

Marketers' Reskilling within the Digital Transformation, a Today's Essential Task for Approaching New Digital Roles

Ioan Matei PURCĂREA

Abstract

We are witnessing really spectacular evolutions in today's digital marketing world and there is still place for improvement, customers increasingly preferring digital interactions. Organizations do feel a real need of having multi-disciplinary teams within their digital transformation, while facing challenges such as the intelligent artificiality or conversational AI, struggling to ensure the integration of their technology stack so as to deliver a more immersive CX. And as marketing and sales are meeting at the point of lead generation, digital marketing is more important than ever, marketers are increasing, for instance, their investment in the social platforms, the use of conversion tracking in improving the ROI of the digital marketing campaigns, and the adequately managing the next generation digital interactions in the contact center, taking into account the rich nature of customers and enhancing CX with the help of recommended behavioral economics practices, deploying digital marketing talent with agility.

Keywords: Marketers' Reskilling; Digital Marketing; Digital Transformation; Intelligent Artificiality;

Conversational AI; Digital CX; Conversion Tracking; Digital Marketing Talent

JEL Classification: D83; L86; M15; M31; M37; O33

Really spectacular evolutions in today's digital marketing world

Three years ago significant opinions were expressed such as those showing that in the digital interface between product and consumer is taking place the battle for today's customer, this shift to the customer interface being continuously confirmed. (Carter, 2016) In today's digital marketing world there are really spectacular evolutions (and there is still place for improvement), such as those reflected by:

- the eMarketer principal analyst and author of eMarketer February 2019 report "Top 10 Tech Trends from CES 2019: How 5G, AI and the IoT Are Changing the Status Quo", Victoria Petrock made reference to the marketers' perspective of targeting campaigns or customizing products and messaging on the basis of consumers' unique traits or behavioral characteristics (beyond the major outcry over privacy by the industry), and this within the context in which a recent Paysafe study conducted by Loudhouse (see the figure below) revealed that biometrics (the application of statistical analysis to biological data) was used by nearly half of consumers worldwide (on the basis on facial recognition technology, commonly); (Kats, 2019)

What Do Internet Users Worldwide See as the Benefits of Using Biometrics to Confirm Digital Transactions?

% of respondents, April 2019

Quicker

44%

More convenient than having to input passwords

44%

More secure than other verification methods

37%

Wouldn't need my phone or other security device

25%

Not good at remembering passwords

23%

Will allow me to make purchases while doing other things

15%

None of these

16%

Source: Paysafe, "Lost in Transaction: The end of risk?" conducted by Loudhouse, July 23, 2019

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www.eMarketer.com

Figure no. 1: What do internet users worldwide see as the benefits of using biometrics to confirm digital electronics

Source: Kats, R. (2019). *Consumers Are More Open to Biometrics*, eMarketer, Aug 13 (work cited)

- after launching a connected jacket with Levi's in 2015, Google granted recently an "Ergonomic Assessment Garment" patent for a smart garment (a t-shirt or jacket tracking the movements of workers or athletes with the help of electrically conductive yarn and embedded sensors) which captures biometric data from its users so as to make possible more comfortable and functional design clothing; (CB Insights, 2019)
- beyond much discussed controversies in the last time, one of the most valuable tools in the digital marketer's work belt remains Facebook, an unique platform for social connectivity stimulating the word of mouth, having breathtaking reach (1.7 billion monthly users worldwide); (Droesch, 2019)
- there will be a clear increasing of the social network users worldwide by platform (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat) in 2023 compared to this year, as shown in the figure below; (He, 2019)

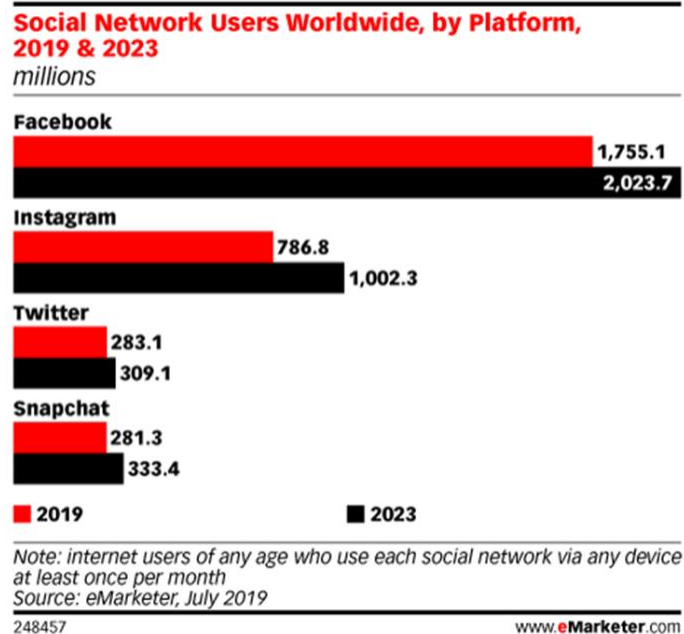


Figure no. 2: Social network users worldwide, by platform, 2019 & 2023

Source: He, A. (2019). *eMarketer's July Earnings Recap: Facebook, Amazon, Google, Twitter, Snapchat, Netflix, eMarketer, Jul 30 (work cited)*

- the Deloitte's 2018 Global Automotive Consumer Study results revealed that including the digital touchpoints along the customer's shopping journey are missing the opportunity to deliver on the promise of CX after a vehicle purchase (including in-dealership tools like kiosks and tablets, communications like chat, email and social media and dealer websites); (Reichheld, 2019)
- brands can enhance (in today's new guided economy where technology is guiding customers before they even realized they needed guidance, making their lives more efficient and convenient), the digital CX in all channels by anticipating and proactively addressing customers' needs; (eMarketer, 2019)
- in US and UK, Generation Z (as revealed by a new study of JWT Intelligence and Snap Inc.), the first generation raised maybe completely within the digital age, is using digital tools in expressing creativity online (Snapchat creative tools, Instagram creative features, Photoshop, iMovie, VSCO); (RetailWire, 2019)
- with regard to the frequency of retailers communication, 29-36% from the US digital shoppers (according to a report of Yes Marketing) feel that it is too frequently, 5-10% from them said that it is not frequently enough, while 57-64% consider that (see the figure below); (Kats, 2019)

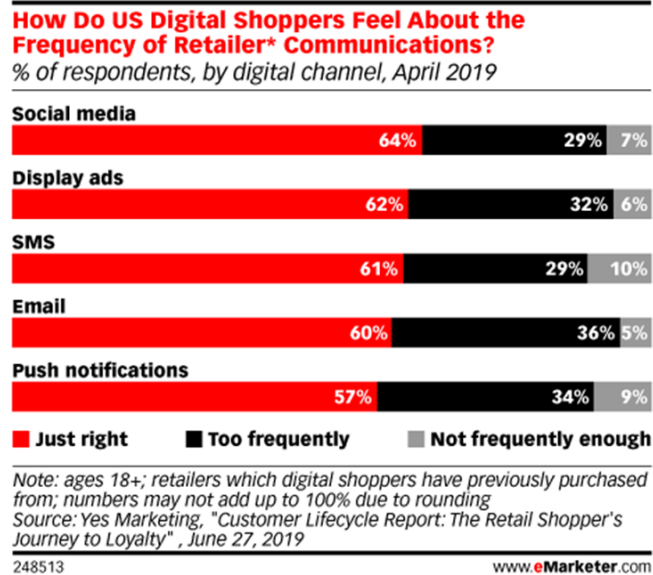


Figure no. 3: How do US digital shoppers feel about the frequency of retailer communication

Source: How Many Retail Communications Are Too Many? eMarketer, Jul 29 (work cited)

- Amazon, Google, and Microsoft account for 60% of total customers on the public cloud market; (Business Insider, 2019)
- Ant Financial (an affiliate company of the Chinese Alibaba Group), one of the top 10 largest banks and internet companies in the world, has built the playbook for internet giants to create financial super apps globally (see the figure below). (CB Insights, 2019)

Ant has built the playbook for internet giants to create financial super apps globally



Figure no. 4: Ant has built the playbook for internet giants to create financial super apps globally

Source: How Asia's Internet Giants Are Creating The Playbook For Fintech Super Apps, CB Insights, 2019 (work cited)

- Daniel Burstein, Senior Director, Content and Marketing at MECLABS Institute recently recommended marketers to replicate the physical experience's delight in E-commerce (this type of commerce being seen by him as a brutally efficient product search, sale, and delivery engine); (Burstein, 2019)

- a McKinsey's study at the level of B2B businesses (surveying more than 150 decision makers and buying influencers at large companies, key accounts) revealed that more than a third of respondents self-identified as digitally savvy, preferring digital channels across the customer decision journey, only a smaller share of buyers using a mix of online and offline information (see the figure below). (Kohli, Paulowsky and Stanley, 2019)

Customers increasingly prefer digital interactions.

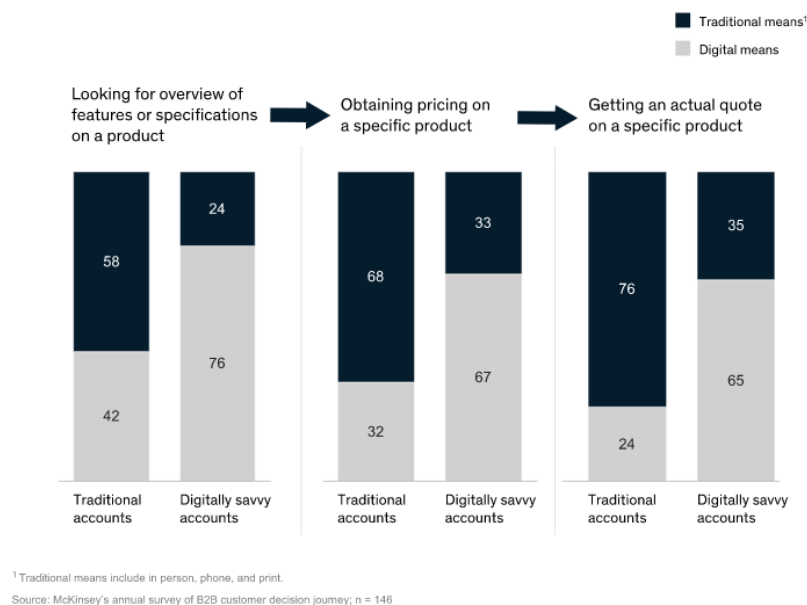


Figure no. 5: Customers increasingly prefer digital interactions

Source: Kohli, V., Paulowsky, R. and Stanley, J. (2019). *How digital is powering the next wave of growth in key-account management*, McKinsey, August (work cited)

The multi-disciplinary team presupposed by the digital transformation, involving including “Intelligent Artificiality”. Conversational AI, an organization’s priority transforming customer engagement

In June this year we highlighted marketers’ need to be truly digital customer focused and to build deep digital customer relationships accordingly, keeping up with the ever-evolving digital marketing trends and providing a superior and seamless CX across the customer journey. Today there is no doubt about marketers’ awareness of the role of CX in advancing digital

transformation. (Purcarea, 2019) Allow us to also remember that at the end of 2017 we showed that CX is a very important benefit of digital transformation (CX and brand working together), being important to focus resources to implement digital transformation. (Negricea and Purcarea, 2019)

Digital transformation involves a multi-disciplinary team, because it is made by with the help of adequate skills of CX (VoC, Journey strategy and mapping, Channel insights, Process tools) and Operational excellence (Process modelling, Lean and Six Sigma, Robotic Process Automation design/build, CX/Journey mapping), also mixing with Business experience (Business and application insights, Cross-functional processes), Technology expertise (Enterprise Applications, Change management, Low code, RPA, AI) and marketing insights, as shown in the figure below. (Moore, 2019) And as recently described by Connie Moore, Vice President and Principal Analyst at Deep Analysis (a research advisory firm focused on emerging technologies), this is an effort involving an outside in and inside out approach of the business, starting with clear steps.

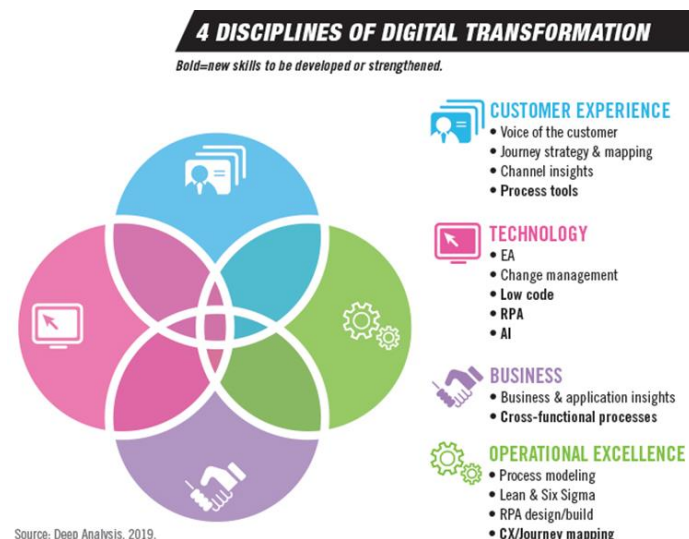


Figure no. 6: Four disciplines of digital transformation

Source: Moore, C. (2019). *How to Build a Cross-Functional, Multi-Disciplinary Team for Digital Transformation*, DOCUMENT Strategy Media, Summer 2019 digital issue (work cited)

We have seen that in the above figure AI (Artificial Intelligence) is one of the fifth elements included in the technology discipline of digital transformation. And speaking about teamwork we considered useful to make a link with a recent signal transmitted at the middle of this year, in the European Business Review, by the Founder of Rotman Digital, the Rotman Self Development Laboratory and the Joe Weider Foundation Leadership Development Laboratory, Mihnea Moldoveanu – who is Desautels Professor of Integrative Thinking, Professor of Economic Analysis and Vice Dean of Learning, Innovation and Executive Programs at the

Rotman School of Management, University of Toronto (he is also: the Founding Director of the Mind Brain Behavior Institute and the Desautels Centre for Integrative Thinking; a Senior Advisor to the Boston Consulting Group and a member of the global advisory board of McKinsey Academy) – with regard to what is to do at the level of organizations *“in order to reap the full benefits of AI innovation and transform into an AI-competent organization... Organisations need people who can talk to both people and machines and people who can talk to people who talk to machines to inhabit their upper echelons. Key to competent communication and collaboration is a common language and pattern of reasoning that makes financiers able to communicate to engineers and marketers – which I have called Intelligent Artificiality... the discipline of specifying business problems and challenges at the algorithmic and computational levels including the procedures, routines, data sets, objective functions and tolerable error rates for possible solutions”*. (Moldoveanu, 2019) Moldoveanu pledges for a smartly reallocation of resources within AI strategies.

On the other hand, it is also useful to show that:

- according to the “The Intelligent Automation Playbook” (SourceCode Technology Holdings, Inc., eBook, Version 1.0, 06.24.2019, Intelligent Automation + K2 - the leader in low-code application development; K2 is well-known as enabling businesses to effectively and efficiently connect robotic process automation/RPA, digital process automation/DPA, and machine learning to deliver intelligent automation), with the view to revolutionize organizations’ way of operating, creating value, earning customer loyalty and staying relevant, automation and AI are collaborating; (SourceCode Technology Holdings, 2019)
- according to this year research (on the basis of a survey conducted in May 2019 among 2,048 US adults age 18 and older) from Invoca and The Harris Poll, respondents felt frustrated (52%) or angry (18%) when not been given the opportunity to communicate with a human (only automated communications such as AI-powered chatbots); (Nanji, 2019)
- according to the responsible for the Conversational AI practice at Cognizant, Matthew Smith, as conversational AI (one of the customer-facing technologies) is moving to offer end-to-end transactional capabilities (beyond simple voice interfaces and basic chat), transforming customer engagement needs to be an organization’s priority (letting customers be the brand’s guide), which will impact teams with regard to their skillsets, expertise and the nature of work, involving the redesigning or reengineering of many processes across all areas of the company; (Smith, 2019)
- a study of Selligent Marketing Cloud (a global B2C marketing automation company), polling 221 digital marketers about the integration of their technology stack in order to deliver an adequate CX, revealed how real the omnichannel excellence struggle is, the majority of customers (65%) expressing their frustration about inconsistent experiences across channels; and

as shown in the figure below, there is still some way to go with regard to integrate the marketing stack to deliver a more immersive CX. (Tongco, 2019)

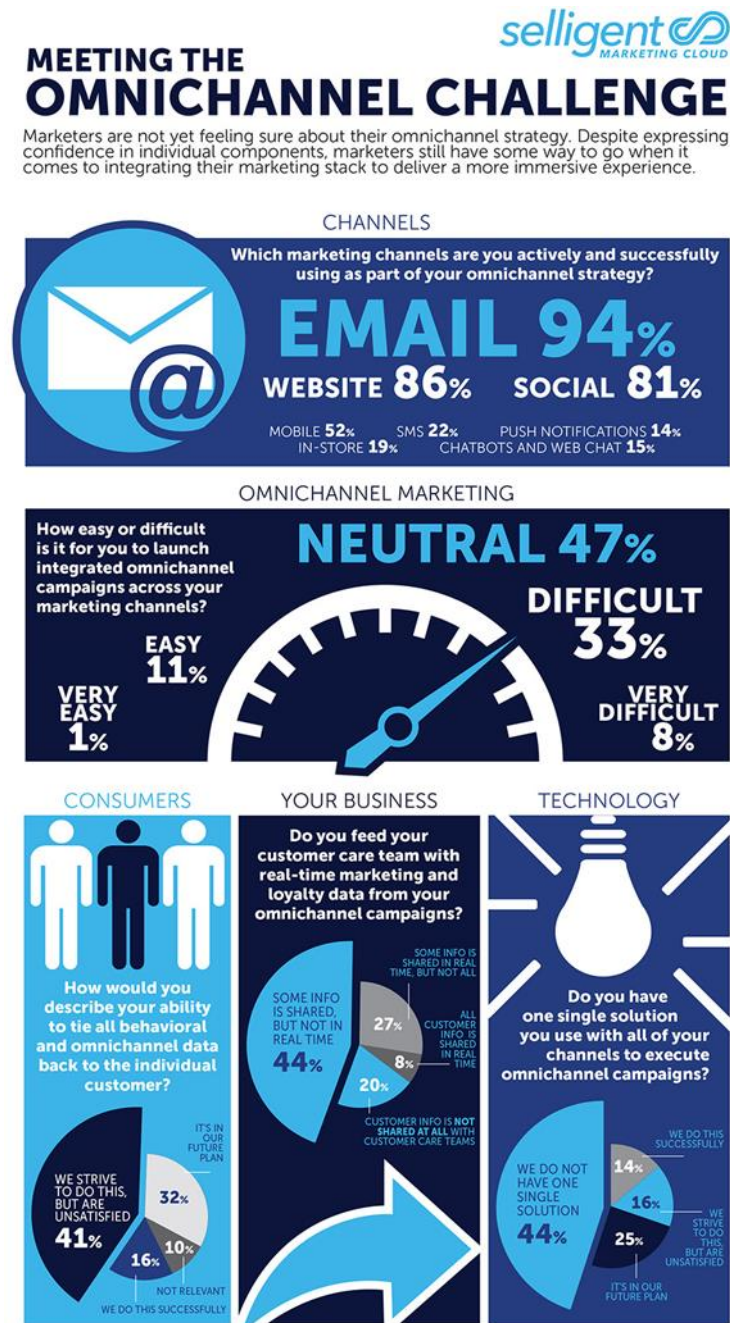


Figure no. 7: Meeting the Omnichannel challenge

Source: Tongco, S. (2019). Selligent Marketing Cloud Study Reveals Digital Marketers' Struggle to Deliver Consistent Omnichannel Experiences, Selligent Marketing Cloud, June 26 (work cited)

- according to Elliott King, a co-founder and the CEO of award-winning international digital agency MintTwist, headquartered in London, digital is: changing the funnel, customers

being in control over their buying journey (more control over their product research phases, independently of suppliers); continuously pushing the influence of the customer further down the funnel, sales and marketing meeting at the point of lead generation (which is the ultimate KPI for many marketing functions, as shown in the figure below). (King, 2019)



Figure no. 8: Lead generation, the ultimate KPI for many marketing functions today

Source: King, E. (2019). Understanding Modern Marketing: Marketing's Evolution and Digital's Impact, MarketingProfs, July 18 (work cited)

Digital marketing, more important than ever. Effectively tracking digital marketing efforts

There is no doubt that digital marketing is more important for businesses than ever before, demonstrated (with the help of an infographic) in April this year James Trotter, a Director and the Head of the Outreach & Content Departments at Point Blank Digital, UK: in 2020, both B2B e-commerce figures are expected to surpass B2C sales, and \$22 Billion the expected value of the video marketing industry; in 2021, \$4.5 Trillion, the expected global value of e-commerce; in 2023, \$25.1 Billion the estimated annual spend on online marketing automation tools etc. (Trotter, 2019) Trotter highlighted different types of digital marketing, such as: SEO, PPC, Content Marketing, Social Media, Video Marketing, Email marketing.

A recent study of Hanapin Marketing (there were surveyed 273 marketers based in US - most respondents, Canada and UK working either for brands or for agencies) revealed, for instance, the social platforms marketers are currently investing in: Facebook (91%); Instagram (69%); YouTube (48%); LinkedIn (45%); Twitter (36%); Quora (31%); Reddit (14%); Pinterest (13%); Snapchat (8%). (Nanji, 2019) It was also revealed, for example, that 51% of respondents plan to increase their YouTube ad spend next year (only 5% planning to decrease this spend).

Phil Frost, Founder and COO of Main Street ROI (being also primary creator of Main Street ROI's marketing training programs) underlined recently the role of conversion tracking (tracking visitors and their actions by placing a piece of code on the company's website; it can be

tracked different forms on this website, e-commerce sales, coupon codes given to encourage people to visit physical locations; phone calls) in improving the ROI of the digital marketing campaigns by identifying the best-performing campaigns and by adequately directing the budget across the various marketing channels. (Frost, 2019) Frost showed that by effectively tracking the digital marketing efforts better ROI tracking, insights into campaign successes can be gained, as well as figuring out what content to reuse, improved audience categorization, knowledge of where to direct marketing budget.

Randy Littleton, Chief Marketing Officer for NICE inContact, ended recently an approach of “The Digital Revolution” by detailing seven “Best-in-Class Digital Experiences”: centrally managing next generation digital interactions in the contact center, adding support for *digital messaging and real-time channels, providing a unified inbox for all channels that supports each channel’s unique capabilities, providing agents context to all interactions across all channels, allowing customers to easily move across voice, digital, and messaging channels, ensuring holistic Omni channel management across all contact center operations, and incorporating AI capabilities for self-service.* (Littleton, 2019)

CX is shaped by marketing campaigns, product quality, in-store service, the way social care team interacts with customers, including social listening and social monitoring, and knowing that social sentiment is the core of all social analytics. (Surico, 2019) In the opinion of the founder and CEO of Beyond Philosophy, Colin Shaw, CX is depending on the rich nature of customers (*irrational, intuitive, driven by past memories, factors seeming irrelevant*), and is enhanced with the help of behavioral economics practices (such as: *embracing your customers’ irrational nature, understanding customers’ conflicted minds, understanding and predicting customer habits, accepting that irrelevant things can be really important, creating memories that build loyalty*). (Shaw, 2019) Shaw made reference, for instance, to the Nobel laureate Daniel Kahneman (according to whom we remember both the peak emotion we felt during an experience, and the final emotion), recommending to analyze the peak emotion felt by customers during an experience (when it is felt and how it is, positive or negative), and the end experience.

Conclusions: Deploying digital marketing talent with agility

In June 2016 we underlined marketers’ need of better understanding the difference between change and transformation, integrating people, technology and best practices, considering the social interaction accelerated by social media, and the already set triggers of the digital transformation, achieving better customer engagement and improving CX while integrating it across channels, having a complete customer view. (Negricea & Purcarea, 2016) In September 2016 we highlighted that it is highly important to gain a better understanding of the core skills needed by today’s digital marketer within the context of the digital transformation moving from digital silos to integrated teams. (Negricea & Purcarea, 2016)

Now it's time to also better understand how to use adequately the talent within the above mentioned integrated teams involved in the pursuit of digital initiative, prioritizing the deployment of digital talent, harmonizing productivity with CX and core with new business, as suggested recently by McKinsey's representatives. What presupposes to continuously learn about the efficacy of different elements of the digital strategy, while considering the competitive threats. (Bughin, Catlin and LaBerge, 2019)

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