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# MASTERING THE DIGITAL BRAND

DO BUSINESS BETTER



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# INTRODUCTION





In today's crowded marketplace, companies cannot afford to stand still when it comes to their digital presence. As digital and mobile technologies increasingly become a part of everyday life for consumers, the importance of developing a digital brand has never been greater, and there has been a forced shift in emphasis from traditional towards digital marketing.

Potential customers are instinctively using digital and social media channels to access readily available information that enables them to form opinions about solutions to the problems they face. Research from the Corporate Executive Board found that, on average, customers progress nearly 60% of the way through the purchase decision-making process before engaging directly with a brand through a sales representative<sup>1</sup>.

“The question for marketers today is how do you start engaging your target audience within that 0-60% phase through the channels you are using?” explains Josh Graff, Senior Director of Marketing Solutions for Europe, the Middle East and Africa at LinkedIn.

The majority of companies today are awake to this need. According to the CMO Council, in the three years

up to August 2012, two out of three marketers moved at least 30% of their budgets from traditional to digital media<sup>2</sup>. Meanwhile, a study by the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth last year found that 95% of America's 500 fastest growing private companies were using at least one of the nine popular social media tools they were asked about<sup>3</sup>. There has also been a stratospheric rise in content marketing in the last few years: more than 92% of marketers now incorporate this into their digital marketing strategies<sup>4</sup>.

Yet as businesses start allocating more resources to digital, they must establish exactly what they want to achieve. They must also work out how to measure their progress in a meaningful way, if they are to achieve concrete results. According to our survey, only 20% of companies currently view themselves as leading digital marketers. The aim of mastering the digital brand is to assess the key areas where companies must focus their efforts in order to improve the impact of their digital marketing, and to offer insights that will help them create more effective strategies for the future.

<sup>1</sup> The Digital Evolution in B2B Marketing, 2012 <http://www.executiveboard.com/exbd-resources/content/digital-evolution/pdf/Digital-Evolution-in-B2B-Marketing.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> CMO Council – Marketing Spend, August 2012 <http://www.cmocouncil.org/facts-stats-categories.php?view=all&category=marketing-spend>

<sup>3</sup> LinkedIn rules but sales potential may lie with Twitter: The 2013 Inc. 500 and social media, UMass Dartmouth, October 2013 <http://www.umassd.edu/cmr/socialmediaresearch/2013inc500/>

<sup>4</sup> Online Content Marketing in 2014: 5 Big Shifts in Store, Content Marketing Institute, January 2014 <http://contentmarketinginstitute.com/2014/01/online-content-marketing-2014-big-shifts/>



# DIGITAL MARKETING **PRIORITIES**



The top digital marketing objective of those companies polled for this study, cited by 76% of respondents, is to increase brand visibility and reach. Given the explosive growth in online sales for many companies over the last few years, this is perhaps unsurprising. For instance, during 2014, it is projected that B2C e-commerce sales will reach \$1.5 trillion, driven by rapidly expanding online and mobile user bases in emerging markets, among other things<sup>5</sup>. For some brands, the first exposure they may gain to some emerging market consumers could be via a digital channel. In this context, building a strong digital brand is vital.

In a recent Wipro survey looking at consumer goods leaders in digital marketing, 76% of transformative companies said that optimizing the consumer experience was their top digital marketing priority<sup>6</sup>. This feeling is echoed by Mayur Gupta, Kimberly-Clark's Global Head of

Refer chart No.1

Marketing Technology and Innovation, who says his company's primary digital ambitions center on creating a universal view of consumers that will help them to develop a seamless brand experience.

This involves tapping into data relating to consumer behavior in real time, or just in time, using it to identify what's most relevant, contextual and valuable for consumers. "The focus is on a shift towards big testing and big learning as opposed to 'big data'. This includes establishing a model where we are constantly testing and optimizing the consumer experience that inspires the desired consumer engagement and behavior. Fundamentally, it is based on a mind set that considers our users as 'people' and not just as 'targets' or 'audiences' which usually results in a one-sided relationship," Mr Gupta explains.

# WHAT IS THE OBJECTIVE OF YOUR **DIGITAL MARKETING STRATEGY?** SELECT TOP 3 OBJECTIVES.

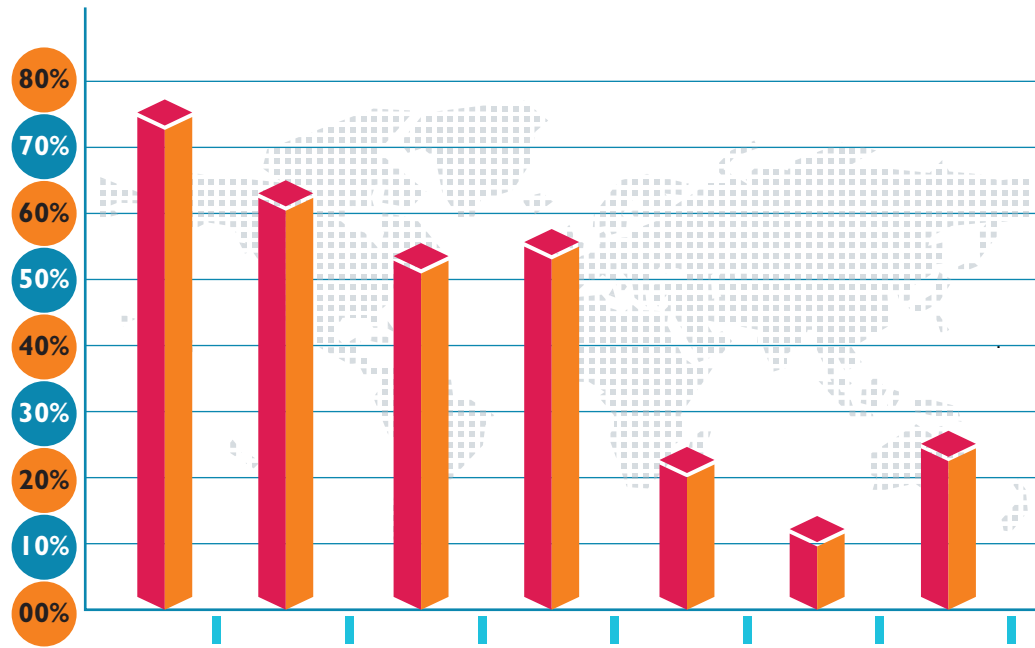


Chart No.1



Increase visibility and reach



Establish a strong brand presence



Drive lead generation



Increase customer engagement and conversion rates



Improve customer service by ease of access



Improve customer satisfaction by faster response times



Enhance market positioning



**Our survey also found that content marketing (47%) and social media engagement (42%) are key priorities.**

LinkedIn's Mr Graff says that brands must focus on making their content more relevant to consumers and on increasing transparency around the content they produce if they are to maintain brand authenticity, not least given how much content is being generated. "Brands must understand the critical nature of the context in which they share their content," he says. "Content may be king but I think that context is the king-maker – brands must establish an accurate definition of their target audience and understand which channels and which platforms that audience is using."

Meanwhile, though 53% of marketers will focus their digital strategy on increasing customer engagement and conversion rates, and 52% will focus on driving lead generation, it is surprising that these figures are not higher. Two key benefits that digital marketing offers is its ability to encourage clients to take direct action, and to boost real time conversion rates .These are also key factors in the ability to measure return on investment (ROI). As the marketing function becomes more digitally mature, greater emphasis will need to be given to these objectives.

**Two key benefits that digital marketing offers is its ability to encourage clients to take direct action, and to boost real time conversion rates .**



5 Global B2C e-commerce sales to hit \$1.5 trillion this year driven by growth in emerging markets, eMarketer, February 2014  
<http://www.emarketer.com/Article/Global-B2C-Ecommerce-Sales-Hit-15-Trillion-This-Year-Driven-by-Growth-Emerging-Markets/1010575>

6 Consumer Goods Transformation, Wipro <http://www.wipro.com/microsite/consumer-goods-transformation/>





**A CHALLENGING** ROAD AHEAD

Companies are desperately seeking ways to increase their sophistication in how they monitor ROI, given the huge benefits this brings in better targeting their marketing spend, and proving which strategies are most effective. Accordingly, capturing digital marketing ROI is the top challenge reported by our respondents, with 44% expressing concern about their ability to measure this in an accurate and meaningful way. At the same time, this highlights the lack of maturity in digital marketing today, given that measurability is one of the key advantages that digital approaches offer.

**WHAT ARE THE TOP THREE DIGITAL MARKETING CHALLENGES FACING YOUR ORGANIZATION TODAY?  
PLEASE SELECT THE TOP 3 CHALLENGES.**

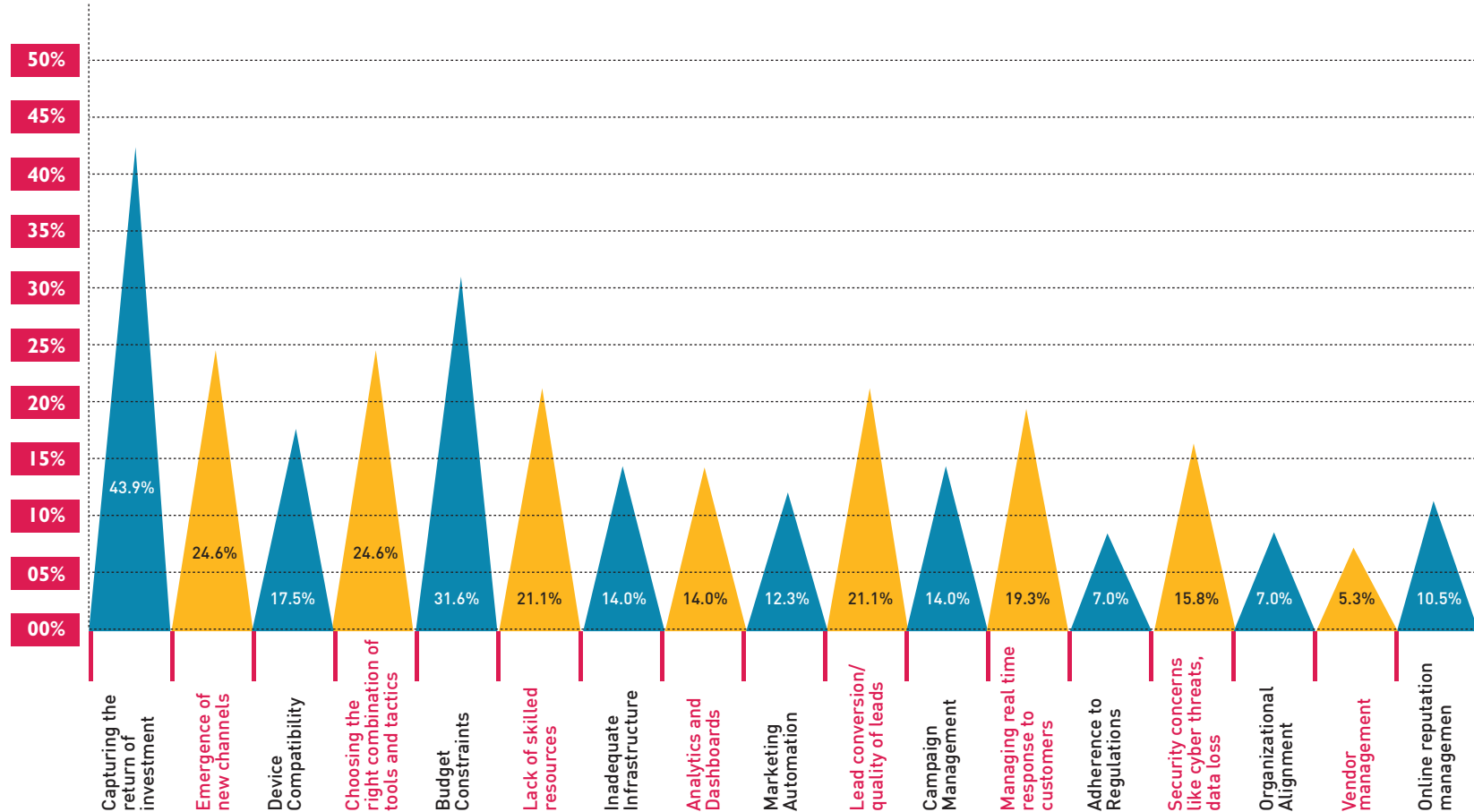


Chart No.2

*ACCORDING TO OUR  
SURVEY, JUST 23% OF  
RESPONDENTS ARE  
CURRENTLY OUTSOURCING  
MORE THAN ONE-QUARTER  
OF THEIR ANALYTICS  
EFFORTS, SUGGESTING THIS  
IS AN UNDERVALUED  
RESOURCE.*

How then to resolve this? Part of the solution involves an evolution in the talent base of the marketing function and in the perception of its role. “The modern marketer is pi-shaped or multi-pi shaped and no longer the traditional ‘T’ shaped thinker; he is a technologist, a data analyst, a storyteller who is creative and strategic as well as someone who understands the basics of finance and can ultimately drive category growth,” argues Kimberly-Clark’s Mr Gupta. “I think that’s a reasonably dramatic shift not just in the expectations and definition of a modern marketer but in the role that technology plays within marketing. I often say that technology is now the interface of marketing; in fact, technology is the new experience.”

That said, there are several new and evolving methods for improving the measurement of ROI that companies can explore too, such as social media gross rating points (GRPs) – a metric based on the number and reach of company-related postings across social media. This is an area that Kimberly-Clark is investigating. “We are definitely

looking at different kinds of attribution, marketing mix and digital marketing mix models which not only help us in measuring ROI across the spectrum but also in maximizing it almost real time,” explains Mr Gupta. “We have very consciously identified that as the key initiative and are working closely with our retail partners, data and analytics providers.” He also notes that a number of new companies are springing up to specialize in helping larger companies measure ROI. According to our survey, just 23% of respondents are currently outsourcing more than one-quarter of their analytics efforts, suggesting this is an undervalued resource. “A number of startups are coming up with new attribution models and statistical machine-based learning that are looking at market share data, looking at the impact of online to offline sales, cross-channel attribution and other areas that help you in pro-actively optimizing your marketing spend; the industry is definitely maturing fast in the space, making marketing more and more accountable,” says Mr Gupta.

**Part of the solution involves an evolution in the talent base of the marketing function and in the perception of its role.**



A low-angle, blue-tinted photograph of two men in business suits shaking hands in front of a large, multi-paned window. The window looks out onto a city street with buildings. The men are silhouetted against the bright light coming through the window. The overall mood is professional and positive.

# HOW LINKEDIN IS HELPING TO SOLVE THE **ROI CHALLENGE**

## **How LinkedIn is helping to solve the ROI challenge?**

Josh Graff, LinkedIn's Senior Director of Marketing Solutions for EMEA, explains how the business social networking site is helping companies measure return on investment (ROI) more effectively.

## **How can companies increase the effectiveness of ROI measurement from their digital marketing efforts?**

Measurement is clearly the biggest challenge marketers face today, particularly in regards to their content. Though the traditional metrics one uses to measure brand effectiveness can be used in a digital setting, there is a growing set of advanced analytics you can now harness within a digital setting that you don't get in the offline world. The digitization of consumers has brought about a fundamental shift in the decision-making process of a purchase journey, meaning that marketers now need to think about moving from a short-term campaign approach to an "always on, always relevant" approach. Brands need to create

and nurture trust with their target audiences in order to truly maximize the value they gain from digital marketing. This means monitoring those relationships over time, looking at engagement rates, understanding how your content is being consumed, and assessing what content resonates more strongly with one audience than another through conducting A/B testing among different audiences.

## **Presumably platforms like LinkedIn assist marketers in delivering on this?**

Yes, we have created the Content Marketing Score that enables a brand to measure the impact it has on a specific target audience in a specific geography over time, and then benchmark it against its competitor set on the LinkedIn platform. We do that through looking at all the different engagements that take place across a brand's groups, organic updates, sponsored updates, its employees, as well as the degree to which they are posting on the platform. We look at criteria from across five different areas of the site and we are able to provide this score, determine how it

changes over time, and more importantly, inform brands where they rank among their competitor set. We can then point them to the leaders from whom they can learn from in order to increase their score over time, and therefore increase the impact and engagement they have with a specific audience.

## **What further advances can we expect to see in the future?**

In the broader industry, the challenge is to measure multichannel attribution and understand the impact of all channels working together. There are a number of new technologies being developed that are geared towards helping nurture such leads, and to inform companies as to the type of content they need to create to deliver more effective qualified leads for their sales team.



# TUNING IN TO THE RIGHT CHANNELS



One-quarter of our survey respondents are also struggling with the emergence of new channels, and the same number find getting the right combination of tools and tactics a challenge. The diversification of digital channels, with each offering users a different type of engagement, makes it tough for marketers to keep up.

Developing a strong understanding of the target audience and what content they are consuming, where should be the starting point in selecting the right channels for a brand to establish a presence on. The next step is to determine how to communicate most effectively with the audience through those channels. "Digital technology increases competition for a consumer's attention. Over time, personalization and customization will therefore become essential to convincing those hard to reach, discerning audiences that your company understands their needs and is qualified to help

them," explains Mr Graff.

The rapid evolution of digital technology is exacerbating this challenge. New technologies are constantly appearing, creating a complex task for marketers to identify which channels and tools will serve their businesses most effectively. "You have to test and learn, otherwise you die," says Mr Graff. "There is tremendous benefit in testing new technologies in their very early stages. Marketers should spend anywhere between 10% and 20% of their budget experimenting with new channels, new audiences and new medium – it is incredibly important." While there is always risk associated with investing in uncharted territory, the meteoric rise of channels such as Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn underscore the importance of keeping a close watch on the latest emerging channels and technologies to avoid lost opportunities.





# DIGITAL THREATS

In an era of corporate social responsibility, reputational risk is emerging as a key board-level issue. The rise of the digital brand not only enables companies to improve their standing with consumers, but also raises the prospect that companies might damage themselves through their online behavior. In a recent Wipro report, of the 330 C-suite executives surveyed, 74% cited the potential for reputational and brand damage as a pitfall of social media.

“Social has given all the power and voice to the consumer: It’s like a nuclear weapon. It’s done some incredible things for brands who’ve used social and used their speed and agility to make a huge impact, but for others it’s really bounced back at them,” explains Kimberly-Clark’s Mr Gupta. He is not alone: the respondents in our survey rank online reputation risk higher than any other digital threat. At the same time however, just 43% of respondents agree that they have taken adequate measures to prevent and counter online reputation damage, and just 38% anticipate increasing investment in initiatives related to online brand and reputation monitoring.

**Refer chart No.2**

## Companies appreciate the need to address this issue, yet are still working out the most effective ways of doing so. **Some key considerations for shoring up online reputation include:**



**Channel selection.** Firms should identify exactly which online channels to target and keep their digital interactions concentrated there so as to avoid losing control of where they have a digital presence.



**Digital hierarchy.** There should be a clearly detailed hierarchy around use of the company’s digital channels, outlining who can post what and under what circumstances a sign-off from senior management is needed.



**Social media policy.** Ensure all staff are trained in how to approach social media communications, including how to avoid inconsistencies between personal profiles and the corporate brand.



**Rigorous monitoring.** If the organization is interacting with consumers and allowing comments to be posted via company channels, these must be monitored constantly.





SETTING STRATEGIES FOR  
**THE FUTURE**

Our research suggests that only one-fifth of companies view themselves as leading digital marketers, highlighting that a significant opportunity awaits many here. In order to become leaders here, they will need to identify best practice, and ensure they continue to evolve this to match the rapid pace of change that is synonymous with the industry.

### **Content marketing**

Clearly, as consumers increasingly move onto mobile devices such as smartphones and tablets, producing the right content and delivering it through the appropriate channels becomes critical.

In future, good practice in this area will involve the ability to nurture leads through different channels using separate pieces of creative content. This means the ability to nurture a lead through a combination of channels such as email, display retargeting, and newsfeeds, among others. For today's marketers, determining the most effective ways of lead nurturing is mostly done manually, but LinkedIn's Mr Graff says leading organizations are seeking to change this. "Companies are investing in technology in order to automate the process of determining what is the most effective nurture path for a specific

lead, and what content should be served to them at what time of day and on what channels," he explains. Another route that leading companies will increasingly take is the convergence of corporate and talent branding. With employees increasingly developing their own digital profiles, organizations must monitor for inconsistencies within their own corporate branding. "Increasing transparency into a company's supply chain is going to impact whether a company or consumer invests in a purchasing decision with your organization in future. I think increasingly you will see companies using their employees as advocates through social media channels for their products, as well as for the organization as an employer," explains Mr Graff.



*In future, good practice in this area will involve the ability to nurture leads through different channels using separate pieces of creative content. This means the ability to nurture a lead through a combination of channels such as email, display retargeting, and newsfeeds, among others.*



### **Convergence is key**

The idea that a more holistic view of the customer-brand relationship is needed is echoed by Kimberly-Clark's Mr Gupta. "We are dealing with a channel agnostic omni-channel consumer today who does not differentiate between the digital and the analog world, she is hopping from the offline world to the online world in a fraction of a second. So as a brand, we don't do digital marketing but build brands in a digital world where she lives and breathes. For brands to successfully engage and inspire this omni-channel consumer, they need to shift from being 'channel obsessed' to becoming 'consumer obsessed' and 'channel agnostic' and strive towards delivering seamless consumer experiences," says Mr Gupta.

To support this, it is necessary to ensure that there is convergence across functions too. If digital marketing campaigns are to succeed, and fit seamlessly into an organization's broader marketing presence, silos must be broken down, so that marketing, technology and sales functions are all able to coordinate. "I often say consumer experiences are a reflection of how an organization is structured because consumers may see distinct experiences when they go to a retail environment versus when they interact with a brand via mobile, social or other digital touch points. You need to break these silos and fragments that enable a disconnected and broken consumer experience, it's all about wiring across the traditionally isolated functions and a need to adopt integrated operating plans," says Mr Gupta.

For brands to successfully engage and inspire this omni-channel consumer, they need to shift from being 'channel obsessed' to becoming 'consumer obsessed' and 'channel agnostic' and strive towards delivering seamless consumer experiences,

A woman with long dark hair, wearing a light pink blouse, is seated at a white desk in a modern office. She is looking intently at a laptop screen, with her hand resting on her chin in a thoughtful pose. In the background, other office workers are blurred, and large windows let in bright light. A teal banner is overlaid at the bottom of the image.

# **KIMBERLY-CLARK'S** BEST PRACTICE FOR DIGITAL MARKETING INNOVATION



Mayur Gupta, Kimberly-Clark's Global Head of Marketing Technology and Innovation explains how the firm seeks to maintain a competitive edge through its approach to marketing in a digital world. Kimberly-Clark has a strong commitment to drive marketing innovation. According to Mr Gupta, the company could be one of the very few Fortune 500 firms that have created an entire function and capability at the intersection of marketing and technology. "We started that journey two years ago; the marketing technology capability is at the helm of a number of enterprises and emerging technologies needed to drive both brand building and category growth " he says.

The company has taken a three-pronged approach. One is around driving scale and efficiency in building global capabilities across data, analytics, CRM and e-commerce; these are fundamental to our business. At the same time, it has built frameworks that allow its marketers to stay agile – assessing, testing and piloting the latest innovative technologies at a local market level. Earlier this year at the Consumer

Electronics Show the company also officially launched its Digital Innovation Lab. "That goes to show our approach and our thinking around how critical innovation is going to be for our business, both incremental and breakthrough. The lab is proactively tapping into all the innovation happening around the world within the growing startup community, the incubators and accelerators," says Mr Gupta.

The company is actively working with the startup community too – forging partnerships with venture capital firms and incubators. "Our goal is not to bring 50 developers into one room and churn out code and build stuff, but make the world our lab, become the orchestrators of innovation by fostering partnerships and investing in ideas that solve consumer needs and problems. We've got a long way to go but we have a solid, scalable framework that enables us to tap into the disruption that's happening around us and helps us to create some cadence around that chaos," Mr Gupta explains.

# CONCLUSION

There can be little doubt as to the future strategic importance of the digital brand for all companies, large and small. Consumers increasingly expect to interact with companies and make purchases online, through a whole array of channels, from company websites to social media and applications.

Marketing leaders understand the need to be in this digital space but many are still working out the best way to optimize their presence there. Our research has uncovered some key areas they must address in order to achieve this:

- Enhance effectiveness of measuring ROI. Tailoring marketing mix modeling towards digital marketing is one way of capturing ROI more effectively. Companies can also forge close working relationships with e-tailer partners in this area-and other specialist external partners.
- Learn how to access which channels you need. Companies must clearly define their target audience and then use analytics around online behavior to learn where those customers are, and how they are consuming digital content. New channels should be experimented with, closely measuring their traction with consumers.
- Refine your approach to lead nurturing. Brands need to influence consumers at the early stages of their purchasing journey, which means feeding relevant content to them via different channels at different times. The key to improving this will increasingly be through automation and more intelligent use of analytics.
- Align your digital marketing with the omni present brand. Companies must react to the omni-channel environment consumers live in. Digital marketing efforts must merge seamlessly with non-digital, something that can only be achieved through increased collaboration between functions, greater engagement of employees with digital channels and more effective use of data analysis.
- Tighten up the defense of your online reputation. A mistake in online behavior can be the source of serious embarrassment or financial losses for companies. Limiting this risk by restricting online presence to key channels, implementing social media policies and training, and rigorously monitoring interactions on company channels will all be increasingly important.

## About the research

This report is based on a survey of 34 senior marketing executives – made up primarily of CMOs and senior marketing directors from around the world, with the majority drawn from North America (41%) and Europe (27%). Respondents represent a range of sectors, including retail and consumer goods, and media and telecommunications. The research was conducted between June and July 2014. For additional context and insight, in-depth interviews were conducted with Mayur Gupta, Kimberly-Clark's Global Head of Marketing Technology and Innovation, and Josh Graff, Senior Director of Marketing Solutions for Europe, the Middle East and Africa at LinkedIn.



Wipro set up the Council for Industry Research, comprising of domain and technology experts from the organization, to address the needs of customers. It specifically looks at innovative strategies that will help them gain competitive advantage in the market. The Council in collaboration with leading academic institutions and industry bodies studies market trends to equip organizations with insights that facilitate their IT and business strategies. <http://www.wipro.com/insights/>

## About Wipro Ltd

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Wipro Ltd. (NYSE:WIT) is a leading Information Technology, Consulting and Business Process Services company that delivers solutions to enable its clients do business better. Wipro delivers winning business outcomes through its deep industry experience and a 360 degree view of "Business through Technology" - helping clients create successful and adaptive businesses. A company recognized globally for its comprehensive portfolio of services, a practitioner's approach to delivering innovation, and an organization wide commitment to sustainability, Wipro has a workforce of over 150,000, serving clients in 175+ cities across 6 continents.

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