

# #6for16

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Six views on the world of digital marketing  
for the year ahead



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## Top three marketing priorities for UK businesses\*

1. Creating and maintaining customer satisfaction and loyalty (48%)
2. Building a customer acquisition strategy (39%)
3. Integrating technology to automate, orchestrate and manage customer interactions (39%)

\*Experian 2015 Digital Marketer Report



“With marketing technology evolving so fast, and our customers constantly challenging us for better service and more sophisticated interactions, there are plenty of things to consider as we enter another year.”

## Be prepared for what 2016 brings

Tom Blacksell – Managing Director, Marketing Services & Decision Analytics

The beginning of any new year is always a good time to reflect on just how far we've come. The way people interact with brands has changed beyond all recognition in the last few years. Search engines started to put the consumers in control of what they saw. Mobile devices gave them freedom of location and channel, and then social networks connected them.

Anyone who has missed the growing complexity of this new world order must have been asleep for the past five years. Trying to engage with your customers and prospects today consists of a multitude of aspects and the sheer range of options available can be intimidating to marketers looking to define their own strategies. I mean, where do you start?

The customer journey is flexible and fluid with consumers jumping across social networks, physical stores, websites and traditional media. These days, people expect brands to keep up with them and tailor offers to suit their individual needs. Your customers expect you to treat them with consistent care and attention, regardless of which channel they're looking to connect with you on. In order to meet the demands of the

modern consumer - and to compete in a fast-paced digital world - we have drawn up what we consider the three key ingredients of effective and best practice marketing - Identity, Intelligence and Interactions.

Identity is being able to recognise your customer regardless of device or channel. This involves ensuring your data is good enough, developing cross-channel identity and device profiles and then being able to check that they are in fact who they say they are. Fraud prevention and customer identity go hand in hand.

Intelligence is learning more about your customers so that you know how to communicate with them effectively. This is what the ability to personalise customer experience relies on – a thorough understanding of individuals and customer types. Brands need to have the right data and they need to be capable of turning that data into actionable insights using strategic segmentation, precision audience creation or detailed customer personas.

Interactions is the final but most telling piece of the marketing puzzle. It's the method and approach you use to

actually communicate with people. As we know, modern customer journeys are fluid so brands need to drive intelligent interactions and engage with scale and flexibility. This requires brands to be able to integrate all their channels so that they can execute, manage and optimise seamlessly across email, web, mobile, social, display and print.

With those three core principles in mind, we've cast an eye forward to what promises to be another challenging year for the industry. We've come up with six themes and gathered a few views from both inside and outside Experian to frame them.

With marketing technology evolving so fast, and our customers constantly challenging us for better service and more sophisticated interactions, there are plenty of things to consider as we enter another year.

We hope you find the discussion points in this paper both interesting and valuable. There's certainly a lot to think about as we make the next steps forward. I'm looking forward to another year of discovery and development.



“It seems that, in 2016, data strategies and the role of data within organisations will continue to be dictated by digital ambitions and growing customer expectation.”



## #1: Data and the digital journey

Defining a data strategy for 2016  
Boris Huard – Managing Director, Data Quality

There is no doubt in my mind that the way organisations perceive the value of data is maturing rapidly. Indeed, our latest global data management research confirms this, finding that 84% of participants see data as an integral part of forming a business strategy and by 2020, 79% believe that the majority of their organisations' sales decisions will be driven by customer data.\*

Enabling this strategic view of data is the sheer pace of technological change which remains relentless. In an 'always-on' and highly connected world, smart businesses now accept that many of their traditional operational methods prevent agility and that they must adapt.

So not surprisingly, blurred lines between digital services and data have resulted in a convergence of activities. For me this is a defining trend for 2016 and I believe that the organisations which are using data to drive innovation

and differentiation in their revenue streams are likely to be the ones that survive and thrive.

Analyst firm Gartner also believes that “digital business success will require companies to take bold actions; including inventing new business models and changing the way they function.”<sup>1</sup> This is having a direct impact on organisational structure and for many organisations it is the main motivating requirement for appointing an overarching senior business leader to manage data, guide the business through this change and fully embrace the possibilities it brings.

I recently had the pleasure of hearing this first-hand as part of our recent research project, 'Rise of the data force', in which we spoke with over 40 Chief Data Officers and senior business executives from blue chip, multinationals. Through their

experiences of introducing a data champion to the Board, we explored how in the past year digitalisation, amongst other factors, has been a major driver in turning data management into strategic 'business as usual' activity.

It seems that, in 2016, data strategies and the role of data within organisations will continue to be dictated by digital ambitions and growing customer expectation.

<sup>1</sup>Gartner press release, Gartner Says Digital Business Requires Organizations to Rethink How They Respond to Change (22 January 2015) <http://www.gartner.com/newsroom/id/2968317>

Jora Gill – Chief Digital Officer, The Economist

“If you haven’t yet made data a priority it could be the key factor that slows you down  
- so many organisations are too slow to react.”\*\*

Ole Obermann – Executive Vice President, Digital Partner Development and Sales,  
Sony Music Entertainment

“There is a requirement for someone who can translate the necessity and importance of data,  
why it matters and how it will allow us to grow. It needs to be someone who can  
communicate this and ‘market’ the data.”\*\*

Derek Munro – Head of Product Strategy, Experian Data Quality

“Digital empowerment has massively raised business expectations concerning the use of data,  
increasing the need for the right mix of people, processes and technology to overcome the challenges  
and capitalise on the business opportunities.”

Steve Sacks – Chief Customer Officer, Burberry

“We don’t need to evangelise and communicate the importance of data anymore.  
Our people realise the importance of data and there is a huge drive for information from the business.  
We now focus on how to work with data to drive the most value.”\*\*

84% of organisations  
see data as an integral  
part of forming a  
business strategy\*

\*Experian Data Quality - Global Data Management Research 2016

\*\*Quote sourced from Experian Data Quality Research 'Rise of the data force'





“There are a huge range of data types and an ever-growing selection of tactics and techniques available”



## #2: Privacy and recognition

How much data do you actually need?

James McGarva – Head of Data Linkage Strategy

In my view 2016 is the year brands and organisations have to approach their usage of data from a consumer perspective and lead the way in being responsible on the sensitive subject of privacy.

The data revolution continues – that shouldn't be news to anyone. As consumers we create more data than ever before and with the sustained proliferation of web-enabled devices that trend will only continue.

In the year ahead the big question will be not what 'can' we do, but rather, what 'should' we do.

As marketers in the adtech space we're all in danger of 'infobesity' - sluggishness from an overload of information. There are a huge range of types of data and an ever-growing selection of tactics and techniques available. We need to be guided by our objectives and what's best for

the customer – and the two are not mutually exclusive.

In a year in which we expect those consumers to have greater control this is not an optional approach. Due to evolving privacy laws and ever-increasing choice, brands have to convince their customers and to do that it's all about relationships. In the adtech industry this often means advertisers must not be too personal without a relationship. It means using data and technology responsibly.

Data-driven insight leads to intelligent action but how 'intelligent' will an action be if it doesn't take into account the person behind the data? What if it runs a campaign that works – in terms of KPIs – but utterly alienates a large segment of potential customers? How do digital marketers gain trust? To be trusted the industry needs to lead and it needs to exercise control and offer consumers meaningful choice.

So how much is too much? Devices and platforms will be increasingly personal and tailored to specific activity. Marketers need to take a similar consultative approach with the consumers themselves. What is your relationship with a consumer? Did they come to you, or are you seeking them out? What do they want from the relationship? The answers to these simple questions should inform your decisions.

**Jon Wilkins – Executive Chairman, Karmarama**

“Privacy is just one of the big issues that is affecting trust. Trust is also being eroded by the spray and pray nature of digital marketing and the poor quality of communication through those channels. Brands need to realise that with proximity and personalisation comes a greater need than ever for humanity and respect. ”

**Steve Sacks – Chief Customer Officer, Burberry**

“Currently it’s unclear how the issue of regulation will play out in non-regulated markets; perhaps people are going to get used to their digital lives being more public, but I believe there will be a backlash here, and that there should be. The potential damage of this far exceeds any possible benefit.”\*\*

**James Platt – Chief Executive Officer, Aon GRIP Solutions and Chief Analytics Officer, Aon Risk Solutions**

“We always operate in the interest of our clients. We recognise that there’s an ethical moral code of conduct and even if we could legally do something with a client’s data we still wouldn’t.”\*\*

**Mark Lindsay – Director, Strategic Client Development and Consulting at Experian Marketing Services**

“Preference centres will become the key source of data for personalisation as they enable brands to tailor messaging to what customers have actually asked for – whether that’s type of message, product or frequency of communications.”

14% of respondents said they find brands they like and admire using their personal details intrusive compared to 49% finding the same comms from a brand they don’t know intrusive\*

\*Experian 2015 Personalisation Report

\*\*Quote sourced from Chapter 5, ‘Confronting the ethical challenge’ in Experian Data Quality Research ‘Rise of the data force’



“2016 will see brands abandon ‘campaign marketing’ in order to concentrate on interactions based on context.”



## #3: Rethinking the customer experience

Interactions and touchpoints rather than campaigns?

Colin Grieves – Director of Digital Advertising Services

As every marketer knows, consumer behaviour has changed dramatically in the past five years. Advances in mobile technology have opened up access to social media, ecommerce and web browsing so that now surfing the web, chatting on social media and making purchases on the go is the norm.

No longer are our customers restricted to simple linear customer journeys which we can easily monitor and initiate with straightforward individual campaigns. Today that journey can be as complicated as a visit to a store and a conversation on social media followed by a visit to a website, seeing some display ads and eventually a return to that website and a purchase. How does a single email plugging a product fit into that?

2016 will see brands abandon ‘campaign marketing’ in order to concentrate on interactions based on context. Context based on data and

insight. This is made more possible for the same reasons the customer journey has changed so dramatically – there are considerably more touchpoints available to involve in the experience and a whole host more data to draw insight from.

These interactions have to be intelligent – they have to be based on what we know about that customer – to add relevance and accuracy. The customer journey is now one giant conversation between a brand and a customer and the brand has to ensure their voice and message are consistent – across all channels and integrated into every touchpoint.

The role of DMPs and similar data management technology will begin to make its mark. Last year DMPs and ‘programmatic’ were top buzzwords – scary pieces of jargon not fully understood. This year they will really come into their own as brands manage,

sort and manipulate large data sets in real time in order to power intelligent interactions.

When someone visits your website you need to be able to know when they return or if they pop up somewhere else where you can, should you wish, communicate with them. You then need to know what to say to them – based on behaviour and preferences.

Rethinking the customer experience in the context of strong customer centricity will offer brands in 2016 a clear path to customer satisfaction, retention, advocacy and sustained sales growth.



## Dan Kennedy – Head of Digital Consultancy at Experian Marketing Services

“In the era of the multi-channel consumer, the purchase funnel has gone, replaced by surround-sound purchase opportunities where the consumer gets to choose how, when and where they want to discover, learn about and purchase products and services”

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## Jon Wilkins – Executive Chairman, Karmarama

“For a start brands should look at the entire customer experience in their category. Currently brand building and digital/CRM are seen as quite different and disconnected processes- this is not customer first thinking and needs to be changed in order to build a more holistic experience.”

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## Mark Lindsay – Director of Strategic Client Development & Consulting

“Understand the consumer and what journey they’re on and put them at the heart of the engagement. It’s about adding value where it is most needed for that individual at that point.”

Only 9% of UK marketers are personalising based on more sophisticated attitudinal data, like whether they are price sensitive versus impulse buyers (compared to 17% globally)\*



“Brands today collect an ever-growing amount of information on consumers but forgetting the individuals behind the data is a mistake that cannot go on.”



## #4: Putting the people first

Why remembering the individuals behind the data is more important than ever  
Matthew Dunn – Managing Director, Targeting

Customer-centricity is hardly a new concept. In fact I remember speaking about it in a similar piece I did for 2015. However, I feel a need to highlight it as a core theme because I believe 2016 will be the year brands start digging down into what it actually means and acting accordingly.

For me this is now less about the techniques and more about the goals and brand responsibility. Putting your customer at the centre of your business is not about how you can get them to spend more money. It is about giving them as good an experience as possible because you value them and want them to have a positive interaction.

There's so much more data now than ever before. As the capabilities and volume of digital devices soar, prices plummet. What's more, sensors and other visual gadgets are digitising information previously unavailable – the

volumes are incredible and companies can get carried away.

Brands today collect an ever-growing amount of information on consumers but forgetting the individuals behind the data is a mistake that cannot go on. Segmenting and selecting particular groups or types of people is an established method of ensuring relevant messages go to relevant people – but when we're talking about thousands, if not hundreds of thousands, of people at a time the view of that person as an individual can get lost.

The very word 'consumer' (used at will in business) implies an element of 'commoditisation'. Do we think these people – everyday people like us and our families - like being considered, discussed and treated as a commodity, a number? In a world where customer experience is quickly becoming

everything it makes little sense. I predict a backlash against marketing that is unwanted and irrelevant.

So this year will see brands take a step up and be responsible for their actions and the way they use data to communicate with people as individuals. Focusing on the experience as the goal. Marketing is about relationships and trust – remembering the people behind the numbers and doing your utmost to treat them as you would wish to be treated yourself.

**Jon Wilkins – Executive Chairman, Karmarama**

“The power of the individual is also the potential Achilles heel of brands. Just because the ability to talk to people at an individual level is there doesn’t mean brands or businesses have any right to invade an individual’s personal media, or personal channels. ”

**Colin Grieves – General Manager, Alchemy Social**

“The customer journey is now one giant conversation between a brand and a customer and the brand has to ensure their voice and message are consistent – across all channels and integrated into every touchpoint.”

**Mark Lindsay – Director of Strategic Client Development & Consulting**

“Consumers don’t like receiving generic messages or information that is of no interest to them – today, ‘irrelevant’ quickly becomes ‘annoying’. We’ve played around the edges for the past few years but now with customers only getting more discerning, further refinement is an absolute must.”

69% of consumers  
we asked receive  
emails from retailers  
every single day\*





“Customers are demanding and don't like receiving generic messages or information that is of no interest to them – today, 'irrelevant' means annoying.”



## #5: Getting up close and personal

How close is too close?

Mark Lindsay – Director of Strategic Client Development & Consulting

In my view, marketing is, and always will be, about influencing consumer behaviour through intelligent engagement experiences. Personalising those experiences to suit the needs, wants and desires of consumers is a vital technique in ensuring the relationship with each customer is effective.

Consumers don't like receiving generic messages or information that is of no interest to them – today, 'irrelevant' quickly becomes 'annoying'.

I see 2016 being the year marketers really step up to the plate with responsible and effective personalisation. We've played around the edges for the past few years but now with customers only getting more discerning, further refinement is an absolute must.

So marketers are planning to get up close and personal to succeed – but is there a risk of getting too close?

We ran a survey in 2015 asking consumers whether they thought personalisation was 'cool' or 'creepy' and 80% of respondents said they didn't find it to be either – with their views towards the concept improving dramatically if their data is used to add value.

It is this value exchange that stops personalisation becoming too close or too personal – as long as consumers see value in return and trust your brand then personalisation is much more acceptable.

With this in mind, the key for the year ahead is to consider the context when planning personalisation. Understand the consumer and what journey they're on and put them at the heart of the engagement. It's about adding value where it is most needed for that individual at that point. Is that a discount or is it a useful piece of

information at exactly the right time? You need to know your customer.

Preference centres will increasingly become a key source of data for personalisation as they enable brands to tailor messaging to what customers have actually asked for – whether that's the type of message, product, channel or frequency of communications.

Another key differentiator in the years ahead will be the ability to leverage available data. Creating linkages between on-line and offline, first party and third party, demographic and behavioural data assets will be the key to delivering intelligent personalisation.

Businesses will need to overcome the main barriers highlighted in our 2015 Digital Marketer Report: lack of internal resources, incorrect technology and inaccurate data and from what I see some are well on the way to doing so.



### James McGava – Head of Data Linkage Strategy

“In the adtech industry advertisers must not be too personal without a relationship. This means they have to use data and technology responsibly or face a backlash.”

### Jon Wilkins – Executive Chairman, Karmarama

“Personalisation allows a greater degree of understanding and insight and that should lead to a higher chance of creating better empathy. Personalisation is not however ‘spyware’. The frontline of how brands and businesses use this data will set the tone for brands moving forwards. Ad blocking is already reaching pandemic proportions and much of this is a response to poor utilisation of the information.”

### Matthew Dunn – Managing Director, Targeting

“Marketing has to be about relationships and trust and you need to consider this before you personalise anything – remembering the people behind the numbers and doing your utmost to treat them as you would wish to be treated yourself.”

86% of UK brands are currently personalising their communications to some extent but only 9% are personalising based on sophisticated attitudinal data\*



“Decisions need to be based on CRM data sourced from every touchpoint and from every channel.”



## #6: What's next for marketing and ad tech?

Simon Martin – Managing Director, Cross-Channel Marketing

Every year new marketing and advertising technologies emerge that, according to their creators, are going to change the face of marketing. While we know for certain that 2016 will see plenty of interesting developments I'm not expecting anything earth shattering. The majority of individual components are now available with many choices within each category. The developments will come more in the form of technology integration and from a brand perspective 'real' cross-channel usage.

On integration, there is the perennial challenge of choosing best of breed versus the promise of a single consolidated platform. My view is that best-of-breed provides the most flexibility, ability to innovate and commercial control for brands. However, best-of-breed has to come with open and easy integrations including via published APIs to enable technology integration around a single

view of the end customer. To achieve this, we are increasingly integrating 'marketing tech' and 'ad tech' components. At a data level, this means linkage of Personally Identifiable Information (PII) and Non PII. At a commercial level it means having well established partnerships between vendors.

Along with further integration developments, the year ahead in my view marks the tipping point of the industry's transition to cross-channel marketing as we see more brands consolidate technologies and change functional roles. Brands are increasingly aligning their technical and organisational set-ups to the end game of customer centricity and intelligent interactions across all touchpoints (inbound and outbound).

We are seeing brands move from running two or three channels driven

by integrated data and programmes to running three or four. This trend is likely to continue and become more interesting. Today we may have email, SMS, Push to App, direct mail and social media advertising linked. Next we'll see on-line programmatic, addressable TV and the Internet of Things. They're on the horizon and the technology and data that you establish in 2016 will need to be capable of scaling up.

Successful brands will need to choose platforms capable of catering for every source and channel while retaining compatibility with partners and other sources. Think of the future – you need to ensure your tech is up to the challenge.

**Boris Huard – Managing Director, Data Quality**

“In an ‘always-on’ and highly connected world, smart businesses are now accepting that many of their traditional operational methods prevent agility and that they must adapt.”

**Jon Wilkins – Executive Chairman, Karmarama**

“I think recognising that data is really the largest focus group in the world - stop thinking of data as solely as source for better distribution and connection of content and start seeing it for what it really is - a powerful tool to garner insight and make strategic decisions.”

**Dan Kennedy – Head of Digital Consultancy, Experian Marketing Services**

“2016 will see the lines blur between what’s content and what’s advertising. Consumers are entering a hitherto unknown era of choice. Not just in what they buy – that’s been around for a while – but rather in what they are shown and what they consume. Siloed organisations will struggle to implement co-ordinated cross-channel strategies if they continue to have different teams responsible for different channels – across the board solutions and teams will become the norm.”

Top three barriers to cross-channel marketing are:  
Linkage – no single customer view (37%)  
Organisational structure (33%)  
Company’s current technology (32%)\*

7 Old Town  
Clapham  
London  
SW4 0JT

Building One  
The Heights  
Brooklands  
Weybridge  
KT13 0NY

Embankment House  
Electric Avenue  
Nottingham  
NG80 1EH

160 Dundee Street  
Fountainbridge  
Edinburgh  
EH11 1DQ

0845 234 0391

[www.experian.co.uk/markingservices](http://www.experian.co.uk/markingservices)

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