

At the Confluence Between Digital Marketing, Phygital CX and AI Agents

(Part I)

Costel NEGRICEA and Ioan Matei PURCĂREA



Abstract

As AI integration becomes transformation and CX is reshaped by AI, CDPs are becoming a key part for CX, and organizations move to proactive engagement, considering both how customers' interaction with brands is redefined by the disruptive technologies, and better approaching performance measurement. We are witnessing how ecosystems are animated by the platforms, networks, and marketplaces as supporting and making marketing stronger. It is obvious that progress is being made at the confluence between digital marketing, phygital CX and AI agents. We valorized the partnership with a voluntary working group, ensuring an evidence-based foundation of the research necessary for an online store project design, considering the importance of crafting a compelling online store value proposition, better understanding project's channel-specific KPI, ensuring strategy and sales' alignment, a structured continuous approach required by an effective e-commerce management, and a clear awareness of AI category agents' power.

Keywords: Digital Marketing, AI Integration, Phygital CX, CDPs, AI Agents, Online Store

JEL Classification: D83; L81; L86; M15; M31; O32; O33

As AI integration becomes transformation and CX is reshaped by AI, CDPs are becoming a key part for CX, and organizations move to proactive engagement, considering both how customers' interaction with brands is redefined by the disruptive technologies, and better approaching performance measurement

According to The State of Marketing 2026 created by HubSpot, marketing in 2026 “is all about blending the efficiency and speed of AI with creativity and good taste. With humans and AI in the loop, marketing has become an iterative process that gets smarter with every new campaign and launch.” AI is more and more used to both clarify, and elevate marketers' thinking. HubSpot CMO Kipp Bodnar stated: “Marketing is evolving faster than ever. AI didn't

just change how we market, it changed where buyers decide. As AI disrupts search, the answer is a compounding loop built for the AI era.”

As customer experience (CX) is reshaped by artificial intelligence (AI), improving customer data strategies (with the help of customer data platforms – CDPs – powering AI agents) is essential, these processes moving in a specific direction of AI at scale orchestration by marketers who transform Marketing AI, ensuring complexity reduction and decision-making acceleration (based on intelligent agents’ leveraging), as well as close alignment of business strategy and execution (Uniphore, 2025). Marketing, sales, and service allow decisions-making based on the same up-to-date information, preventing data silos and ensuring consistency and efficiency, CDPs becoming a key part for CX.

According to Genesys (Conlon, 2025), modern experiences are made intelligent and deeply human by the human-AI partnership, employees taking advantage of less cognitive load and meaningful interactions within the context of continuously evolving customer expectations, technology maturation, and operational resilience, empathy being extended based on AI. Going on this path, organizations move to proactive engagement, meeting these continuously evolving customer expectations at the required speed and scale by improving intent understanding, needs’ anticipation, and providing a prompt reply.

More recently, Trendhunter showed how: (Kanesa, 2026) the platform Shoptelligence provides forward-looking intelligence (replacing reactive decision-making) based on its new VendorSense IQ Suite (having as first products ShopLab AI ensuring product ideation and validation support and ShopLaunch AI ensuring optimize market rollout and dealer performance support) that integrates into a single system not only demand signals and predictive insight, but also performance measurement; there are significant industry implications such as, for example, in retail industry, AI platforms transforming retail technology so as to improve product development and market penetration based on data-backed solutions; (Hemsworth, 2026) an AI-powered tool has been introduced by the pizza brand (in partnership with Google Cloud) for the first time as Papa Johns Food Ordering agent, being ensured a large accessibility on the omnichannel platform (Food Ordering agent being a part of the agentic solution Gemini Enterprise for Customer Experience).

Indeed, as underlined by Wassel (2026), customers’ interaction with brands is redefined by technology, but at a recent National Retail Federation (NRF) Big Show panel it was showed that shopping will persist in part a human experience, the CIO of the home improvement retailer Home Depot making reference to the focus on agentic AI applications in its operations while taking heed to the way in which customers’ use and adaptation to the new features is happened. Also, Home Depot’s CIO underlined their preoccupation to test the most effective possible way in which technology’s strategic placement can improve CX without being an obstacle in the shopper’s way.

On the other hand, as shown recently at the ICR (Investor Relations Company) Conference by Walmart's executive vice president of AI acceleration (Salpini, 2026), improvement by making small changes to AI integration becomes transformation, customer problems being deeply addressed by starting building necessary things, consequently improving the Walmart shopping experience (better grocery items' replenishment, customers' scrolling through AI-generated immersive photos with clothes to buy, recommendations based on what's already in customers' closet etc.). For instance, what a specific shopper repeatedly buys can be already recognized by Sparky (Walmart's customer AI agent), then suggesting a new order when customer enters the app. With regard to the long-term, this executive vice president of AI acceleration sees the blending into one search system of the Sparky chat interface and Walmart's traditional search bar. Also, users can benefit from Walmart's integration with Gemini, and big-box retailer's focus on price and speed will boost if shoppers are helped in making their selections by AI agents.

But beyond the value delivered by AI agents, it is important to take into account that the hard part is measuring AI agents, CB Insights (2026) showing that early AI agent measurement efforts are dominated by cost savings and time tracking (see figure below). Recent research findings by CB Insights revealed leading key performance indicators (KPIs) used to track AI agent success, highlighting how difficult to quantify remains the revenue impact..

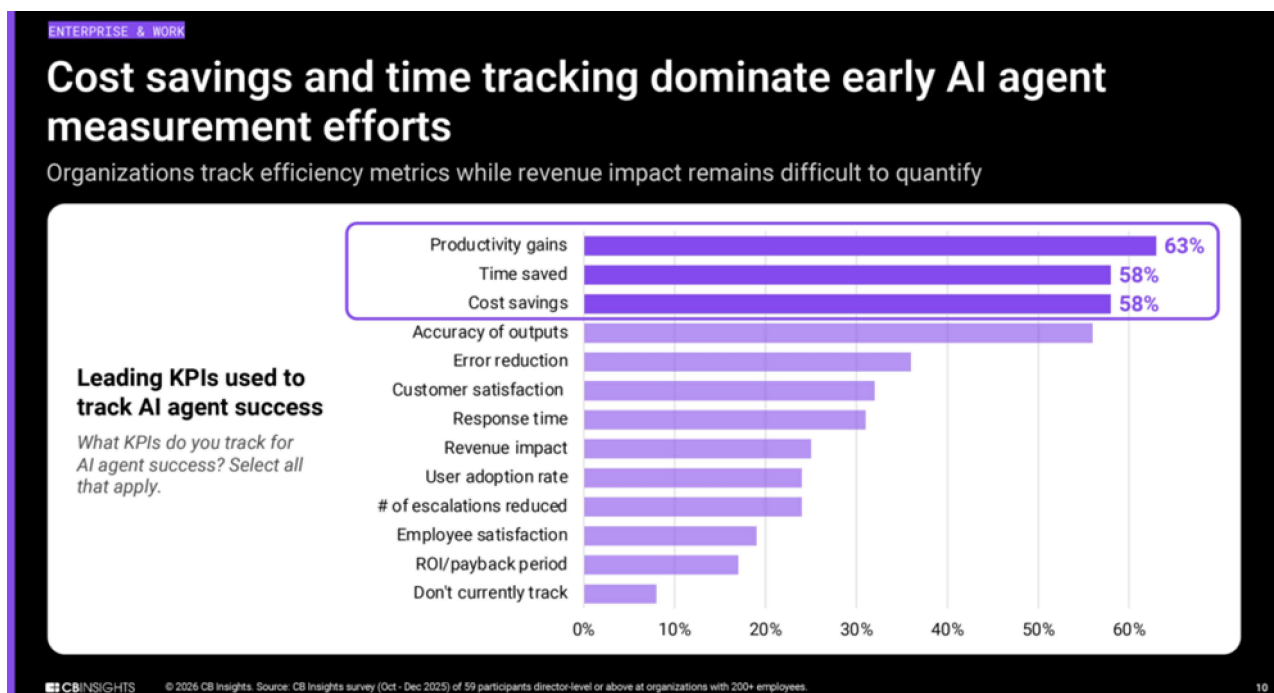


Figure 1: Cost savings and time tracking dominate early AI agent measurement efforts

Source: CB Insights, 2026. Tech Trends 2026: 14 emerging trends to watch closely this year, Research, January 15 (work cited)

Seeing ecosystems animated by the platforms, networks, and marketplaces as supporting and making marketing stronger

The report Martech 2030 published by Scott Brinker and Jason Baldwin in 2020 predicted five major trends that would shape marketing and marketing technology (martech) through the so-called (by them) augmented marketer decade (Brinker, S., 2026). One of these trends referred to platforms, networks, and marketplaces (see figure below) through which businesses structure and strategy were going to be driven more and more by graphs and ecosystems' interconnection, as an expression of evolution from linear chains' optimization (value chains, supply chains, distribution chains). And while advancing into 2026 Brinker see the major AI engines (with Model Context Protocol/ MCP connectors enabling AI agents' interaction with external data sources, applications, and tools and ChatGPT Apps performing tasks, triggering interactions, or accessing data) as the most intriguing platforms probably, hyperscalers (AWS Marketplace, Google Cloud Marketplace, and Microsoft Marketplace) being the outstanding ones in marketing technology. Also, Brinker is strengthening his commitment to see ecosystems animated by the platforms, networks, and marketplaces as supporting and making marketing stronger by the close of the decade.

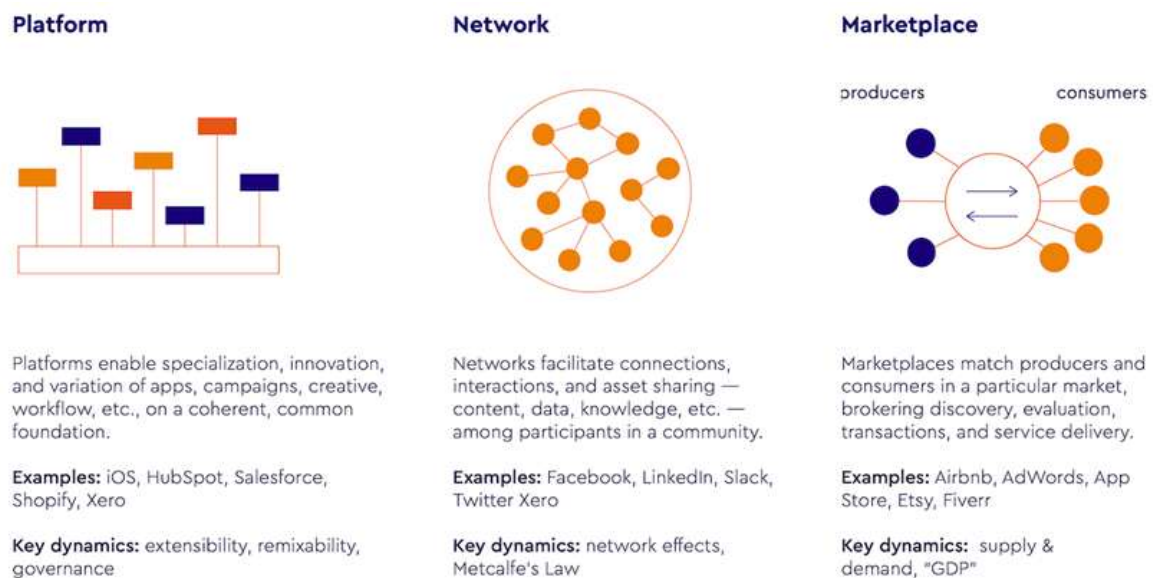


Figure 2: Platform, Network, Marketplace

Source: Brinker, S., 2026. In 2020, I made 5 predictions about marketing and martech for this decade. Here's how they're going..., CustomerThink, January 10 (work cited)

It is interesting to also remember that Brinker made reference in the above-mentioned article to Databricks and Snowflake as two of the remarkable platforms today integrating across varied technology stacks (acting as universal data layers).

In a new book published in 2026 by Wiley, the authors Denise Persson (chief marketing officer) and Chris Degnan (chief revenue officer) explained how Snowflake scaled its go-to-market (GTM) organization (Persson and Degnan, 2026). They highlighted their committing to absolute alignment of marketing, sales, and product (at any level of their business growth or size), strategizing for it, and then deliver on it, so as to ensure customers' attraction and revenue driving, creating awareness (based on campaigns' building to shift perception) and being part of every AI conversation, driving pipeline to make sales successful.

Research findings by Mogno, Nuccio and Bellio (2025) underlined digital platforms' role in building a CX strategy in phygital retail, revealing key elements (a core digital platform, a shared brand purpose, experience customization, strong brand positioning, and a dynamic partnership ecosystem) integrated by a digital platform (as the central enabler) to deliver effective CX. Consequently, ensuring relationships' mediation by brands, the digital platform can deliver well integrated customer-centric phygital journey.

According to Broitman et al. (2025), organizations can be empowered to reimagine marketing technology nature so as deliver rapid responses to their customers, by: focusing on shaping full CX based on marketing technology within AI revolution as strategic enterprise asset backed by the C-suite (better understanding martech implications in an AI-driven future) and implanted in organizations' long-term vision; anticipating their customer needs and behaviors based on strong data strategy (ensuring interactions' combination across phygital touchpoints and updating customers' profile continuously); encouraging the development of collaboration between technology teams, marketing, product, and data science by embracing digital-first ways of working, investing continually in talent (martech skills' development being treated as a continuous journey); envision martech as an integrated marketing operating model ensuring E2E journey orchestration (stack simplification being accelerated by AI-powered agents, understanding AI role as a capability enabler across not only data and decisioning, but also across design and distribution), and marketing outcomes' driving (including delivering AI-driven CX), seeing martech as a growth engine. Also, McKinsey's representatives highlighted the importance of redefining with the help of AI how organizations measure marketing technology's impact around revenue generation (as well around operational efficiency and total cost of ownership), and empowering brands to approach the customer.

It is obvious that progress is being made at the confluence between digital marketing, phygital CX and AI agents

There is always need of encouraging a relevant continual relationship to productively engage customers based on using data-driven personalized interactions, consequently building not only trust and loyalty, but also advocacy. According to Doherty, Torres and Gaylard (2026), critical in better understanding productively ensuring customers' engagement is the creative process of ideation (both conventional, and contemporary) in reconsidering experiential marketing as a dynamic capability focused on interactions' mediation, automation, and personalization (beyond touchpoints' orchestration), rigorously investigating technological

adoption (including the extended reality technology – ERT, being demonstrated that ERT framework has a large-scale effect on the phygital experience).

Suh (2026), who investigated in the last five years and in various sectors over 30 global cases, developed a typology (by outlining 4 experiential domains charted alongside the dimensions of digitalization and physicalization: escapist, esthetic, educational, and entertainment) of phygital CX business models to enhance both value creation and stakeholder engagement based on phygital interactions. And for this he conceptualized experiential modules as recombinatory elements, prioritizing human needs and values in linking enterprise strategy with CX and societal experience within technology adoption. Research findings by Klaczek-SucHECKI et al. (2026), who conducted in 2025 a bibliometric analysis (papers published in WoS and Scopus from 2015 to 2024) revealed the key role played by emotions in the perception of phygital experiences and identified 3 types of consumers (solution skeptics – 48.1%, cautious explorers – 20.1%, and tool enthusiasts – 31.9%). Luan, Zhang and Chen (2026), who analyzed AR try-on effectiveness in supporting the five-stage cognitive process of buyer journey within phygital retail environments, showed how purchase intention regarding mainstream products is directly influenced by telepresence (its effect being mediated by confidence in fit for narrower-appeal products).

A recent conceptual paper by the reputed Batat (2025), starting from the novel paradigm so-called phygital service research (PSR, a new introduced paradigm extending, toward human-first experience design within phygital service ecosystems, both foundational service research/FSR, and transformative service research/TSR) highlighted the existing paradigms' limitations in capturing the complexity of phygital service realities and proposed (by integrating technology without compromising experiential authenticity) a human-first logic grounded in the so-called phygital phenomenology. This innovative framework contributes among other aspects to the design of (prioritizing human needs and for positive impact) phygitally mediated service ecosystems, sector-specific applications needing, of course, to be explored further.

In our last HMM issue we took into consideration (Negricea and Purcarea, 2025) the significant relationship between consumer phygital experience and operational efficiency within the context of the E2E digital supply chain transformation, the new CX roles' and AI capabilities' alignment, and the challenge of consumer phygital experience enhancement while leveraging mutually beneficial synergies between humans and machines. And as previously mentioned it's time: to accelerate the progress of sales and marketing teams' process to benefit from AI agents, and increase marketers' focus on building an AI digital marketing department advancing towards an easy-to-use system (Purcarea a, 2025); to improve human and digital workforce synergy, keeping up with the evolving enterprise agents, and reimagining the end-to-end phygital marketing process, reshaping sales-marketing relationship within AI-driven workflows' orchestration while advancing on the path to Agentic Economy, and in perspective of Agentic Society (Purcarea b, 2025).

Known as the largest independent full-funnel marketing agency across the media, Tinuiti (2026) declared that AI is already a utility, and marketing is dealing with a whole new dimension within the movement from surfaces (one-dimensional placements) to interfaces (systems inviting interaction and continuously learning), the governing algorithms being the infrastructure. Also, Tinuiti introduced the concept of “The Everything Interface: one intelligent layer interpreting every signal, mediating every move, and quietly deciding who wins” (reflecting “the convergence between search and commerce, ads and answers, creative and data”). Consequently, for CMOs it’s a moment for reprogramming, starting designing accordingly. On the other hand, a well-known leading cloud-based customer engagement platform, Braze (Nasdaq: BRZE), underlined the importance for marketers to “seamlessly incorporate AI into their daily tasks. Marketers should master AI-assisted content creation, campaign optimization, churn prediction, and upsell opportunities” (Team Braze, 2025).

Leveraging the partnership with a voluntary working group, ensuring an evidence-based foundation of the research necessary for an online store project design, considering the importance of crafting a compelling online store value proposition, better understanding project’s channel-specific KPI, ensuring strategy and sales’ alignment, a structured continuous approach required by an effective e-commerce management, and a clear awareness of AI category agents’ power

As revealed by Panas and Karlsson (2025), within the AI at work increasing use, among the ways Gen Z can align with AI trends to prepare in advance for job market changes are also upskilling with AI in mind. And that while the roles organizations hire for work are reshaped by AI. On the other hand, with regard to Gen Z as consumers within the new business model, Hootsuite CEO Irina Novoselsky (Santiago, 2025) stated: “They complete 60% of their buying journey before ever actually engaging with the sales representative because they want to discover and evaluate their business on their own terms.”

We identified the challenging opportunity of a partnership with a voluntary collaborative team of students sharing passion for online stores, and eager to surpass themselves by bridging theoretical knowledge with practical application, dedicated to addressing identified research goals and create, innovate, and produce tangible outcomes based on high engagement over a defined period. Centered on this initiative, we have established that this voluntary working group to meet regularly to brainstorm, coordinate, plan, and execute this project significantly improving undergraduate research experience. There was also an advantage in being able to benefit from ensuring visibility into this team’s work, being taken into consideration the so-called visibility grid (Wilding, 2025), consequently both adjusting, and iterating as needed.

From the very beginning, in order to consolidate arguments and decisions, our partnership focused on building an evidence-based foundation of the research necessary for the

design of our voluntary project, by critically analyzing multiple sources, including (beyond the above-mentioned verified information) those regarding the importance of:

- Crafting a compelling online store value proposition (beyond just the product, and being trustworthy and memorable) to effectively meet customer needs, knowing that for this value proposition it is necessary to have an integrated digital marketing strategy defining segmentation, targeting and position, and focus the SMART marketing objectives on CX by applying the so-called RACE Framework (Chaffey a, 2025; Take Action, 2025);
- The value delivered by AI and consumer acceptance of AI and his trust in AI, as well as AI features' rising adoption (analysis based on the well-known Technology Acceptance Model: Nagy and Hajdu, 2022; Frank et al., 2024; Musa et al., 2024; Sharabati et al., 2024; Ruangkanjanases et al., 2024; Frank, Folwarczny and Otterbring, 2025; Kumari and Gupta, 2025; Mennekes, T., 2025);
- Better understanding project's channel-specific KPIs such as: online store customer acquisition cost (CAC), mainly organic search/SEO, and organic social as online store CAC by channel; online store customer lifetime value (CLV); online store conversion rate by channel; online store average order value (AOV), that needs, for instance, to be monitored, analyzed, and increased in order to maximize the profitability of the online store, knowing that online shoppers are expecting tailored CX (Bishop, C., 2025; Tanner, 2025; Bose, 2025; Gare, 2025; Chaffey b, 2025; Haynes, 2025; Llewellyn, 2025; Odom, 2025);
- Ensuring strategy and sales' alignment, including by creating market penetration strategy for each product or segment, so as to achieve specific relevant market goals based on this blueprint for aligning marketing, sales, and product teams, as well on a clear ideal customer profile (ICP) for precision targeting, considering its firmographics, technographics, and behavioral attributes (B2C), plus – regarding the most essential prospects in B2B marketing – psychographics, business situation, business and operating model, and resources (Harvard Business School, 2026; MacKay, 2025; Jain, 2024);
- A structured continuous approach required by an effective e-commerce management as the process of maintaining and operating the online store, so as to overcome and promptly respond to challenges (such as inventory management, shipping and fulfillment, and customer acquisition), leveraging the potential benefits (such as efficiency, compliance and security, and data-driven decision-making), including considering the role of e-commerce product categorization in improving online shopping process streamlining and CX optimization (Shopify Staff, 2024; Keenan, 2025; Miller, 2025; Ideson, 2025; Scarpa, 2025);
- A clear awareness of AI category agents' power, taking into account that both the organization's procurement performance in its entirety, and a category manager's typical day can

be transformed (through not only substantial cost savings and enhanced analytics, but also automation) by quickly embracing AI category agents, as well as preparing for the new reality of Agentic Commerce (D'Avino and Chawla, 2025; Stryker, 2025; Google Cloud, 2025; Snowman, 2026).

Instead of conclusions

The first stages of the above-mentioned partnership with the voluntary working group mapped out the project's operational infrastructure, and recorded notable results that will be highlighted in the next issue. A significant number of established tasks are currently in the process of being completed, confirming powerful strengths combinations to achieve more together. It is also worth mentioning that from the very beginning a thorough analysis of the present Romanian e-commerce landscape has been provided (MerchantPro, 2025; Mordor Intelligence, 2025; NORBr, 2024; DataReportal, 2025).

References

- Batat, W., 2025. Phygital service research (PSR): advancing FSR and TSR toward human-first experience design in hybrid physical-digital ecosystems, *Journal of Services Marketing* 1–14, December 9. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JSM-09-2025-0600>.
- Bishop, C., 2025. Customer acquisition cost formula and tips to improve your CAC, *Zendesk*, September 2. Available at: <<https://www.zendesk.com/au/blog/customer-acquisition-cost/>> [Accessed 2 February 2026].
- Bose, S., 2025. Ecommerce Customer Value: How to Calculate & Improve It (2025), *Saras*, July 7. Available at: <<https://www.sarasanalytics.com/blog/ecommerce-customer-lifetime-value>> [Accessed 2 February 2026].
- Brinker, S., 2026. In 2020, I made 5 predictions about marketing and martech for this decade. Here's how they're going..., *CustomerThink*, January 10. Available at: <<https://customerthink.com/in-2020-i-made-5-predictions-about-marketing-and-martech-for-this-decade-heres-how-theyre-going/>> [Accessed 26 January 2026].
- Broitman, A., Robinson, K., Brodherson, M., Jabs, N., Tas, R. and Flavin, S., with Gomes, M., 2025. Rewiring martech: From cost center to growth engine, *McKinsey & Company, Growth, Marketing & Sales Practice*, October 22, 2025, pp. 1-11. Available at: <<https://www.mckinsey.com/capabilities/growth-marketing-and-sales/our-insights/rewiring-martech-from-cost-center-to-growth-engine>> [Accessed 24 October 2025].
- CB Insights, 2026. Tech Trends 2026: 14 emerging trends to watch closely this year, *Research*, January 15. Available at: <<https://www.cbinsights.com/research/report/top-tech-trends-2026/>> [Accessed 30 January 2026].
- Chaffey, D., 2025. How to define SMART marketing objectives (with example RACE KPIs), *Smart Insights*, 29 Jul. Available at: <<https://www.smartinsights.com/goal-setting-evaluation/goals-kpis/define-smart-marketing-objectives/>> [Accessed 2 February 2026].

Chaffey, D., 2025. E-commerce conversion rate benchmarks – 2025 update, Smart Insights, 02 Jan. Available at: <<https://www.smartinsights.com/ecommerce/ecommerce-analytics/ecommerce-conversion-rates/>> [Accessed 2 February 2026].

Conlon, G., 2025. Why AI is a non-negotiable for CX leaders in 2026, Genesys, 03/12/2025. Available at: <<https://www.genesys.com/en-gb/blog/post/why-ai-is-a-non-negotiable-for-cx-leaders-in-2026?>>> [Accessed 28 January 2026].

DataReportal, 2025. DIGITAL 2025: ROMANIA, Global Digital Insights, Global Digital Reports series in 2025 supported by Meltwater and We Are Social. Available at: <<https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2025-romania>> [Accessed 25 October 2025].

D’Avino, L., Chawla, D., 2025. The future of category management: The power of AI category agents, McKinsey & Company, April 29. Available at: <<https://www.mckinsey.com/capabilities/operations/our-insights/operations-blog/the-future-of-category-management-the-power-of-ai-category-agents>> [24 October 2025].

Doherty, Á., Torres, A.M. and Gaylard, A.K., 2026. Advancing phygital experiential marketing via generative AI, Journal of Strategic Marketing, 09 Jan, pp. 1-15. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/0965254X.2026.2614475>.

Frank, D.-A., Chrysochou, P., Mitkidis, P., Otterbring, T., Ariely, D., 2024. Navigating uncertainty: Exploring consumer acceptance of artificial intelligence under self-threats and high-stakes decisions, Technology in Society, Volume 79, December. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techsoc.2024.102732>.

Frank, D.-A., Folwarczny, M., Otterbring, T., 2025. Consumer Acceptance of High-Autonomy AI Assistants Is Driven by Perceived Benefits in Online Shopping Settings Characterized by Scarcity, Psychology & Marketing, 1–18. <https://doi.org/10.1002/mar.70074>.

Gare, J., 2025. 9 strategies to increase customer lifetime value (CLV) in ecommerce, Venn Apps, 11th April. Available at: <<https://www.vennapps.com/blog/how-to-increase-customer-lifetime-value-clv-in-ecommerce>> [Accessed 2 February 2026].

Google Cloud, 2025. What is an AI agent? 12/04/. Available at: <<https://cloud.google.com/discover/what-are-ai-agents>> [Accessed 2 February 2026].

Harvard Business School, 2026. Aligning Strategy and Sales. Available at: <<https://www.exed.hbs.edu/aligning-strategy-sales?>>> [Accessed 2 February 2026].

Haynes, T., 2025. How to define effective digital marketing objectives and KPIs to achieve your goals? Smart Insights, 15 Apr. Available at: <<https://www.smartinsights.com/goal-setting-evaluation/goals-kpis/choosing-effective-digital-marketing-kpis/>> [Accessed 2 February 2026].

Hemsworth, M., 2026. The Papa Johns Food Ordering Agent is Powered by Google, Trendhunter, January 14. Available at: <<https://www.trendhunter.com/trends/papa-johns-food-ordering-agent>> [Accessed 20 January 2026].

HubSpot, 2026. The State of Marketing 2026, Report created by HubSpot in collaboration with Datalily. Available at: <<https://hubspot-state-of-marketing-2026.replit.app/>> [Accessed 2 February 2026].

Ideson, P., 2025. What Does a Category Manager Do? (To Elevate Procurement's Impact), Art of Procurement, September 5. Available at: <<https://artofprocurement.com/blog/learn-category-manager>> [Accessed 2 February 2026].

Jain, A., 2024. How to Define Your Ideal Customer Profile (ICP) for Precision Targeting, Gartner, January 16. Available at: <<https://www.gartner.com/en/digital-markets/insights/b2b-ideal-customer-profile>> [Accessed 2 February 2026].

Kanesa, D., 2026. Shoptelligence Debuts the ShopLab AI and ShopLaunch AI Tools, Trendhunter, January 13. Available at: <<https://www.trendhunter.com/trends/shoptelligence>> [Accessed 20 January 2026].

Keenan, M., 2025. 26 Need-to-Know Ecommerce Marketing Tactics, Shopify, 16 Mar. Available at: <<https://www.shopify.com/au/blog/ecommerce-marketing?>> [Accessed 2 February 2026].

Klaczek-SucHECKI, K., Kucharska, B., LubERda, P., Malinowska, M., 2026. Psychographic Typology of the Phygital Consumer Based on Emotions Towards Tools and Solutions Used in Retail and Services. Sustainability 2026, 18, 666. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su18020666>.

Kumari, N., Gupta, K., 2025. Consumer Acceptance of AI Generated Content in E Commerce, International Journal for Multidisciplinary Research (IJFMR), Volume 7, Issue 2, 27 March. DOI:10.36948/ijfmr.2025.v07i02.39569.

Luan, C.-C., Zhang, S., Chen, W.-L., 2026. Augmented reality try-ons as phygital integration technology for sustainable fashion products, International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management 1–16. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJRDM-03-2025-0215>.

Llewellyn, B., 2025. The Importance of AOV for eCommerce Businesses | Tips to Boost Your Average Order Value, Salesfire, Dec 22nd. Available at: <<https://www.salesfire.co.uk/articles/aov-ecommerce/>> [Accessed 2 February 2026].

MacKay, J., 2025. How to identify your ideal customer profile (ICP), Planio, September 17. Available at: <<https://plan.io/blog/identify-your-ideal-customer-profile/>> [Accessed 2 February 2026].

Mennekes, T., 2025. Digital Transformation in Retail: A Comprehensive Analysis of Technology Acceptance and Consumer Behavior. Springer Fachmedien Wiesbaden GmbH, part of Springer Nature 2025. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-658-50223-2_1.

MerchantPro, 2025. Raportul anual MerchantPro eCommerce Insights 2025 – Perspectiva completa asupra anului 2024, analize și predicții pentru 2025, March 12. Available at: <<https://www.merchantpro.ro/blog/tendinte/raportul-anual-merchantpro-ecommerce-insights-2025-perspectiva-completa-asupra-anului-2024-analize-si-predictii-pentru-2025>> [Accessed 25 October 2025].

Miller, J., 2025. Ecommerce Product Categorization: How To Organize Your Products, Gorgias, November 4. Available at: <<https://www.gorgias.com/blog/ecommerce-product-categorization>> [Accessed 2 February 2026].

Mogno, S., Nuccio, M., Bellio, E., 2025. Building a customer experience strategy in phygital retail: the role of digital platforms, SINERGIE, Institutional Research Information System. Available at: <<https://iris.unive.it/handle/10278/5108368>> [Accessed 18 January 2026].

Mordor Intelligence, 2025. Romania E-Commerce Market Size & Share Analysis - Growth Trends & Forecasts (2025 - 2030), Report, June 30. Available at: <<https://www.mordorintelligence.com/industry-reports/romania-ecommerce-market>> [Accessed 25 October 2025].

Musa, H.G., Fatmawati, I., Nuryakin, N. and Suyanto, M., 2024. Marketing research trends using technology acceptance model (TAM): a comprehensive review of researches (2002–2022), Cogent Business & Management, 11:1. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311975.2024.2329375>.

Nagy, S., Hajdu, N., 2022. Consumer acceptance of the use of artificial intelligence in online shopping: evidence from Hungary, *Amfiteatru Economic*, 2021, 23(56), pp.155-173. <https://doi.org/10.24818/EA/2021/56/155>.

Negricea, C. and Purcarea, I.M., 2025. Enhancing Consumer Phygital Experience at the Confluence between E-Commerce and E2E Digital Supply Chain Transformation, *Holistic Marketing Management*, vol. 15(4), pp. 08-24, December.

NORBr, 2024. Payment methods in Romania RO, in PayWorldTour, 11 September. Available at: <<https://norbr.com/library/payworldtour/payment-methods-in-romania/>> [Accessed 25 October 2025].

Odom, N., 2025. 8 Proven Strategies for Driving AOV With Personalized Product Recommendations, Emarsys, April 2. Available at: <<https://emarsys.com/learn/blog/proven-strategies-for-driving-aov-with-personalized-product-recommendations/>> [Accessed 2 February 2026].

Panas, A. and Karlsson, A., 2025. Curated reads on Gen Z in the workplace, McKinsey & Company, July 2025, Available at: <<https://www.mckinsey.com/~media/mckinsey/email/genz/2025/07/2025-07-29b.html?>> [Accessed December 3, 2025].

Persson, D., Degnan, C., 2026. Make It Snow: From Zero to Billions: How Snowflake Scaled its Go-to-Market Organization, Wiley, Hoboken, New Jersey, 2026, pp. VII, 210-213.

Purcarea, I.M., 2025. AI Digital Marketing Department and ABM, ABX, and Account-Driven GTM Strategies, *Holistic Marketing Management*, vol. 15(2), pp.19-25, May.

Purcarea, I.M., 2025. Getting Marketing in Perspective of Agentic Society, *Holistic Marketing Management*, vol. 15(3), pp. 16-25, August.

Ruangkanjanases, A., Khan, A., Sivarak, O., Rahardja, U. and Chen, S.-C., 2024. Modeling the Consumers' Flow Experience in E-commerce: The Integration of ECM and TAM with the Antecedents of Flow Experience, *SAGE Open* April-June 2024: 1–13. DOI: 10.1177/21582440241258595.

Salpini, C., 2026. Walmart: This year, AI tinkering 'becomes transformation', CIO Dive, Jan. 16. Available at: <https://www.ciodive.com/news/walmart-ai-shopping-strategy-tinkering-transformation/809895/?_> [Accessed 29 January 2026].

Santiago, E., 2025. Gen Z is turning this CEO's business model upside down, Hubspot, 02/27/25. Available at: <<https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/new-gen-z-business-model>> [Accessed 10 October 2025].

Scarpa, A.B., 2025. Category Management in eCommerce: what changes and what stays the same, Dunnhumby, 24 July. Available at: <<https://www.dunnhumby.com/resources/blog/category-management/en/category-management-ecommerce-changes-vs-constants/>> [Accessed 2 February 2026].

Sharabati, A.-A.A.; Ali, A.A.A.; Allahham, M.I.; Hussein, A.A.; Alheet, A.F.; Mohammad, A.S., 2024. The Impact of Digital Marketing on the Performance of SMEs: An Analytical Study in Light of Modern Digital Transformations. Sustainability 2024, 16, 8667. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su16198667>.

Shopify Staff, 2024. Ecommerce Management 101: How to Create A Winning Strategy, Shopify, Jan 25. Available at: <<https://www.shopify.com/blog/ecommerce-management?>> [Accessed 2 February 2026].

Snowman, B., 2026. Agentic Commerce: How to win and retain customer loyalty, Dunnhumby, 14 January. Available at: <<https://www.dunnhumby.com/resources/blog/loyalty-personalisation/en/agentic-commerce-how-to-win-and-retain-customer-loyalty/>> [Accessed 2 February 2026].

Stryker, C., 2025. Types of AI agents, IBM Think, AI Models. Available at: <<https://www.ibm.com/think/topics/ai-agent-types>> [Accessed 2 February 2026].

Suh, T., 2026. Conceptualizing a Business Model Typology of Phygital Customer Experience to Build and Manage Phygital Ecosystems, Journal of Macromarketing, First published online January 9, 2026. <https://doi.org/10.1177/02761467251411511>.

Take Action, 2025. Value Proposition Explained: Boosting Ecommerce Growth, December 8. Available at: <<https://www.take-action.agency/blog/value-proposition-explained-ecommerce>> [Accessed 2 February 2026].

Tanner, J., 2025. How Digital Marketing Works: Key Processes, Channels & Strategies, Strativera, October 23. Available at: <<https://strativera.com/how-digital-marketing-works/>> [Accessed 2 February 2026].

Team Braze, 2025. Are you AI-savvy enough to survive? A wake-up call for CMOs, Braze, December 11. Available at: <<https://www.braze.com/resources/articles/are-you-ai-savvy?>> [Accessed 15 January 2026].

Tinuiti, 2026. Big Bets for the CMO in 2026. The Everything Interface, pp. 1-13. Available at: <<https://info.tinuiti.com/Big-Bets-For-2026>> [Accessed 8 January 2026].

Uniphore, 2025. Marketing AI Transformation and the Role of CDP, Guide, pp. 1-22. Available at: <https://cloud.insight.insiderintelligence.com/20250926-Uniphore-ContentSyndication_RegPageProgPro?> [Accessed 24 January 2026].

Wassel, B., 2026. How Home Depot, Wayfair executives are preparing for an agentic AI future, Customer Experience Dive, Jan. 12. Available at: <<https://www.customerexperiencedive.com/news/home-depot-wayfair-preparing-agentic-ai/809357/?>> [Accessed 29 January 2026].

Wilding, M., 2025. How to Stay on Top of Your Team's Projects—Without Micromanaging, Harvard Business Review, July. Available at: <<https://hbr.org/2025/07/how-to-stay-on-top-of-your-teams-projects-without-micromanaging>> [Accessed 31 July 2025].

