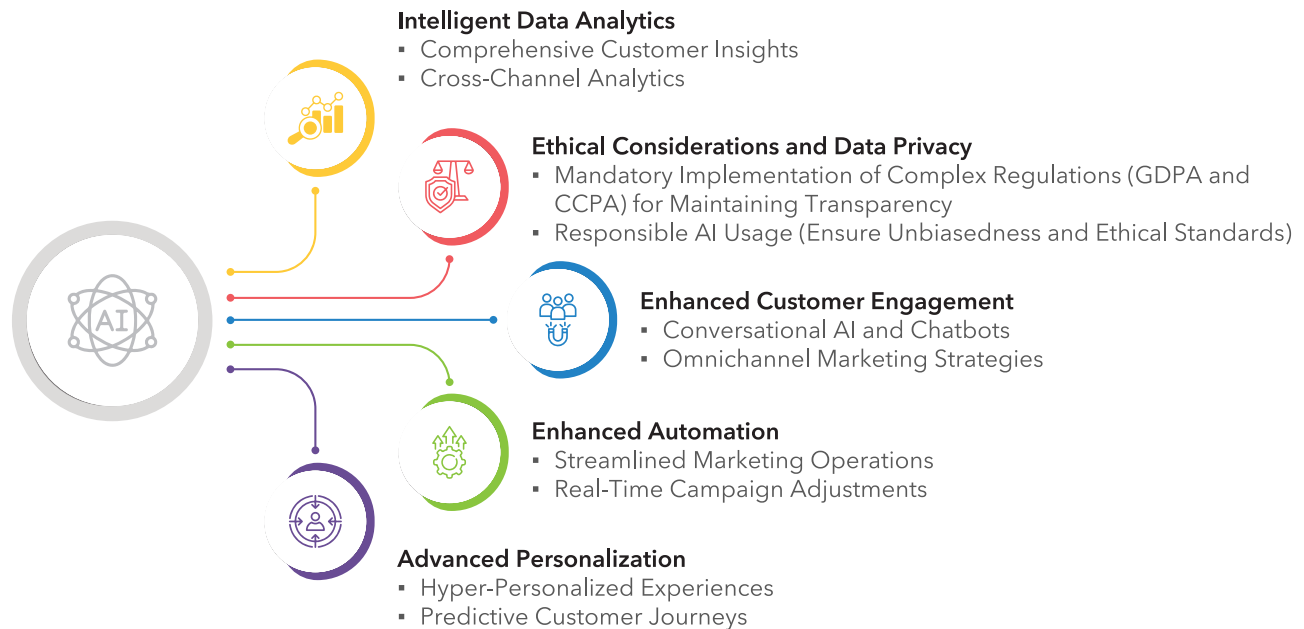>
> The 'Share a Coke' campaign, where AI helped identify popular names to feature on bottles, driven a significant increase in sales.

FUTURE LANDSCAPE OF FULL-FUNNEL MARKETING USING AI INNOVATION:

The future of marketing is not just about reaching customers; it's about understanding them deeply and responding to their needs in real time.

Intelligent Data Analytics
- Comprehensive Customer Insights
- Cross-Channel Analytics

Ethical Considerations and Data Privacy
- Mandatory Implementation of Complex Regulations (GDPA and CCPA) for Maintaining Transparency
- Responsible AI Usage (Ensure Unbiasedness and Ethical Standards)

Enhanced Customer Engagement
- Conversational AI and Chatbots
- Omnichannel Marketing Strategies

Enhanced Automation
- Streamlined Marketing Operations
- Real-Time Campaign Adjustments

Advanced Personalization
- Hyper-Personalized Experiences
- Predictive Customer Journeys

The future landscape for full-funnel marketing using AI is promising and transformative. By harnessing the power of AI, brands will be able to deliver hyper-personalized experiences, streamline their marketing operations, and gain deeper insights into customer behaviors. However, as they embrace these advancements, it is essential for marketers to prioritize ethical considerations and data privacy. Ultimately, the successful integration of AI into full-funnel marketing strategies will hinge on building trust and delivering genuine value to consumers in an increasingly digital world. ■

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D&B ESG Intelligence

D&B ESG Intelligence delivers data and analytics built from the Dun & Bradstreet Data Cloud and established sustainability standards to help companies quantify and assess the impact of their business partners' sustainability rankings to their companies' performance. This true and trusted source of ESG data enables compliance and procurement teams to generate insights that help strengthen their ESG goals and policies, and streamline ESG assessment processes.

PLATFORMS

- ➢ D&B Risk Analytics ESG Module

SOLUTIONS

- ➢ ESG Self-Assessment
- ➢ ESG Report
- ➢ ESG Registered Solutions

Sales & Marketing Solutions

Empowering sales, marketing, and operations teams to improve the impact of go-to-market strategies with better data, analytics, and solutions built on our data foundation.

PLATFORMS

➢ D&B Hoovers

SOLUTIONS

➢ Analytics

➢ Demand Generation

➢ Master Data

EXPERTS' VIEW

Anoop K Melethil

Vice President & Head of Marketing

Maveric Systems

AI-POWERED STRATEGIES FOR FULL FUNNEL MARKETING

Full funnel marketing engages potential customers at every stage of their buying journey–from awareness to engagement, consideration, and conversion–corresponding to the top, middle, and bottom of the funnel. Like many other fields, AI is being increasingly adopted in marketing, where traditional funnel models are being disrupted by digital channels and an explosion of data.

In the awareness stage, machine learning algorithms empower brands to analyze demographic, geographic, and psychographic data, identifying Ideal Customer Profiles (ICP) for precise segmentation. This leads to heightened personalization, enabling brands to tailor content formats to resonate with specific customer personas. For instance, Netflix excels at analyzing viewer preferences to suggest content that aligns with individual tastes. Additionally, natural language processing (NLP) enables brands to analyze online and social media conversations, uncovering trending topics that resonate with their ICPs, thus enhancing content creation and targeting. Instances also abound where AI plays a crucial role in SEO, by replicating competitor sitemaps, generating topic suggestions based on keyword search volumes, and crafting content that mirrors successful ranking patterns.

AI adoption is more focused on analysing audience engagement and lead scoring in the mid funnel phase. For instance, HubSpot employs AI to categorize leads based on their engagement levels, helping marketers identify prospects with highest interest and conversion potential. Advanced AI platforms facilitate personalized communication by determining optimal subject lines, content types, and send times, ensuring that messages resonate with recipients. Furthermore, AI tools can conduct heat mapping of content assets to recommend the most effective visuals and placements for maximizing engagement.

At the bottom of the funnel, the emphasis shifts to conversions, utilizing smart bidding strategies that harness extensive datasets–including user behaviour, intent, and contextual signals. Google Ads, for example, employs AI-driven bidding strategies to optimize ad placements in real time, focusing on maximizing conversion rates. Dynamic pricing algorithms enhance sales by adjusting prices based on real-time demand, competitor pricing, and customer behaviour, particularly during peak periods. AI based product recommendation engines from Amazon that suggest options based on other similar customer purchase behaviours further validate AI led differentiation.

Across all funnel stages, AI delivers real-time insights and predictive modelling, empowering marketers to dynamically adjust campaigns for maximum impact. Tools like Amazon Performance Plus illustrate how organizations can harness AI to achieve successful outcomes. While established use cases primarily focus on generative AI, machine learning, and natural language processing, agentic AI applications are also emerging, offering new avenues for innovation. By seamlessly integrating these advanced capabilities throughout the funnel, brands can elevate audience targeting and engagement while optimizing their marketing strategies. ◼

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B2G2C MARKETING: THE TRIFECTA AT THE CENTRE OF SUCCESSFUL PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

Public-private partnerships are becoming essential for efficient service delivery in today's interconnected world. The Business to Government to Citizen (B2G2C) model represents a vital framework where businesses bridge the gap between governments and citizens. This model unites the government's strategic focus, businesses' innovation capabilities, and citizens' needs, ensuring public services are responsive and citizen-centric. Despite the unique challenges presented by the complex B2G2C environment, it also offers a rich tapestry of opportunities for governments and businesses alike.

Governments often prioritize strengthening regulatory frameworks, which can lead to a disconnect with citizen needs.

Businesses, however, are consistently in tune with customer sentiment, through regular surveys focussed on consumer behavior, needs, and so on. This enables them to innovate for citizens at a much rapid pace while empowering the government stakeholders with the right solutions. Here, the marketing function plays a critical role, serving as the conduit that aligns government priorities, business innovations, and citizen needs seamlessly.

MARKETING STRATEGIES FOR THE B2G2C TRIFECTA

To succeed in B2G2C, businesses must adopt strategies that strengthen the relationship between government, business, and citizens. One key approach is **integrated marketing communications,** leveraging **digital platforms, public relations,** and **advertising** to communicate effectively with both governments and citizens in the world's largest democracy. This keeps all parties informed about available solutions.

Stakeholder engagement is also crucial, requiring businesses to gather insights from government, citizens, and industry to ensure their solutions solve real-world challenges. Feedback loops help citizens provide input on the services they receive that are fed back into the product development process, further improving the effectiveness of solutions.

In addition, **education and awareness campaigns** are indispensable to this process. They help government officials and citizens understand and adopt new products and services, ensuring smoother implementation, greater adoption, and better results. One

very noticeable and pertinent example of this approach can be seen in the smart city sector, where several awareness campaigns like safe, clean, and sustainable city initiatives are being run across the nation.

Lastly, **simplicity in communication** can make or break this entire operation. The art of communicating even the most complex solutions in a manner that is easily understood and strikes a chord with people is essential for success. Narratives that draw from the everyday lives and challenges of people, creating an emotional resonance with them can be profound and powerful.

OVERCOMING CHALLENGES

Navigating complex regulations and balancing diverse stakeholder needs can be challenging. However, clear communication, responsive feedback loops, and adaptability help businesses overcome these hurdles. There are several examples of this that we see around us today, whether it is the DigiYatra initiative, that is quickly revolutionizing the air travel experience, connecting the remote islands of Lakshadweep & Andamans to the mainland through the submarine cable network, or the Aadhaar program, which has streamlined and sped up access to basic amenities for over 1.3 billion people. By positioning marketing at the center of this partnership, businesses can drive innovation, transparency, and improved public services, ensuring a win-win scenario for all involved.

Govind Sharma

CMO

KEI Industries Limited

AI-POWERED STRATEGIES FOR FULL FUNNEL MARKETING

As the Chief Marketing Officer of KEI Industries, I've witnessed firsthand how AI is reshaping the marketing landscape. In today's fast-paced, data-driven world, AI-powered strategies are not just a luxury but a necessity. At KEI, we've embraced AI across the marketing funnel, leveraging it to create more personalized, efficient, and impactful campaigns that resonate with customers at every touchpoint.

1. ENHANCED AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION & PERSONALIZATION

AI has allowed us to revolutionize how we approach audience segmentation. By analyzing vast datasets, we can now identify and target specific customer segments with unparalleled precision. This ensures that our messaging speaks directly to the needs and preferences of each group. One of our proudest AI-driven initiatives was creating personalized video messages featuring RCB stars like Virat Kohli. These videos were tailored for dealer-distributors, adding a personal touch to our communications and strengthening brand loyalty. AI's ability to customize interactions has been invaluable in fostering deeper relationships with both B2B and B2C audiences.

2. PREDICTIVE ANALYTICS FOR SMARTER CAMPAIGNS

Predictive analytics is at the heart of our AI-powered marketing strategies. By analyzing historical data, AI enables us to predict customer behaviors, from purchase likelihood to preferred engagement channels. This has allowed us to make data-backed decisions about where to invest our marketing resources. Whether it's optimizing ad spend or identifying high-value leads, AI-driven insights have sharpened our mid-funnel strategies, ensuring we deliver the right message at the right time to the right audience.

3. AUTOMATION TO DRIVE EFFICIENCY

Efficiency is a key focus at KEI, and AI-powered automation plays a critical role in that. We've implemented AI across several processes, from automating email campaigns to streamlining social media posts. This not only frees up valuable time for our team to focus on more strategic initiatives but also ensures our marketing activities are consistent and responsive to real-time customer behavior. For example, automated workflows help us nurture leads through the funnel, ensuring timely follow-ups and interactions that keep prospects engaged.

4. AI-DRIVEN CONTENT CREATION & OPTIMIZATION

Content remains central to any marketing strategy, and AI helps us ensure it is always relevant and optimized for performance. By analyzing how different content formats and messages perform, AI allows us to refine and improve our output. This has been especially crucial during the consideration and decision stages of the funnel, where content needs to align closely with user intent. At KEI, we've seen significant improvements in engagement and conversion by utilizing AI tools to optimize everything from social media posts to product videos.

CONCLUSION

AI is no longer a futuristic concept it's a critical component of how we approach full-funnel marketing at KEI Industries. By leveraging AI for audience segmentation, predictive analytics, automation, and content optimization, we've been able to create more efficient and engaging campaigns that drive real results. As AI continues to evolve, I believe it will further revolutionize how marketers connect with consumers, and at KEI, we're committed to staying ahead of the curve in harnessing this technology for business growth.
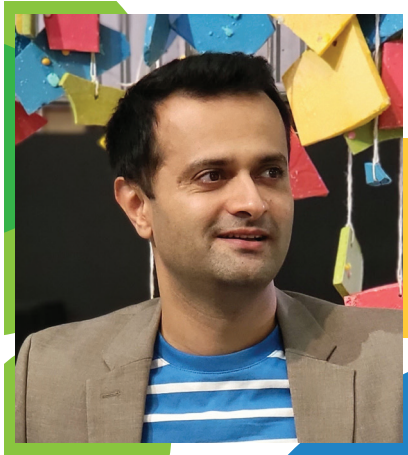
Jaydeep Deshpande
Head of Enterprise Marketing
Google Cloud & Google Workspace

AI-POWERED STRATEGIES FOR FULL FUNNEL MARKETING

The traditional marketing funnel has been a guiding principle for marketers for decades. However, in today's digitally-driven world, customer journeys are more complex and less linear. This is where AI steps in, offering powerful tools to personalize and optimize every stage of the funnel, from awareness to advocacy; from consumption drivers to creation owners.

Let me try and explain this via the inverted pyramid/ funnel that we all marketers understand and know best:

AI-POWERED TOP OF FUNNEL (TOFU) STRATEGIES:

- **Content Creation and Optimization:** AI can analyze vast amounts of data to identify trending topics and keywords, helping marketers create relevant and engaging content that attracts their target audience. There are plenty of tools available that can even assist in generating high-quality copy, blog posts, and social media updates.

- **Targeted Advertising:** AI algorithms can analyze user data to identify potential customers who are most likely to be interested in a product or service. This allows marketers to create highly targeted ads that reach the right people at the right time on the right platforms.

- **Personalized Website Experiences:** AI can personalize website content and offers based on user behavior and preferences. This can improve engagement, reduce costs, and increase the likelihood of conversion.

AI-POWERED MIDDLE OF FUNNEL (MOFU) STRATEGIES:

- **Lead Scoring and Qualification:** AI can analyze lead data to predict the likelihood of conversion, allowing sales teams to prioritize their efforts on the most promising prospects.

- **Chatbots and Conversational AI:** AI-powered chatbots can engage with website visitors, answer questions, and provide personalized recommendations, nurturing leads and guiding them towards conversion.

- **Personalized Email Marketing:** AI can segment email lists and personalize email content based on individual preferences and behaviors, improving open rates and click-through rates.

AI-POWERED BOTTOM OF FUNNEL (BOFU) STRATEGIES:

- **Predictive Analytics for Sales Forecasting:** AI can analyze historical sales data and market trends to predict future sales performance, helping businesses optimize inventory and allocate resources effectively.

- **Personalized Product Recommendations:** AI can analyze customer data to recommend products that are most relevant to their needs and interests, increasing the likelihood of purchase and repeat business.

- **Dynamic Pricing and Promotions:** AI can adjust pricing and promotions in real-time based on demand, competitor pricing, and individual customer behavior, maximizing revenue and profitability.

LET ME QUANTIFY BY GIVING SOME CROSS-INDUSTRY EXAMPLES:

- Some of the **Retail companies** are using AI to personalize product recommendations and offers, resulting in increased sales and customer loyalty.

- Some of the **Financial services companies** are using AI to detect fraudulent transactions and improve risk management.

- Some of the **Healthcare & Lifesciences companies** are using AI to personalize patient care and improve diagnostic accuracy.

- Some of the **Travel companies** are using AI to predict flight prices and recommend the best travel deals.

By leveraging AI-powered strategies across the entire marketing funnel, businesses can create more personalized, engaging, and effective campaigns that drive conversions and build lasting customer relationships.

Manish Sridhar
Group Head - Marketing
Quess Corp Limited

AI-POWERED STRATEGIES FOR FULL FUNNEL MARKETING

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is revolutionizing the marketing landscape, ushering in a new era where adaptation and innovation are paramount for success. As marketers, it is essential to understand the profound impact of AI on our strategies and operations in order to remain competitive. One of the most significant contributions of AI to marketing is the ability to achieve deep personalization at every stage of the customer journey.

AI's role in marketing begins at the awareness stage, where it leverages large volumes of behavioral data to provide insights into individual customer needs and preferences. Understanding these nuances allows marketers to tailor their communications effectively. Whether customers are seeking discounts, durable products, or a seamless experience, AI empowers brands to deliver targeted messaging that resonates on a personal level. This enhanced targeting not only boosts engagement but also improves the overall effectiveness of marketing campaigns.

As customers begin to interact with a brand—using products or services—AI continues to play a crucial role in addressing changing consumer demands. By harnessing AI-driven insights, brands can dynamically adapt their strategies to accommodate evolving preferences. This agility is essential for maintaining customer satisfaction and loyalty, as it ensures that businesses are not only meeting but anticipating consumer needs.

Retaining customers is as important as acquiring them, and here, AI's impact is even more pronounced. It enables brands to implement effective cross-selling techniques and manage customer feedback adeptly. By analyzing customer behavior and preferences post-purchase, AI helps identify opportunities for additional sales and enhances the overall customer experience. When customers feel recognized and valued for their individual preferences, their loyalty deepens, ultimately increasing their lifetime value to the brand.

Furthermore, AI enhances the efficiency of responses to customer inquiries and concerns, ensuring timely and relevant interactions. This responsiveness is critical in today's fast-paced marketplace, where customer expectations continue to rise. Brands that can provide quick, personalized support are more likely to foster positive relationships with their customers.

In conclusion, integrating AI into marketing strategies is not merely advantageous—it is essential for thriving in an increasingly competitive environment. By utilizing AI to achieve personalization, brands can more effectively convey their stories, address customer needs, and build long-lasting relationships. As we look to the future, embracing AI at every stage of the marketing funnel will undoubtedly drive growth and success for businesses committed to innovation and customer-centricity.

Megha Agarwal
CMO
Table Space

THE MODERN DIGITAL MARKETING FUNNEL - MORE COMPLEX, EVOLVED CONSUMER AND HELLO AI

The digital marketing funnel has evolved into something far more intricate than it used to be. Once, the funnel was simple—customers would move from awareness to action in a fairly straightforward, linear path. But with today's complex digital ecosystem and more informed, demanding consumers, the game has changed completely. As marketers, we're dealing with multi-touchpoint journeys and a funnel that no longer plays by traditional rules.

On top of this, we now live in an omnichannel world where consumers expect seamless, cohesive experiences, whether engaging with your brand on social media, in-store, or through an email campaign. The challenge for marketers is ensuring all these touchpoints work together, delivering a unified experience no matter where or how the customer engages.

THE MULTI-TOUCHPOINT REALITY: Let's be real—consumers do not move through the funnel in a straight line anymore. They jump around. They may engage with your content today but decide to make a purchase weeks later after exploring every option out there. They may even revisit earlier stages of the funnel as their needs evolve or as new information comes to light. For example, someone may be ready to buy but get derailed by a negative review or a better offer from a competitor. This is where personalization becomes key—being able to meet them where they are in their journey and guiding them back to your brand.

THE SAVVY, INFORMED CONSUMER: Today's consumers are more informed than ever. They've got access to reviews, ratings, comparison tools, and more—often before they even land on your website. They've done their homework. They expect more from brands in terms of transparency, authenticity, and value. That means we're no longer just selling products—we're educating, engaging, and building trust. As CMOs, it is our job to ensure our marketing not only captures attention but also delivers meaningful, value-driven content throughout the entire funnel. This takes time, but it pays off through long-term loyalty and advocacy.

AI - THE GAME CHANGER: The good news is that we don't have to navigate this complexity alone. AI has become a crucial tool in managing these new, fragmented funnels. AI can help us analyze consumer behaviour across every touchpoint - real-time, so we can adjust our messaging and engagement strategies accordingly. It's not just about understanding where customers are in the journey—it's about anticipating their needs, predicting their actions, and personalizing their experience.

In this new era, the digital marketing funnel is more dynamic, more complex, and more exciting than ever. As CMOs, we need to embrace this complexity, leverage the right tools (hello, AI), and build authentic relationships with today's savvy consumers. The brands that can successfully navigate these multi-touchpoint journeys will be the ones that thrive. It is no longer a question of whether you are using AI, but how much and how well is AI integrated into your Marketing strategy?

Piush Srivastava
Head Marketing &
Corporate Communications
Fleetguard Filters Private Limited

AI-POWERED STRATEGIES FOR FULL FUNNEL MARKETING

The world is evolving with every passing day. With AI and ML strategies applied for full funnel marketing are largely data-driven and have high-speed accuracy of data for strategy and execution. Over the decade, we have seen a paradigm shift from conventional to electronic media engagement in all age groups across the geographies and economic strata of the populace. As a marketer exploring and exploiting this newer relatively cost-effective method for full funnel marketing is inevitable.

While marketing principles remain unaltered the tools have drastically changed. From targeting, messaging, lead generation, decision-making, influencer marketing, and customer relationship management the entire process would and could all be done speedily. The advantages marketers encash with data-driven campaigns and focused targeting have definitely generated quantifiable ROI's for campaign costs.

Presently, marketers have more data than we ever had in the history of marketing. Generative AI with ML has made the entire Customer relationship management cycle easier. Today our impetus is more on customer insights and focused groups for relevance. The rebound marketing and lead generation via the internet, the target group advertising, the lead generation, and primary customer support via chatbots have facilitated and helped marketers focus on better quality of content and reach.

However, as the AI revolution catches up, there is also a growing need to use technology with caution and responsibility. Marketers now have to be more concerned with following more ethical practices ensuring customer privacy is well protected. This is a golden phase where technology and marketing are growing stronger together ensuring it's a win-win situation for both customers and organizations. ■

Senthilkumar VG
Head Marketing & Branding
Bank of Baroda

AI-POWERED STRATEGIES FOR FULL FUNNEL MARKETING

The role of Artificial Intelligence in marketing funnel somewhat relates to that of a magnet to find needles in the huge heap of haystack. With digital transformations happening so fast, the quantum of needles and the size of the haystack have multiplied manifold. Organizations need to have a clear strategy, roadmap, and time bound actionable to harness the potential of AI for full funnel marketing.

According to my understanding of AI in marketing organization should devise their strategies on 4 pillars-

1) Infrastructure and capacity building - which should include your data management and retrieval systems, hardware, servers, and integrations including a detailed policy relating to organization goals and objectives for using AI in Marketing.

2) Hiring of specialized skilled resources and upgrading skills of existing resources. This part is most critical for the understanding of the latest developments in AI and best industry practices in executing AI strategies in marketing.

3) Identifying use cases in the marketing activities– This is essentially the operational part where different use cases need to be identified for getting insights into data, transactions, behaviors, responses, products, and services mapping with customer segments, pushing real time content to target audiences, developing Brand campaigns on Market insights and many more. Hence the analytical and creative minds need to have strong collaboration for getting the best use cases in marketing thereby driving efficiency in campaigns ultimately supplementing the efforts for a higher ROI. The objective of this pillar should be on improving the effectiveness of marketing campaigns and providing better customer experiences in real time.

4) The fourth pillar should form on the governance part. while there are exhaustive opportunities to harness AI in marketing, there are equally several risks associated with algorithms bias, exclusion of segments and many more. To mitigate this and to protect the reputation of the brand, Organization before jumping into the implementation of AI in Marketing should have a strong governance policy to carefully tread this opportunity. On the communication front to end customer, organization should deliver meaningful, relevant, and engaging content to the right set of targeted audience.

It is here that AI can take lead role in bringing together all the blocks while keep organization's Marketing and communication objective intact.

Another critical role that AI can play in marketing is on the digital part. Most successful campaigns bring home the positive trends and insights which reflects the behavior of consumer or target audience of a particular audience or product preferences with maturity models these trends can be effectively utilized for pitching the rightest communication to the target customers.

To conclude, the potential of AI magnet is immense and all we need to do is to traverse across the huge haystack to fetch the right needles we need.

Shamini Martin
VP, Marketing (CMO)
Trigent Software

HOW TO BUILD A WINNING FULL-FUNNEL MARKETING STRATEGY BY INFUSING AI

If you think B2B marketing is tough, just ask a B2B TECHmarketer. We're constantly balancing between in-house engineers and techies who often see marketing as a rather questionable role. Add to that the challenge of crafting "foolproof" strategies to engage potential tech buyers—on a tight budget and dealing with a sales cycle that moves at the speed of a sloth. Not exactly a walk in the park.

And then there's the marketing funnel. It's no longer the simple, one-directional path it used to be; now it's this intricate maze. Over my 23 years in marketing, I've seen many get stuck in the exploration loop, trying to crack it.

But here's the good news: it's 2024, the year of the Great GenAI Boom! We now have a plethora of AI tools for every marketing task. Sure, it can feel overwhelming at first. But if you know the tricks, AI can become our secret weapon to create a winning full-funnel marketing strategy.

TOFU - BUILDING AWARENESS AND ATTRACTION

Think back to a time when a marketing campaign really clicked. For me, it was when we used **Predictive Analytics** to forecast customer behavior, allowing us to target campaigns effectively. This alignment with real demand led to a 30% increase in leads in just one quarter.

Personalized Marketing also played a key role. We adapted website content in real time based on visitors' browsing history, enhancing user experience and maintaining a consistent omnichannel presence, which significantly boosted engagement metrics.

MOFU - NURTURING ENGAGEMENT AND CONSIDERATION

Once you've captured interest, nurturing leads is crucial. I recall using **Smart Chatbots** during a product launch; they engaged users in meaningful conversations and provided instant support, leading to higher lead generation and improved user satisfaction.

Alongside this, we implemented **Advanced Ad Targeting,** reaching not just a broad audience but the right one through precise audience segmentation. This data-driven strategy significantly boosted our ROI.

BOFU - DRIVING CONVERSION AND RETENTION

At the bottom of the funnel, the focus shifts to converting leads into loyal customers, where **AI-**

Assisted Content Creation became essential. It allowed us to quickly generate compelling marketing copy and optimize messaging based on performance metrics. This streamlined ideation meant less time brainstorming and more time executing.

For instance, by analyzing post-purchase interactions with AI, we developed tailored re-engagement strategies that significantly boosted retention rates—crucial in B2B marketing, where retaining customers is as valuable as acquiring them.

BEYOND THE FUNNEL: ELEVATING CUSTOMER LIFETIME VALUE

Let's go beyond conversion and focus on maximizing customer lifetime value. One effective approach is using AI to create personalized loyalty programs based on purchase history, making customers feel valued. Additionally, predictive analytics allows us to anticipate customer needs, enabling proactive service and fostering loyalty by reaching out just as they consider a repeat purchase.

CONCLUSION

As we embrace the future of marketing, AI is essential, not just a trend. My success mantra is to **build an innovation-first team** that explores the latest AI tools for better results. Encouraging experimentation fosters growth and a forward-thinking mindset. By empowering our teams with the right tools, we can create inspiring marketing strategies. As we approach 2025, remember: the future belongs to those who embrace innovation. Let's harness AI, fuel creativity, and shape the future of our industry together.

Sudhakar Rao

Director, Branding & Communications
ICFAI Group

AI-POWERED STRATEGIES FOR FULL FUNNEL MARKETING IN INDIAN HIGHER EDUCATION

The rise of artificial intelligence (AI) is transforming marketing across sectors, including higher education. Indian universities and educational institutions are adopting AI-powered strategies to optimize their full-funnel marketing efforts, enhancing engagement with prospective students from awareness to post-enrollment retention. Here's how AI is shaping the marketing landscape in Indian higher education.

TOP-OF-THE-FUNNEL: DRIVING AWARENESS

AI tools are revolutionizing the way institutions identify and engage prospective students. Leading private universities have adopted AI-driven chatbots to assist prospective students with inquiries 24/7, providing instant responses about admissions, courses, and campus life. This personalized, real-time engagement not only drives awareness but also creates an immediate connection with potential students. While some of the leading Govt. funded schools are yet to fully leverage AI for recruitment, many institutions are exploring AI-based programmatic advertising to strategically place ads across digital platforms, ensuring that their marketing efforts reach the right audience at the right time.

MIDDLE-OF-THE-FUNNEL: NURTURING PROSPECTS

AI plays a crucial role in nurturing student leads by delivering personalized content at the right time. Ed-tech platforms in India have already mastered AI-powered recommendation systems that tailor content to the learning needs of individual users. Similarly, Indian universities are beginning to explore AI to create customized content for prospective students. For example, AI tools can segment leads based on interests and engagement patterns, sending targeted emails, invitations to webinars, or offering virtual campus tours. This strategic personalization helps nurture leads through the consideration phase and improves the chances of conversion.

BOTTOM-OF-THE-FUNNEL: CONVERTING LEADS

Conversion is a critical stage in the full-funnel marketing process, and AI optimizes this by analyzing student behavior and providing insights for targeted follow-ups. Institutions like ICFAI are known to use AI-driven email marketing tools that track student interaction with marketing content, enabling dynamic follow-ups with personalized messages. Such AI strategies ensure that prospective students receive relevant information, ultimately increasing application-to-enrollment conversions.

POST-ENROLLMENT: RETENTION AND LOYALTY

AI also plays an essential role in post-enrollment retention. Universities like IIIT Hyderabad are exploring AI tools to track student performance and predict at-risk students who might drop out. By analyzing data, universities can intervene with personalized tutoring or support, ensuring better retention rates. AI-powered systems also assist in alumni engagement by providing tailored communications, much like how brands use AI to nurture customer loyalty.

In conclusion, AI-powered strategies are enhancing the entire marketing funnel in Indian higher education. From student recruitment to retention, AI is enabling institutions to engage students effectively, driving higher conversion rates and fostering long-term loyalty.

Tarun Devasia
CMO
Ramco Systems

THE MODERN DIGITAL MARKETING FUNNEL: NAVIGATING COMPLEXITY IN B2B ENTERPRISE SOFTWARE

In the world of B2B enterprise software, the modern digital marketing funnel has transformed into a complex, multi-touch ecosystem. Gone are the days of a predictable, linear journey from awareness to consideration to decision. Today's customers engage with brands across multiple channels, often looping between stages, and involving various decision-makers throughout the buying journey.

For Ramco Systems, this shift has redefined how we approach digital marketing. Our funnel is no longer a simple pathway but an integrated, omnichannel process driven by personalisation and data. More than 50% of our new pipeline additions to CRM come through digital marketing tactics, underscoring the vital role digital channels play in our success.

At the top of the funnel, we use a blend of content marketing, SEO, social media, PR and ads to capture potential leads. The goal here is to generate awareness and spark interest. Mid-funnel strategies involve nurturing these leads with educational, value-driven content like product guides, e-books, webinars, blogs and whitepapers. This content addresses specific pain points, positioning Ramco as a thought leader and trusted partner. When prospects reach the bottom of the funnel, their decision-making process becomes even more intricate. They need more than just product information -- they require proof. Case studies, customer testimonials, product demos and ROI calculators become essential tools for showcasing the real-world impact of our solutions.

It's important to note that in addition to the linear funnel activities we have listed, our offline efforts -such as event participation, partner collaborations, media relations, and analyst & influencer interactions - have also played a significant role in shaping the digital journey. Some of our marquee customers closed this year, while initially sourced through digital channels, experienced multiple touchpoints along the way, including industry events, webinars and influencer engagements. In the B2B space, today's customer is not a single individual but a strategic team that scouts across channels before making a decision.

Another effective strategy we have employed is intent monitoring, capturing signals from software review platforms, sales intelligence and CRM systems to understand where prospects are in their buying journey. These insights help us create timely and relevant content that guides them toward making informed decisions.

Technology plays a crucial role in scaling our digital marketing efforts. We continuously explore and adopt new MarTech tools to enhance our capabilities and optimise our processes. Through a 'test and learn' approach, we experiment with different strategies and technologies to identify what works best for our audience. By leveraging AI, automation and data analytics, we can personalise our communications, measure performance and make data-driven decisions.

But tools and technology alone aren't enough. Success depends on synergy. At Ramco, collaboration between sales, product and marketing teams is crucial. By aligning our efforts, we create a seamless experience for the customer, driving results that would be unattainable without this integrated approach.

In conclusion, the modern digital marketing funnel demands a holistic strategy -- one that embraces personalisation, technology and cross-functional collaboration to navigate today's complex B2B landscape effectively.

Vignesh Murali
SVP & Head Brand, Marketing &
Corporate Communication
Equitas Small Finance Bank

AI-POWERED STRATEGIES FOR FULL FUNNEL MARKETING

In today's rapidly evolving digital landscape, the modern marketing funnel in banking has transformed into a dynamic and customer-centric model. As a Chief Marketing Officer, driving growth through strategic campaigns requires understanding this nuanced funnel and leveraging data-driven insights to engage customers at every touchpoint. This funnel isn't just about conversions—it's about building long-term relationships and creating meaningful experiences that resonate with customers.

Awareness forms the first stage, where potential customers are introduced to a bank's brand. Digital campaigns—whether through online ads, SEO, or social media—must focus on personalizing content that speaks directly to the needs and aspirations of the target audience. Crafting innovative and engaging content, like interactive videos or informative blogs, not only builds brand awareness but also fosters trust and sets the foundation for deeper engagement.

As we move into the **Interest** phase, the challenge is to capture the customer's attention and keep them engaged. Here, modern growth marketers can utilize advanced tools like retargeting ads and tailored email campaigns to address specific pain points. By showcasing the bank's unique value propositions— such as competitive loan rates or superior digital banking tools— marketers can guide customers toward exploring further.

Once customers show signs of **Consideration,** it's crucial to provide them with resources that empower decision-making. At this stage, offering detailed product comparisons, testimonials, and financial tools like calculators helps build confidence in the brand. Customers actively weighing their options are more likely to convert if they find easily accessible and credible information.

The **Intent** and **Evaluation** stages are where personalization and customer support play pivotal roles. Offering product demos, personalized consultations, or seamless application processes can significantly increase the likelihood of conversion. Ensuring that customers encounter minimal friction while applying for a product is essential to maintaining their interest.

Finally, post-conversion, the focus shifts to **Retention**. Today's digital customers expect ongoing value and personalized engagement. Loyalty programs, data-driven insights, and tailored communications are critical to keeping customers satisfied and encouraging further engagement, whether through upselling, cross-selling, or simply enhancing the overall experience.

By embracing this modern marketing funnel, Indian banks can enhance both customer acquisition and long-term retention, fostering deeper relationships and driving sustainable growth in the digital age.

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SUMMIT HIGHLIGHTS

Use of AI in Marketing:
Exploring New Frontiers

(L-R: Mr. Monil Hathi, Chief Marketing Officer, Befree | Mr. Jaydeep Deshpande, Head of Enterprise Marketing, Google Cloud & Google Workspace | Mr. Mukhesh Jain, Senior Director Sales, Dun & Bradstreet India | Ms. Manisha Kapoor, CEO & Secretary-General, The Advertising Standards Council of India | Mr. Govind Sharma, Chief Marketing Officer, KEI Industries Limited)

The panel discussion delved into how AI is reshaping brand communication and marketing strategies. Experts highlighted that AI allows brands to gain deeper insights into customer behaviour, enabling more personalized and targeted messaging. This is particularly impactful in B2B marketing, where hyper-personalization focuses on specific roles and departments, meeting the evolving consumer expectation for highly tailored content.

The panellists highlighted AI's ability to handle large volumes of data, process it quickly, and accommodate diverse sources enhances the efficiency and effectiveness of campaigns. However, the panellists underscored the importance of maintaining a human touch, recognizing that while AI accelerates processes, human intelligence and empathy are crucial to avoiding bias and ensuring authenticity. The ethical considerations of using AI, especially with technologies like deepfakes, were also discussed. While such innovations can enhance brand storytelling and engagement, they present potential legal and ethical challenges. Marketers must adhere to ethical guidelines, ensuring transparency and avoiding manipulative practices.

Ultimately, the discussion emphasized that while AI can augment creativity and streamline operations, the human element remains irreplaceable. Marketing professionals should focus on blending AI's capabilities with human insight to foster genuine connections and create forward-thinking, responsible brand strategies.

"

Mr. Mukhesh Jain, Senior Director Sales, Dun & Bradstreet India

No matter how limitless AI's capabilities may seem, as marketers, we recognize its limitations in understanding complex human emotions.

We must ensure that we always maintain control over the outcome we aim to achieve.

"

Mr. Monil Hathi, Chief Marketing Officer, Befree

In B2B content, one-to-one personalization plays a crucial role.

A bad creator will always remain a bad creator no matter how much AI you use.

"

Mr. Jaydeep Deshpande, Head of Enterprise Marketing, Google Cloud & Google Workspace

We as marketers are not competing with AI, but with marketers who are using AI.

Technology is no longer part of the strategy; it is the strategy.

Mr. Govind Sharma, Chief Marketing Officer, KEI Industries Limited

When it comes to innovation, as a marketer you have so many avenues.

If a person consistently relies on AI applications, their development of new skills and ideas could decrease by up to 40%.

Ms. Manisha Kapoor, CEO & Secretary-General, The Advertising Standards Council of India

In some way, customers expect customization.

As we talk of a more inclusive world, let's remember that our past world was not as inclusive.

Optimizing Content and Communication with Intelligent Technology

(L-R: Ms. Naina Acharya, Associate Director, Dun & Bradstreet India | Mr. Senthilkumar VG, Head Marketing & Branding, Bank of Baroda | Mr. Samar Kagalwalla, Head – Marketing, Growth & Partnerships, Onsurity | Mr. Argho Bhattacharya, Head Marketing, PayU India | Mr. Milind Tapaswi, Director - GTM Strategy & Marketing Operations, Tata Communications)

The panel discussion explored how AI and emerging technologies are transforming customer engagement and content personalization. Key themes included the role of AI-driven analytics in refining content strategies, such as crafting effective titles, utilizing keywords, and delivering valuable, tailored content based on customer behaviour. The transformative impact of Gen AI on personalized experiences was a focal point, with an emphasis on balancing personalization with privacy to ensure customer trust.

The discussion also highlighted the importance of tracking KPIs to evaluate the effectiveness of content strategies during the consideration phase. Conversational marketing was identified as a vital tool for building trust, with chatbots and real-time assistance playing a key role in personalizing interactions. The need for a seamless transition between automated responses and human support was emphasized to maintain a positive customer experience.

Additionally, the panel addressed retargeting strategies, emphasizing the role of customer feedback and AI-driven insights in refining outreach efforts. Metrics for gauging the success of retargeting campaigns, particularly in driving conversions, were also discussed. Overall, the conversation underscored the need for intelligent content strategies that combine AI and human insight, aligning with business goals and fostering meaningful customer engagement.

Ms. Naina Acharya, Associate Director, Dun & Bradstreet India

Marketing has evolved a lot along with the role of marketing leaders.

Strategy thinking was expected earlier, but it has now increased by 5-10X.

There is a constant fight for identifying which content is apt, when you can reuse it and how can you reposition it.

Mr. Milind Tapaswi, Director - GTM Strategy & Marketing Operations, Tata Communications

It's always important to understand who your audience is.

Always engage in a feedback loop to determine if what you release to the market is truly effective for you.

Mr. Senthilkumar VG, Head Marketing & Branding, Bank of Baroda

We need to integrate a high level of personalization into our communication channels, and that's where technology plays a role.

We have Gen AI powered internal knowledge portal which supports internal operations.

You can provide highly personalised content with help of technology.

Mr. Samar Kagalwalla, Head – Marketing, Growth & Partnerships, Onsurity

We have turned ROI to Return on Interactions rather than Return on Investments.

It is not always about digital mediums but also about offline events where AI can play a critical role.

Mr. Argho Bhattacharya, Head Marketing, PayU India

Investments in chatbot has gone up from 5 bn last year to 7 bn this year, and predicted to reach 15 bn in 2028.

Chatbots are conversational commerce instruments.

When you are buying technology solution, you have to deal with it as you deal with humans.

Have an agile outlook.

Video Bites of Eminent Speakers

Mr. Shubhranshu Singh, Chief Marketing Officer, Tata Motors Commercial Vehicles

I think the emergence of AI is brilliant thing for marketing

While there will be excitement surrounding AI, the core reason for a brand's existence lies in the promise it holds as a trust symbol. As synthetic media becomes more prevalent, with indistinguishable replicas of content, the source of that content—whether it's the individual, company, or institution behind the brand—will become increasingly critical. Trust in the brand will carry even more weight in the future. As marketers, we still have the power to choose how to leverage AI, identifying meaningful use cases that create value and enhance our efforts.

Ms. Manisha Kapoor, CEO & Secretary-General, The Advertising Standards Council of India

With technology there are new challenges and opportunities that marketers are seeking.

From an advertising standards perspective, it's essential to seize new opportunities without compromising consumer protection or confidence. The online space is crucial, and consumers must feel both valued and safe when engaging with it. Emerging technologies should strike a balance between leveraging the opportunities the internet provides while ensuring consumer safety. With advancing technology, the power dynamic between service providers and consumers is increasingly tilted in favor of advertisers and marketers, which makes safeguarding consumers even more important.

Video Bites of Eminent Speakers

Mr. Govind Sharma, Chief Marketing Officer, KEI Industries Limited

AI has certain solutions through which you can become more productive.

New-generation AI technologies are transforming daily marketing operations. With a wide range of tools available, the rise of AI is accelerating, making it more crucial than ever for marketers to understand its impact. AI has significantly disrupted traditional marketing methods, especially in the last two years, where its buzz has grown substantially. It now provides real-time solutions that marketers once relied on agencies for, such as generating content, developing strategies, and targeting consumers. AI is freeing up valuable time by performing these tasks more efficiently and in a shorter time frame.

Mr. Argho Bhattacharya, Head Marketing, PayU India

How much personalisation is too much personalization?

AI development has advanced significantly over the past 2.5 years, with focus on three key areas. Initially, AI was used for basic product and content listing, then progressed to generative AI for personalization and sentiment analysis. In the future, AI is likely to create and curate entire experiences. For example, Spotify uses machine learning to generate personalized playlists and make recommendations based on past behaviour. However, it's crucial to remain aware of associated risks, particularly data privacy concerns.

Video Bites of Eminent Speakers

Mr. Milind Tapaswi, Director - GTM Strategy & Marketing Operations, Tata Communications

Over a period of time, try and rotate your marketing experience.

The emerging trend in marketing is the deeper integration of AI-based solutions. Businesses now expect marketing to not only generate leads but also take responsibility for converting them into wins. In B2B marketing, the days of simply passing leads along are over; companies demand more value for their marketing spend. However, the growing reliance on AI comes with risks, such as potential errors or hallucinations in communication, which highlights the need for human oversight. AI isn't a plug-and-play solution—human involvement is essential to ensure accuracy and effectiveness.

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MARKETING MAVERICKS 2024

MARKETING MAVERICKS 20 24

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1	Anjali Gupta	Head of Marketing, Sify Technologies Limited
2	Anoop K Melethil	Vice President & Head of Marketing, Maveric Systems
3	Arnav Sharma	Head - Global Strategic Marketing Programs & CEO Comms, Tech Mahindra Limited
4	Arvind Saxena	Head - Marketing Centre of Excellence (MCoE) - Global Smart Cities & CMO, NEC Corporation India
5	Charandeep Singh	CMO & Head - CX, TVS Credit Services Limited
6	Govind Sharma	CMO, KEI Industries Limited
7	Manish Sridhar	Group Head - Marketing, Quess Corp Limited
8	Megha Agarwal	CMO, Table Space
9	Naved Chaudhary	Head - Marketing & PR, Ingram Micro India , Ingram Micro India Private Limited
10	Nitu Sharma	Head of Marketing India, Iron Mountain India
11	Nupur Singh	Head - Marketing & PR, Moglix
12	Piush Srivastava	Head Marketing & Corporate Communications , Fleetguard Filters Private Limited

MARKETING MAVERICKS 20 24

Sr No	Name	Designation & Company
13	Praveen Rao	Director – Marketing, SAP India Private Limited
14	Pulak Sarmah	Executive Vice President & Head - Marketing, Zurich Kotak General Insurance
15	Sachin Vashishtha	CMO, Paisabazaar
16	Samar Kagalwalla	Head - Marketing, Growth & Partnerships, Onsurity
17	Sanchita Johri	Head of Media, CRM, eCom Marketing and CX, Abbott India Limited
18	Saurabh Panday	Head of Marketing, Commercial Business, HP India Sales Private Limited
19	Senthilkumar VG	Head Marketing & Branding, Bank of Baroda
20	Shamini Martin	VP, Marketing (CMO), Trigent Software
21	Sudhakar Rao	Director, Branding & Communications, ICFAI Group
22	Tarun Devasia	CMO, Ramco Systems
23	Vignesh Murali	SVP & Head Brand, Marketing & Corporate Communication , Equitas Small Finance Bank

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PROFILES OF
MARKETING MAVERICKS 2024

ANJALI GUPTA

Head of Marketing
Sify Technologies Limited

" My success mantra as a marketing leader is rooted in leading by example, working hard, and empowering my team. I believe in walking the talk, showing up with integrity, and rolling up my sleeves to collaborate directly with my team, ensuring we deliver results together.

Empathy drives my leadership approach, helping me understand the team's needs and challenges while guiding them to make the right decisions. Continuous learning is at the heart of my growth, fuelling my passion for innovation and excellence. By fostering trust and ownership, I strive to build a culture of shared success and resilience wherever I am. "

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ANOOP K MELETHIL

Vice President & Head of Marketing
Maveric Systems

"

I feel effective marketing hinges on three key elements: analysis, agility, and adaptability. An outcome-driven mindset grounded in data analysis across marketing initiatives and channels helps marketers to have an impartial view when allocating resources within their marketing mix and phasing out ineffective campaigns or programs. Agility is crucial, allowing marketers to change gears seamlessly based on real-time performance of channels, initiatives, and content. Adaptability enables marketers to respond decisively to shifting market dynamics. Embracing adaptability not only enhances responsiveness but also drives a culture of innovation, inspiring teams to experiment with new ideas and approaches.

"

ARNAV SHARMA

Head - Global Strategic Marketing Programs & CEO Comms
Tech Mahindra Limited

66

As a marketer, I believe that apples were falling even before Newton was born; creative ideas are everywhere—you just need a keen eye. Your passion for the field of operations you choose is the key to fuel your journey, and your desire to succeed will continue to pave your way forward. As a leader, you can always hone your skills and capabilities with a learning mindset. Build personal resilience and consider failures as only pitstops on the road to success. Lastly, always be kind and take everyone along; the good you share will always come back.

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ARVIND SAXENA

Head - Marketing Centre of Excellence (MCoE) - Global Smart Cities & CMO
NEC Corporation India

"My success mantra stems from my values and beliefs, what we practice every day as individuals, becomes our management mantra as professionals. *कोशिश करने वालों की कभी हार नहीं होती...*"—the famous poem by Shri Harivansh Rai Bachchan has been my true north star throughout my personal and professional journey. Translated, it means that success comes to those who persist, which embodies my approach of taking complete ownership and maintaining a 'never say no' attitude. My creativity stems from the phrase "destroy to create" reflecting the constant transformation and renewal needed to create something new each day—often known as a 'marketer's curse.' With a career spent marketing complex business and technology, I aim to distil these ideas into clear and simple messages that anyone—from school kids to grandparents can easily comprehend the story of impact. *"जाति न पूछो साधु की, पूछ लीजिये ज्ञान..."* a doha by Sant Kabir highlights the importance of curiosity and continuous learning.

CHARANDEEP SINGH

CMO & Head - CX
TVS Credit Services Limited

" As a marketeer, I believe that success lies in listening to your customer, keeping your ears to the ground, and always understanding the voice of the customer. To be successful, it's essential to avoid procrastination and tackle challenging work head-on.This disciplined approach not only shapes a strong work ethic but also cultivates long-term success and growth. "

GOVIND SHARMA

CMO
KEI Industries Limited

" Always lead with purpose, blending innovation with strategy to create impactful results across the brand funnel—from awareness to conversion. Success lies in understanding the pulse of the customer, quickly adapting, and using data-driven insights to drive brand growth. By leveraging AI and next-gen technologies, brands can deliver personalized experiences at every stage of the funnel, fostering long-term brand love. Stay focused on offering exceptional value through an omnichannel presence, empowering teams to innovate while balancing business objectives with social responsibility. Real growth happens when you create meaningful connection whether through a brand, partnerships, or community initiatives. Be bold, stay agile, and continuously strive for excellence with integrity. "

MANISH SRIDHAR

Group Head - Marketing
Quess Corp Limited

" My success mantra has been about setting a clear goal and making bold decisions, even when they pushed me beyond my comfort zone. In addition to having a strong sense of purpose, three key factors have driven my growth. First, I embraced challenges that others often avoided. Second, staying with an organization for a significant period allowed me to build deep business acumen. Finally, having a great mentor has been instrumental in guiding me to evolve into a better version of myself. These principles have been the foundation of my professional journey. "

MEGHA AGARWAL

CMO
Table Space

> My success mantra is rooted in the firm belief that marketing serves as a growth engine, rather than merely a cost function. With 16 years of experience across various marketing roles, I emphasize a balanced approach combining long-term brand building with immediate business impact. My strategy focuses on data-driven solutions, innovative thinking, and client-centric engagement. Effective marketing should deliver measurable ROI, driven by strategic vision that continuously propels brand transformation, elevating and expanding businesses to new heights.

NAVED CHAUDHARY

Head - Marketing & PR, Ingram Micro India
Ingram Micro India Private Limited

" The fast-paced digital era makes it an absolute necessity for Marketers to think beyond the usual to achieve success. Besides driving innovation and adaptability, marketers must competently leverage cutting-edge digital technologies to enhance customer experience and maximize the returns on marketing investments. That's why, I focus on embracing an integrated, data-driven marketing approach that can cater to the evolving needs of the target customers. Moreover, it can help you forge stronger bonds with your new-age customers through personalized, meaningful, and value-based conversations. "

NITU SHARMA

Head of Marketing India
Iron Mountain India

The success mantra in marketing hinges on the synergy of innovation, strategy, and data-driven decision-making, with a laser-sharp focus on brand purpose, sustainability, and the customer experience. With over 16 years of B2B marketing experience in the Tech/IT sector, a balance of traditional and innovative techniques must be prioritized to drive business growth. Leading high-performing teams and executing multi-channel strategies are crucial for achieving significant revenue gains, especially as the industry sits at a tipping point.

> Data analytics must be embraced to fine-tune marketing initiatives, ensuring they resonate with target audiences. By nurturing customer relationships and strategically positioning brands, lasting impacts can be created that deliver outsized results, demonstrating that effective marketing is both an art and a science. This multifaceted approach not only meets immediate business needs but also prepares for future challenges, reflecting a deep understanding of the market dynamics.

NUPUR SINGH

Head - Marketing & PR
Moglix

" Success is the relentless pursuit of purpose. It involves pushing boundaries and creating a lasting impact. I've learned that every new responsibility brings evolving expectations. The key is to adapt, continuously maximize value, and celebrate each milestone along the way. Your journey is not a sprint—it's a marathon, and the belief in yourself is the fuel to move ahead. My mantra? No idea is small. Speak up, take the lead, and go for it. It's this boldness that drives lasting success and turns vision into reality. "

PIUSH SRIVASTAVA

Head Marketing & Corporate Communications
Fleetguard Filters Private Limited

With 19+ years of experience, Piush possesses the expertise in designing dynamic marketing campaigns that are evolving with changing technology.

At the heart of everything we do is the customer. Every strategy and every initiative is crafted with the customer as the focal point, ensuring that their needs are seamlessly catered to and aligned with our business objectives.

Success comes not from chasing a wish list but from solving real, specific problems. Understanding the root cause of any issue is fundamental in building solutions that truly add value. Diving into the why of things provides deeper insight than simply knowing what or how of things. This thoughtful approach ensures we create meaningful solutions that resonate with customers and drive long-term value.

PRAVEEN RAO

Director – Marketing
SAP India Private Limited

" I have been and continue to be a
marketing practitioner and learner for
life. I have been at the forefront of driving
integrated marketing campaigns for various
brands irrespective of my positions and
organizations, giving me an opportunity to
continuously upgrade my skills. "

PULAK SARMAH

Executive Vice President & Head - Marketing
Zurich Kotak General Insurance

"

Marketing is a lot about ideas and turning these ideas into strategy and execution. And ideas can come from anywhere – be it a colleague, co-worker or an external inspiration. For me, this has worked really well as I like to listen, keep my ears close to the ground and observe whatever is happening around. Thank you D&B team for providing me with this opportunity to share my thoughts with a larger audience.

"

SACHIN VASHISHTHA

CMO
Paisabazaar

" Mr. Sachin Vashishtha is a seasoned marketing professional with a wealth of experience in digital marketing. He helped build Paisabazaar as one of India's most popular consumers fintech brands. He leveraged data intelligence built over marketing for personalized and integrated lending solutions and has won several prestigious awards. "

SAMAR KAGALWALLA

Head - Marketing, Growth & Partnerships
Onsurity

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As a marketer, I believe numbers tell the story, but emotions create the legacy. While AI and automation shape the future, the true differentiator lies in understanding the emotional pulse of our audience. Observations, attention to detail, and the ability to visualize beyond data will always be essential. In an increasingly automated world, these human elements remain irreplaceable. In the future, marketers must humanize technology—blending innovation with empathy to build brands that foster genuine connections, inspire loyalty, and stand the test of time. It's about creating experiences that resonate beyond the metrics.

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SANCHITA JOHRI

Head of Media, CRM, eCom Marketing and CX
Abbott India Limited

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I've been a part of the industry from so long, having worked my way up through the ranks by always having an open mind and an innate ability to learn. They say that the illiterate of the 21st century isn't going to be someone who cannot read or write, but someone who cannot learn, unlearn and relearn and that's exactly what I have strived to do.

"

SAURABH PANDAY

Head of Marketing, Commercial Business
HP India Sales Private Limited

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With many years of experience in marketing, I've successfully led initiatives that significantly enhanced brand presence and demand generation across various sectors. My leadership in the "Work Happy" campaign repositioned HP as a leading technology partner for the hybrid work era, boosting brand relevance and market share. The key to success is having a strategic approach to marketing, a focus on impactful demand creation, and a consistent track record of delivering tangible results.

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SENTHILKUMAR VG

Head Marketing & Branding
Bank of Baroda

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Happiness is a reflection of our personal definitions of success, which are inherently subjective and relative. I believe that true success and happiness can never be achieved alone and I cherish this journey of marketing where relationships are inevitable . The diverse experiences I encounter continuously elevate my goals and create new opportunities , setting higher benchmarks, milestones and new borders to touch. In marketing, creativity, innovation, passion along with integrity will always stand out in a competitive landscape where imitation is so common.

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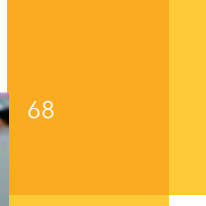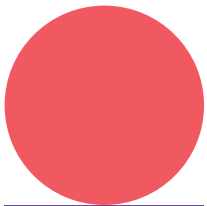
SHAMINI MARTIN

VP, Marketing (CMO)
Trigent Software

66 Marketing is ever-evolving—what worked six months ago may not work today. So my success mantra? Build a strategy rooted in business outcomes, embrace the latest trends like AI, and keep the customer at the heart of everything. At Trigent, I focus on building a high-performing team and encourage them to continuously innovate and push boundaries. As Steve Jobs said, 'The people who are crazy enough to think they can change the world are the ones who do. 99

SUDHAKAR RAO

Director, Branding & Communications
ICFAI Group

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My success mantra is grounded in blending creativity with data-driven insights, especially in the education sector where shaping futures is the ultimate goal. I focus on crafting innovative strategies backed by strong customer insight and authentic storytelling, ensuring that brands resonate deeply with students, educators, and stakeholders. With experience across sectors like clothing, food, pharma, and education, I value diversity of thought and collaboration to drive meaningful engagement and trust. Embracing new technologies like AI, while staying rooted in human behavior, allows me to create campaigns that not only deliver results but also contribute to transforming education.

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TARUN DEVASIA

CMO
Ramco Systems

> My Marketing Mantra: Adapting, Innovating & Punching Above our Weight
>
> Over the years, I've seen marketing evolve from a tactical function to a strategic business driver, and I've always believed in punching above our weight. For me, it starts with a performance-oriented marketing team aligned with the company's goals, backed by the right talent and a powerful Martech stack. The focus is always on business results while treating marketing as both an art and a science -- balancing intuition with data. My team is empowered to experiment & follow a test-and-learn approach, continuously refining strategies to discover new opportunities. This approach has been invaluable in driving impactful marketing outcomes.

VIGNESH MURALI

SVP & Head Brand, Marketing & Corporate Communication
Equitas Small Finance Bank

" To thrive in today's fast-paced environment, marketers must be flexible, adaptive, and innovative. As customer behavior evolves with emerging technologies, it's essential to adopt a data-driven approach that aligns with the company's DNA. By leveraging data and understanding these dynamics, marketers can effectively integrate AI and machine learning into smart-tech platforms, delivering personalized and impactful customer experiences. Data will be the ultimate tool for crafting solutions that blend technology with customer needs, allowing marketers to create scalable strategies for success in the ever-evolving digital landscape. "

METHODOLOGY FOR SELECTING THE MARKETING MAVERICKS 2024

Through comprehensive research process, parameters were identified against which senior marketing leaders were evaluated. These are listed below:

Eligibility Criteria:

- The Nominee must have at least 10 years of experience in Marketing Field
- The Nominee must have at least 2 years of experience as CMO or Equivalent Senior Most Marketing Leader
- The Company where the nominee is currently employed must have a turnover of greater than INR 50 Crores as per the latest standalone financial statement.

Nomination Shortlisting:

- Inviting nominees (via E-mail, Microsite, Social Media)
- Objective Eligibility Check of the Applications
- Initial Shortlisting based on Dun & Bradstreet Proprietary Model

Final selection of the Marketing Mavericks was based on the following consideration:

- Current role and responsibilities
- Significant accomplishments achieved and impactful contributions made to the field of marketing during their tenure as a senior marketing leader
- Case of excellence submitted for being recognized as a Marketing Maverick

D&B ESG Intelligence

D&B ESG Intelligence delivers data and analytics built from the Dun & Bradstreet Data Cloud and established sustainability standards to help companies quantify and assess the impact of their business partners' sustainability rankings to their companies' performance. This true and trusted source of ESG data enables compliance and procurement teams to generate insights that help strengthen their ESG goals and policies, and streamline ESG assessment processes.

PLATFORMS

➢ D&B Risk Analytics ESG Module

SOLUTIONS

➢ ESG Self-Assessment

➢ ESG Report

➢ ESG Registered Solutions