

B2B Marketing Trends Report 2025

Seven essential trends for the strategic CMO

How to monetize your AI strategy, harness intent data, and build greater affinity with your customers.



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00 Introduction: the year ahead



Steve Ellis

Founder

AI changes everything

2024 was a year of change. Artificial intelligence firmly established itself as a primary business focus, with Microsoft, Dell Technologies, Google and AWS all doubling down on their offerings and narratives. Elections in both the UK and the US brought us new governments, and NVIDIA became the most valuable company in the world, surpassing Apple with a market cap of \$3.43 trillion.¹

The value of the global AI market grew beyond \$184 billion in 2024—up nearly \$50 billion compared to 2023—and the typical B2B buyer is changing. Millennials and Gen Z buyers now drive purchasing decisions,² and more than half of large B2B transactions are processed through digital self-serve channels.³ Ninety percent of online content is forecast to be generated by AI by 2026.⁴ And SEO is expected to have a \$83.7 billion market reach by 2025.⁵ There is clearly a wealth of potential opportunities for brands to leverage as they look to firm up their AI adoption strategies and strengthen their customer interactions.

Tightening budgets will inevitably make things difficult. According to Forrester's Budget Planning Survey, in 2024 only 47% of B2B marketing decision-makers expect an increase of between 1% and 4% in 2025.⁶ But with the right focus and approach, the challenge of doing more with less should not be a barrier to success.

Although AI will dominate boardroom discussions in 2025, we think the best course of action is to focus on harnessing the power of data insights and setting firm principles to shape and inform marketing programs that are as reactive as they are proactive. And to use AI to help supplement this strategy in the most effective manner possible, where appropriate.

New platforms, tools and skills

To ensure we are ready to help our clients apply AI to their marketing activities, in 2024 Metia Group merged with JBI Studios. This move brought together outstanding technology and AI platforms, with deep expertise in sales and marketing in both tech and financial services.

We start 2025 ready to offer our clients the opportunities provided by our entire group. These include the AI Suite platform, developed by AI specialist Cody for use in marketing and sales applications. We also leverage CodeSM which provides Marketing on Demand services managed and delivered via a SaaS platform. In the financial services and wealth industry our sister business, JBI Metia, provides industry focused services, data and products.

The chapters of the Metia B2B Trends Report 2025 will provide you with insights and expertise from across our business to help you shape and inform effective B2B marketing strategies and practices. We hope you find them valuable as you prepare for the year ahead.

¹ [The Washington Post](#), "Nvidia surpasses Apple to become world's most valuable company," November 2024.

² [Forrester](#), "Younger Generations Are Shaking Up B2B Buying — Are You Prepared?" March 2024.

³ [Forrester](#), "Forrester's B2B Marketing & Sales Predictions 2025: More Than Half Of Large B2B Purchases Will Be Processed Through Digital Self-Serve Channels," October 2024.

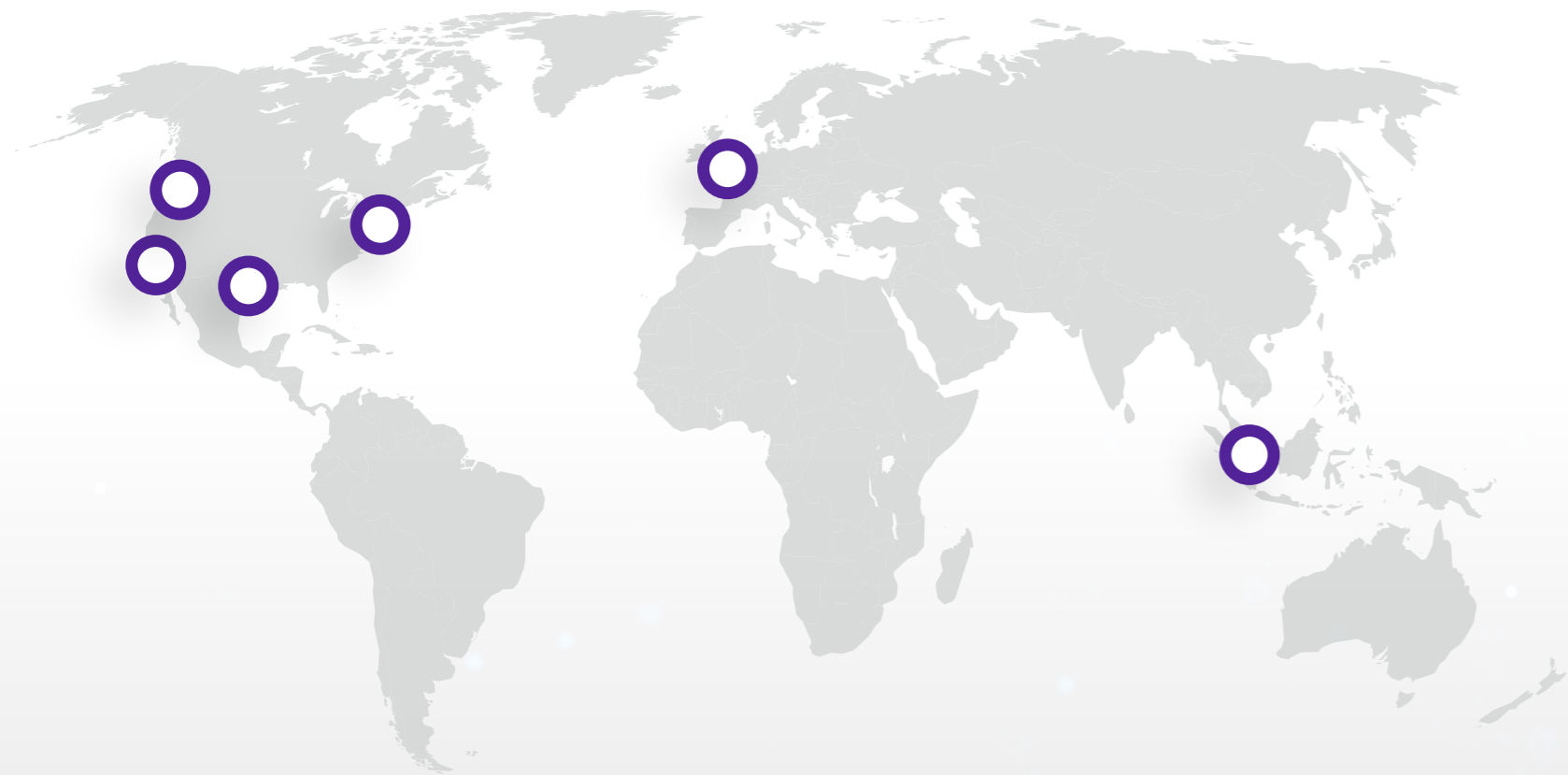
⁴ [Financial Times](#), "How does AI in thought leadership benefit the audience?" February 2024.

⁵ [Traffic Think Tank](#), "How to Start an SEO Business and Run a Profitable Agency," July 2024.

⁶ [Forrester](#), "B2B CMOs Don't Expect 2025 Growth To Come From Budget Increases," August 2024.



00 Introduction: our global perspective



“In 2025, B2B marketing in the US will be driven by the integration of AI and data analytics, the need for seamless multi-channel experiences, and a heightened focus on data privacy. Account-based marketing (ABM) will play a crucial role, enabling marketers to target high-value accounts with personalized strategies. Marketers who can navigate these complexities and leverage technology effectively will lead the way in creating impactful and personalized customer engagements.”

Amber Whiteman, President, US



“In 2024, we witnessed a significant shift towards personalization and data-driven decision-making in B2B marketing. As we move into 2025, the APJ region is poised to embrace emerging technologies like AI and automation at an unprecedented scale. Expect a surge in hyper-targeted campaigns that leverage real-time insights, fostering deeper connections and driving sustainable growth. The integration of sustainability into marketing strategies will also become essential, as businesses respond to the growing demand for corporate responsibility. The future is not just about selling; it’s about creating meaningful partnerships that resonate across cultures.”

Jason Cheang, Vice President, APJ



“Adapting quickly and identifying ways to embrace AI effectively and efficiently will be at the forefront of business strategy in 2025. Our business is responding by continuously innovating our offering to help our customers solve their biggest problems and navigate the new challenges and opportunities AI provides. Finding the right path forward is essential to delivering impact quickly and value in the long-term. From streamlining and accelerating content creation to providing tools that enrich the end-user experience across a broad range of sectors – 2025 will see marketing teams take a leading role in helping organizations move from experimentation to meaningful and measurable outcomes.”

Becky Warner, Chief Operating Officer

01 How AI will transform the marketing engine and how you can monetize the possibilities



Dan Brooks
Chief Customer Officer

AI is expected to increase sales productivity by 30% in 2025,⁷ and 84% of marketers believe that leveraging AI will enhance their marketing efforts.⁸ The year ahead is going to see AI increasingly shape and influence how brands build and execute their marketing programs. It will also see more scrutiny placed on how organizations monetize their AI investments.

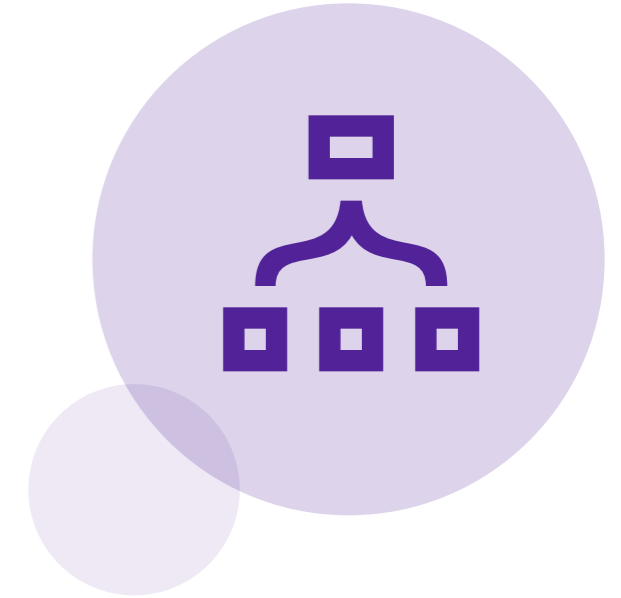
B2B marketers will consequently double down on ways they can “do more for less.” AI already provides a wealth of opportunities to enrich existing services and speed up the creative process with GenAI. Marketers will now look to use the right tools and deploy solutions to capitalize on these opportunities to greater effect to see how much measurable real change they can drive. At the same time, it’s likely they will also start to recalibrate how AI can simplify and extend the services they offer. This will reduce the overall cost of sale, a saving that we expect will be passed on to customers in a bid to provide a more competitive point of difference.

According to the Metia Insight team, who analyzed the commercial conversations of CxOs around the subject of AI, organizations are already starting to reevaluate their strategies. We expect this trend to accelerate in 2025 as they focus on how they can measure and improve the ROI of their transformation initiatives, especially when it comes to AI adoption.

Establishing ROI frameworks

Our data suggests that leaders are increasingly emphasizing the need for structured ROI frameworks before diving into AI adoption. Many will also need to reevaluate their ambitions to ensure they devote their resources to initiatives that deliver realistic and achievable results as well as value.

In 2024, we saw B2B leaders experiment with AI in bold and innovative ways. Many for the first time, and all with varying levels of success. These “experiments” demonstrate a great willingness to innovate and break new ground, but they may not all have been done with as much regard for the bottom line as we will likely see going forward.



⁷ Accenture, “Going for growth: Navigating the great value migration in the age of AI,” September 2024.

⁸ Salesforce, “Top Generative AI Statistics for 2024.”

Strategic implementations

If 2024 was a year of experimentation and extensive investment announcements, like ServiceNow's major commitment to invest £1.15 billion in the UK over the next five years,⁹ then 2025 will be a year for genuine and considered implementation. Many CxOs will move with more strategic focus toward practical AI integration across a suite of products and services. And they will look to advance their AI adoption journey from navigating challenges and identifying the "right" approach to optimizing and overseeing major changes to ensure they are positioned as a leader in their field. We therefore expect businesses to place greater emphasis on how they can improve revenue while refocusing their growth strategies around their customers to become "more human" and resonant.

Experimentation to transformation


Our findings also show there is an increasing focus on information gathering and skills investment to help navigate the best way to stay competitive and ethical. For those on a more advanced AI journey, our data indicates that many CxOs will look to embed AI into their growth strategies—seeing AI not as a tool but as a driver of long-term success. This effort must include careful consideration of how to mitigate bias while balancing innovation with oversight, especially when it comes to navigating ethical complexities.

For the 75%¹⁰ of marketers that are already experimenting with or have fully implemented AI into their workflows, 2025 will likely see big transformations in how marketing engines are powered and operate. AI will continue to shape and influence decision-making, spur content creation, and help hone or simplify processes. But how organizations find the right balance presents an interesting conundrum.

Getting the balance right

As leaders realize that ROI from AI investments will take longer than they anticipated, it's possible their impatience with AI ROI could prompt some enterprises to prematurely scale back investments. That approach could prove to be a long-term disadvantage to growth and even impact their competitive edge in an increasingly challenging marketplace. To forestall such retrenchment, AI adoption strategies should be built with long-term ROI targets in mind.

With budgets becoming more restrictive and the appetite for innovation increasing, finding the right balance will be key. AI expansion is inevitable, but the AI adoption journey will need to become more considered. Changes to the marketing engine must be rooted in identifying the right enhancements and maximizing profitability.



2025 will likely see big transformations in how marketing engines are powered and operate.

⁹ Service Now, "ServiceNow pledges \$1.5bn investments to UK business over five years," October 2024.

¹⁰ Salesforce, "State of Marketing report," March 2024.

02 Beyond experimentation: Moving from proof of concept to impact



Oriol Zertuche
Chief Technology Officer

The evolution of AI in marketing has reached a critical point where success depends not just on sophisticated models but on how effectively organizations leverage domain-specific data. A recent NTT DATA survey highlights this shift,¹¹ with nearly 90% of senior decision-makers citing AI pilot fatigue. This signals the need to move from broad experimentation to targeted, data-driven implementation. IDC's survey underscores this,¹² revealing that organizations launch an average of 37 AI proof-of-concept projects annually, but only a small fraction progress to full production.

Key to overcoming these hurdles is integrating industry knowledge with AI strategies. Leading companies are fine-tuning models with proprietary data, taking advantage of Retrieval-Augmented Generation (RAG) for real-time access to knowledge bases, and implementing contextual prompting. These approaches share one vital requirement: high-quality data. The quality, organization, and relevance of data are not just technical considerations—they are strategic imperatives determining whether AI becomes transformative or remains an expensive experiment.

The data dilemma

Marketing faces a unique challenge: data fragmentation across disparate platforms like CRM systems, cloud storage, and social media management tools. This data includes diverse formats, from customer feedback and campaign metrics to multimedia assets. Estimates indicate 80–90% of business data is unstructured,¹³ yet many organizations lack the infrastructure to leverage it effectively for AI applications.

This disconnect between data availability and usability poses a major obstacle. When AI systems rely on disorganized data, outcomes range from ineffective insights to damaging errors. Poor data quality can erode customer trust and lead employees to lose confidence in AI tools. With 67% of consumers already skeptical of AI,¹⁴ repeated errors can deepen this distrust, especially in B2B contexts where precision and trust are critical.



¹¹ NTT DATA, "Global GenAI Report," 2024.

¹² IDC, "IDC Executive CIO QuickPoll Series: Operationalizing AI," 2024.

¹³ IDC, "Untapped Value: What Every Executive Needs to Know About Unstructured Data," August 2023.

¹⁴ KPMG and the University of Queensland, "Trust in artificial intelligence," 2023.

Beyond basic interfaces

An analysis by McKinsey highlights a shift from basic chatbots to integrated, purpose-driven AI embedded in enterprise workflows.¹⁵ Chatbots, while useful as learning tools, represent only a fraction of AI's potential. The next wave of AI interfaces has to go beyond simple interactions, embedding advanced capabilities directly into marketers' tools and workflows.

These new interfaces must address the complexity of marketing workflows. They need to source data appropriately, provide meaningful user options, and support creative collaboration where there may be no single "right" answer. For example, creative content generation requires balancing factual accuracy with imaginative output. Leaning too heavily on facts can stifle creativity, while prioritizing creativity without thorough data validation risks generating misleading content.

Successful interfaces will foster transparency, offering marketers options to guide the AI process, such as toggling data sources, selecting creative directions, and refining outputs through iteration. This shifts AI from a black-box solution to a collaborative partner, amplifying human creativity while maintaining control and accuracy.

Breaking through the pilot phase

To transition AI from experimentation to impactful solutions, marketing teams must address key operational gaps:

Data hierarchy and selection

- **Governance frameworks:** Implement policies ensuring data quality, security, and usability.
- **High-value data sources:** Prioritize data that directly supports marketing goals, such as personalized campaign performance data.
- **Data structuring:** Adopt consistent naming conventions and metadata to reduce fragmentation.

AI pipeline optimization

- **Testing protocols:** Perform rigorous testing under real marketing scenarios.
- **Feedback loops:** Continuously refine models using input from users and performance metrics.
- **Scalable infrastructure:** Deploy platforms capable of handling large data volumes and supporting advanced AI tasks like RAG.
- **Performance benchmarks:** Align AI outputs with KPIs such as engagement rates and ROI.

Review and evaluation

- **Comprehensive testing:** Stress-test AI with diverse data types across the marketing cycle.
- **Success metrics:** Measure tangible outcomes like improved campaign ROI and accelerated lead conversions.
- **Regular review cycles:** Identify bottlenecks and adapt to shifts in consumer behavior.
- **ROI frameworks:** Align AI initiatives with financial outcomes such as cost reduction and revenue growth.

The path forward

Effective AI implementation goes beyond cutting-edge technology; it requires strategic data governance, seamless integration, and ongoing optimization. By resolving data fragmentation and embedding AI into workflows, organizations can foster personalized, agile marketing operations. The right AI strategy not only enhances efficiency but also strengthens brand narratives and deepens customer connections.

Additionally, purpose-driven AI tools can ensure compliance with brand and regulatory guidelines, reinforcing trust without compromising creativity. By providing customizable options and embedding AI into collaborative workflows, marketing teams can maintain a consistent brand voice across channels and gain deeper insights to inform decisions.

As marketing leaders look to 2025 and beyond, success hinges on aligning AI tools with business objectives. Investing in robust data foundations, scalable infrastructure, and continuous optimization enables teams to move past pilot fatigue and transform AI from an experimental tool into a competitive advantage.

¹⁵ McKinsey and Company, "Navigating the generative AI disruption in software," June 5, 2024.



03 Why intent data is the next evolution in behavioral science that will spearhead your marketing programs



Misia Tramp
VP Strategy & Insights

Marketing has always been grounded in understanding customers, but the tools and methods available to decode behaviors are evolving rapidly. Intent data, a powerful synthesis of behavioral science and predictive analytics, enables brands to understand not only the what of customer behavior, but also the why and, crucially, the when. This shift from observation to anticipation is a game-changer, allowing brands to build deeper relationships, craft more relevant campaigns, and ultimately achieve greater success.

Intent data is not a new idea—it stems from well-established concepts in behavioral science. However, as analytics tools, AI, and compute power have advanced, we now have the capacity to process vast amounts of unstructured data in real time, including search queries, conversational patterns, and content consumption behaviors. This evolution has unlocked unprecedented insights into audience intent.

What is intent data, and why now?

Intent data focuses on the signals customers send when they are researching solutions, evaluating options, or contemplating a decision. By analyzing these signals—whether they come from search engine queries, social conversations, or content engagement—marketers can better determine where a customer is in their journey.

Unlike demographic or firmographic data, intent data provides dynamic insights. It doesn't simply categorize customers; it reveals the subtleties of their current mindset. For example, a potential buyer searching for "top cloud security providers" is likely at the start of their research phase, while someone reading an in-depth technical paper about multicloud solutions may be much further along in their decision-making journey.

Intent data helps identify these moments earlier than ever before, functioning as an "early warning system" that detects interest before customers formally enter a buying cycle. Brands can therefore build relationships proactively, aligning messaging and outreach with customer needs at every stage.



The power of prediction

By taking advantage of intent data to power predictive analytics, organizations can fundamentally shift how they plan, execute, and optimize campaigns. Traditional methods often focus on transactional points of the customer journey. Intent data enables marketers to focus higher up the funnel—on shaping the why and building urgency around the customer’s problem before they fully recognize it themselves.

This capability is critical as B2B buyer behaviors shift. Research shows:

87% of marketers consider data their most under-utilized asset.¹⁶

5–8 times higher ROI reported for businesses using data-driven strategies.¹⁷



Google’s AI-driven search engine updates

now deliver intent-based answers across complex queries, reflecting the growing emphasis on customer intent over mere keywords.¹⁸

Ensuring your organization is equipped with rich data insights that can help predict and meet these changes in behavior—along with finding ways to enhance every interaction—can deliver measurable outcomes.

Intent data meets AI

However, as AI becomes a more integral part of marketing, some may question where intent data fits into the equation. The answer is simple: intent data and AI are not competing forces—they are complementary.

AI excels at processing large datasets, identifying patterns, and automating workflows, but it lacks the nuanced understanding of customer behavior that intent data provides. By integrating intent signals into AI workflows, marketers gain the ability to refine audience targeting and deliver hyper-relevant, human-centric experiences at scale.

For example, Metia’s Content Resonance System (CRS) enriches traditional targeting by analyzing the language of audiences. This approach identifies not just who to target but how to connect with them, based on the conversations they are having and the content they are consuming.

This fusion of intent data and AI empowers brands in three ways. They can pinpoint engagement opportunities by better understanding where conversations are happening and then tailoring campaigns accordingly. Brands can also refine targeting strategies by identifying white spaces in the market where competitors have yet to engage effectively. And they can personalize experiences with resonant messaging for specific audience segments based on their intent and mindset.

The risks of not adapting for 2025

Failing to embrace intent data as part of your strategy carries significant risks. As B2B decision-makers become younger and increasingly reliant on digital and self-serve channels, traditional demographic and transactional approaches will yield diminishing returns. Organizations that do not adapt risk falling behind competitors who leverage predictive insights to engage customers earlier, and they can end up wasting resources on campaigns that fail to resonate or reach the right audience. They can also miss opportunities to build lasting relationships with customers before competitors do.

The shift toward intent-driven strategies is not optional. It reflects a broader change in how businesses build trust and deliver value in the digital age. To leverage intent data effectively, organizations must:

- **Define customer journeys holistically:** Map every stage of the journey, from early awareness to final decision, and identify intent signals that matter most at each stage.
- **Align marketing and sales efforts:** Ensure both teams agree on what constitutes a qualified lead and establish clear processes for handoffs.
- **Invest in enriched datasets and AI integration:** Use intent data to complement AI tools, refining targeting and content strategies with real-time insights.

Intent data is not just another tool—it’s the foundation for a new era of predictive marketing. By embracing this evolution, businesses can not only meet customer needs more effectively but also anticipate them, staying one step ahead in a rapidly changing landscape. As we continue to integrate intent data with AI and behavioral science, the possibilities for innovation and impact are boundless.

¹⁶ Invoca Blog, “Data-Driven Marketing Trends for 2025: Why you need to update your strategy,” August 2024.

¹⁷ UpLead, “70 Top Lead Generation Statistics for 2024,” June 2024.

¹⁸ The Keyword, “Ask questions in new ways with AI in Search,” October 2024.

04 Why a highly targeted ABM program should be the centerpiece of your marketing strategy



Amber Whiteman

President, US
Metia Inc

Account-based marketing has always been a mainstay in B2B marketing, but in 2024 we saw an increasing demand for an approach that prioritized hyper-personalization. That trend is set to continue in 2025 and become increasingly more prevalent. Despite 82% of global B2B marketing decision-makers reporting that their budgets are likely to increase by 1% or more, only 35% of organizations will actually see any real-terms increase when adjusted for inflation.¹⁹

What this means for ABM activity is that businesses now expect the programs they invest in to fully harness the advances that have been made in the field and the wider technology landscape in recent years. Over the past decade, automation, AI, and advanced analytics have enabled better targeting, measurement, and scalability of ABM strategies, but the advent of large language models (LLMs) and generative AI has once again led to an evolution of capabilities and increased efficiency.

With the continuing pressure to do more with less, there's an increasing need to demonstrate the ROI of ABM programs. Investment in advanced technology that can streamline activities is a core element of this, but it must not be at the expense of personalization. Furthermore, demonstrating ROI with any technology necessitates the availability of effective measurement, which must also inform technology.

Why prioritize ABM?

The key reason ABM should be a priority for marketing spend is that it takes advantage of technologies that can operationalize data-rich ecosystems. The marriage of intent data and advanced predictive analytics, for example, has made it easier than ever to deliver personalized experiences to broader audiences without losing the customized touch.



¹⁹ Forbes, "[In 2025, demand and ABM teams must do better with less.](#)" August 2024.

ABM programs can harness data from across an organization, from sales and customer retention activities to customer support, finance, and product development data. This therefore moves ABM beyond its traditional function and enables it to support a more holistic customer experience, driving further integration with customer success teams.

This evolution has moved ABM from being purely based on customer acquisition to programs that includes account expansion, cross-selling opportunities, and retention, supporting the entire customer journey. A crucial outcome here is that data, teams, processes, and technology come together to create an efficient and unified strategy geared toward growth and retention through strengthening customer relationships.

Advancing account-based intelligence

Doing more for less is not a new concept—in fact, it's typically the long-term intention behind the adoption of technology, beyond the initial financial investment and implementation. Understanding how ABM can harness current and nascent technology will be crucial for determining how campaigns will be run over the coming year, so it's crucial that marketers are aware of the wider technology trends that will affect the landscape—and customer expectations.

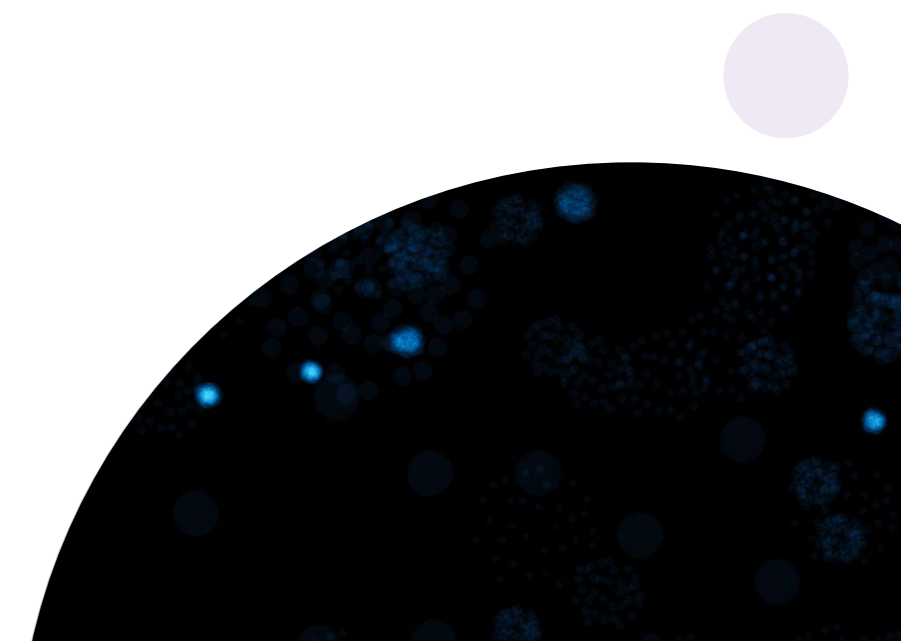
Generative AI, for example, can be used to parse more targeted and personalized content from large collections of data, refining messaging for target cohorts. This process can then be repeated to enable further personalization for smaller cohorts and individuals. Further capabilities are also being unlocked with multi-modal models, which enable the creation of bespoke creative assets, such as images and videos, from text that can support one-to-one and one-to-few campaigns. An example might be a customer or prospect who is passionate about cooking, who can then be targeted with visual assets that reflect this interest.

GenAI can also be used to engage targets driven to a website with a chatbot that further refines the buyer journey and creates more data from which even more bespoke assets and campaigns can be derived, again increasing personalization. It's crucial, however, to make sure that those conducting these activities are aware of the risks inherent in GenAI use cases, or work with trusted partners who can ensure they are compliant with data regulations and best practices around GenAI.

The evolution of analytics tools is also set to help marketers react to the latest information so that ABM campaigns are able to respond more immediately to changing requirements in real time. The rise of agentic AI is likely to supercharge this activity because agents will be able to retrieve and respond to real-time data almost immediately. This advanced use case may be out of the reach of smaller organizations, but the potential for innovation and growth will be a compelling element of ABM in 2025.

As is the case with all elements of marketing, AI continues to play an increasing role in ABM strategies, helping to streamline and refine, while also delivering hyper-personalized content at the right stage in the buyer's journey. With 34% of marketing professionals intending to move toward an ABM strategy in the future,²⁰ it's crucial they understand the key technology and market trends that will shape the coming year. Partnering with a supplier who understands these factors will be essential for delivering success and helping you develop a future-proof strategy that meets your short- and long-term business needs.

²⁰ Powered By Search, "[B2B Account-Based Marketing Statistics for 2024](#)," April 2024.



05 What can the financial services sector tell us about how to supercharge your AI strategy?



Liz High

Global Head of Integrated Marketing Strategy and Financial Services Practice Lead

While other industries debate the peril and promise of artificial intelligence, the financial services sector has quietly and methodically embraced it, tackling real-world challenges and improving customer experiences.

In true fashion, the industry is letting money do the talking. Spending on AI worldwide is predicted to reach \$632 billion by 2028 and financial services will account for 20% of it.²¹

Financial services are leading AI growth

Why? The reason is simple. According to a 2024 study by Citi GPS, banks will see an additional \$170 billion in profit over the next five years thanks to their ongoing commitment to investing in and adopting AI.²²

Their AI adoption has been incremental, prioritizing systematic improvement over sweeping transformation. The approach emphasizes setting realistic expectations and measurable goals, making strategic investments, and focusing on outcomes over hype.

So, what can we all learn about profitable AI adoption from these traditionally risk-averse, highly regulated, and arguably unlikely pioneers?



²¹ Salesforce, "How Can Financial Services Firms Grow Their Business With Agentforce?" November 2024.

²² Citi GPS: Global Perspectives & Solutions, "AI in Finance Bot, Bank & Beyond," June 2024.

The financial services playbook

Developing an AI strategy is not something you can rush. Nor is it something you can expect to see transformational outcomes from overnight.

To support your strategy, we believe there are five essential steps to consider and evaluate—all of which start with asking the right questions.



Step 1 Do we have a defensible and actionable AI strategy?

Start with a business strategy, not technology. Operating in a heavily regulated environment, financial institutions begin their AI journey with a clear understanding of its relevance to their business and customers. They focus on the “why” of AI, ensuring decisions are strategic and defensible.

By taking an outcomes-centered approach, you can focus more on identifying specific problem areas where AI can make a measurable impact on your business. Before assessing how AI affects your people, customers, and the customer experience they encounter when they interact with you, it’s essential to ensure your approach to AI is adopted ethically, compliantly, and mutually beneficially to everyone across your organization as well as your customers.

So, communicating transparently about AI usage, defining and measuring success through both soft and hard metrics, and establishing accountability frameworks provide essential foundations that shape and determine how successful you can be.



Step 2 What’s the most important, tangible business problem that AI can solve?

Focus on the right “jobs to be done.” Rather than chasing trends like generative AI, financial institutions focus on practical applications. This path ensures that decisions are made with the intention to tackle or address a specific business challenge or opportunity—rather than fulfilling an ambition that may not deliver long-term value.

Early success has come from deploying AI in repetitive workflows such as fraud prevention, Know Your Customer (KYC) processes, and first-line support for routine financial transactions. These efficiency-driven investments yield quick, measurable wins. Organizations that can find comparable examples will be able to focus their AI adoption strategy on the most suitable solutions.



Step 3 How can we easily prove AI’s viability for our organization?

Start small, think big. The financial services sector has emerged as an AI leader by beginning with use cases that free employees for higher-value activities. These include moving call center teams from basic transactions to value-generating activities like cross-and upselling, as well as allowing loan officers to focus on customer solutions rather than acting as “human APIs” between systems.

By solving immediate problems first and proving AI’s efficacy, organizations build momentum to tackle larger, higher-stakes opportunities with greater potential rewards. Organizations therefore need to set realistic achievable goals and work in partnership with teams across the business to communicate that proving value quickly is better than trying to deliver greater impacts and failing.



Step 4 How do we ensure our AI strategy aligns with our business ethics and regulatory requirements?

Set and maintain ethical guardrails. Amid regulatory scrutiny, financial institutions have proactively self-regulated their AI strategies in preparation for legislative developments such as the EU Artificial Intelligence Act and anticipated US regulations.

Organizations need to embrace and implement key elements of ethical AI in their adoption strategy. These can range from establishing greater transparency in training data, model design, and decision-making processes to ensuring customer recourse and transparency in AI-driven decisions. They should also undertake regular audits to identify and mitigate biases and use tools like LIME for explainable AI, to provide clear, auditable insights into model performance.



Step 5 Are we culturally ready for AI?

One consistent message from financial services AI leaders is that human oversight is critical every step of the way to achieve effective and ethical AI adoption. Successful initiatives hinge on partnerships—between organizations, teams, and AI systems—that build a culture of trust.

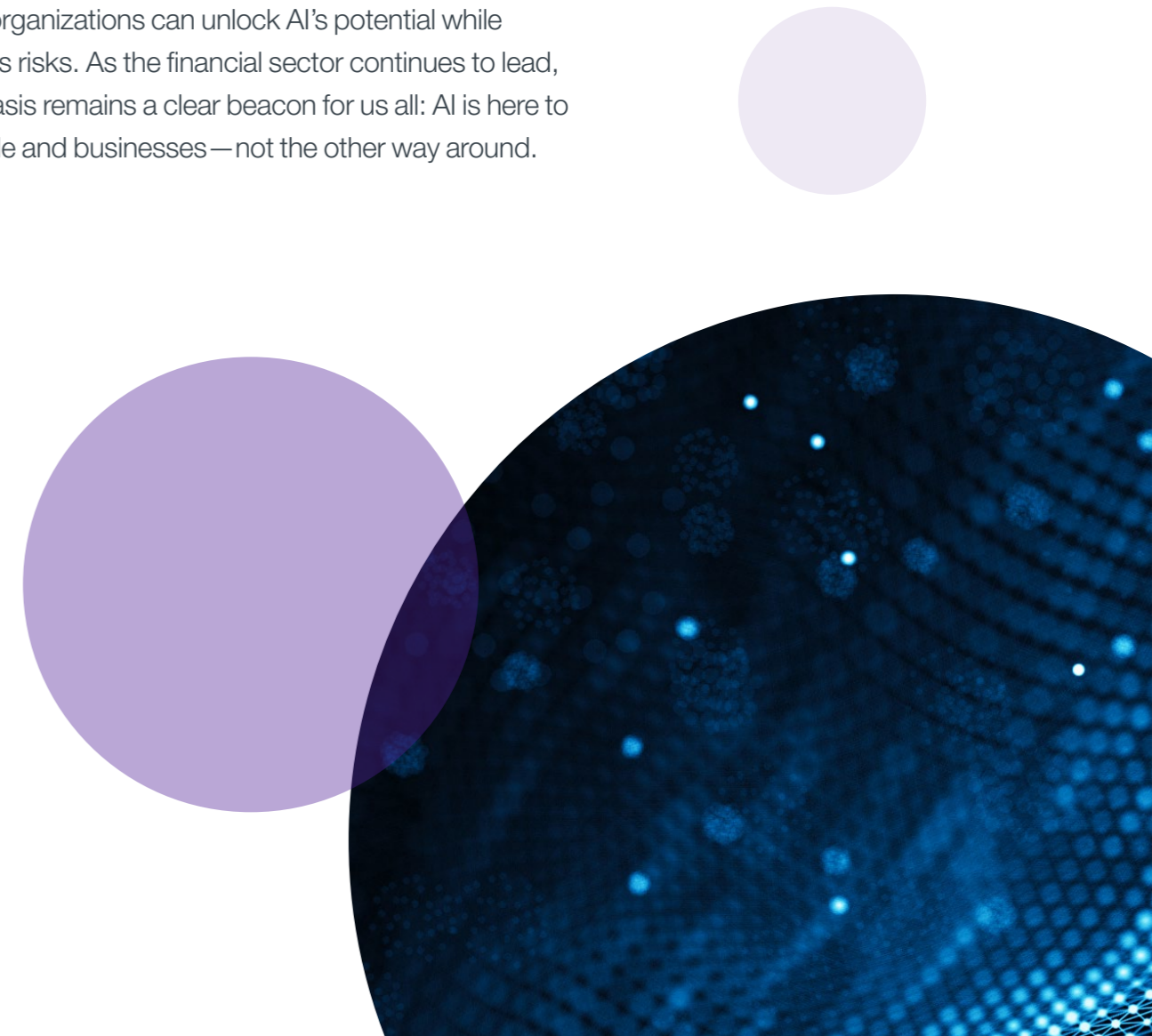
This involves:

- Encouraging diversity of thought in strategy development.
- Empowering employees to question AI-driven outcomes and raise concerns.
- Promoting continuous learning so employees feel confident using AI tools.
- Ensuring there's a skilled human with a deep understanding of each critical milestone in every workflow that AI is a part of.

Ultimately, AI adoption is as much about cultural readiness as technical fit. Employees must see AI as a tool that enhances their work, enabling them to focus on more meaningful, impactful commercial outcomes or relationships with customers.

What should you do next?

The financial services industry's pragmatic approach to AI adoption offers valuable lessons. By starting with strategy, focusing on tangible problems, scaling thoughtfully, maintaining ethical standards, and ensuring human oversight, organizations can unlock AI's potential while mitigating its risks. As the financial sector continues to lead, their emphasis remains a clear beacon for us all: AI is here to serve people and businesses—not the other way around.



06 GenAI, agentic AI, and I: The changing face of content, campaigns and creativity



Matt Robinson

Content Director

Forecasts predict that 90% of the content available on the internet will be generated by AI in some capacity by 2026.²³ It's a given that marketers will increasingly need to ensure they are effectively set up to keep pace with market innovation as AI continues to change how we generate, optimize, and curate content. However, the extent to which brands will evaluate their preparedness to deliver valuable experiences and outputs for their customers will be somewhat dependent on a range of factors.

GenAI and evolving creative outputs

Content creation and marketing activations are invariably faster, cheaper, and simpler when powered by AI tools. But this can only be fully realized when the right people and skills are on board and have access to the right technical capabilities and tools. Only then will brands even begin to understand how they can use generative AI correctly, responsibly, and in a considered and strategic manner.

As 2025 progresses, finding ways to bring AI into the content creation process will need to be carefully calibrated. An all or nothing approach, simply won't work. Recalibrating teams and their shared responsibilities, while setting aspirational yet achievable expectations around outputs will become increasingly more common.

Marketers' ability to invest in teams that can develop large language models (LLMs) that capture essential messaging narratives in a distinct tone of voice and understand a primary set of clearly defined marketing objectives will be able to clearly distinguish themselves. The market is likely to be increasingly flooded with content that may appear to tell a clear story on the surface but ultimately lack any true flair or uniqueness. Getting that right will only become more important as brands try to get as close to their desired outputs as possible, with each refinement and development raising the bar of possibilities even higher. Organizations that fail to do this, run the risk of what's ultimately going to be seen as content homogenization.



²³ Financial Times, "[How does AI in thought leadership benefit the audience?](#)" February 2024.

The changing role of content teams

Just as with any overarching AI adoption strategy, it's essential to set clear strategies with defined and measurable outcomes for the desired content you are looking to create. Expectations that focus on enriching the creative development process, instead of replacing it, will therefore need to take center stage.

It's likely that internal content teams, will become critical components in helping marketers bring visions to life at scale, faster. In the short-term, greater effort to train AI tools to suit your specific needs as a brand will ensure that as output volumes increase, the accuracy and precision of the outputs will naturally become easier and more cost-effective to produce in turn. If volumes are to be met, quality standards must be maintained, resonance ensured, and overall engagement increased. Marketers need to adapt quickly to keep pace with the demands of both their organization and the appetite of their customers.

The rise of agentic AI

Although GenAI will likely remain a clear focus for businesses looking to deliver faster and cheaper outputs, We expect that agentic AI will start to dominate more boardroom conversations and marketing activation plans. Especially for businesses that look beyond the need to simplify the creative process.

As Enver Cetin, an AI expert at global Experience Engineering firm Ciklum, puts it, it's all about "proactiveness."²⁴ As we've seen in this report, being able to anticipate customer activities, and to prepare the most effective outputs to meet those needs or demands, is becoming increasingly more critical for marketers looking to build and maintain long-lasting and trusted relationships. Not only does it help create the authenticity needed to sustain trust, it supports the development and delivery of more effective marketing campaigns — and by design the content and creativity that powers them.

A shift in focus

Agentic AI is not just about content creation. At heart, it's more about identifying desired outcomes and implementing decisions. The aim is to optimize specific goals such as increasing customer satisfaction scores or specific processes and workflows, without the need for human-powered prompts.

Marketers typically rely on a wealth of unstructured and structured data, with pressures to scale quickly, personalize more accurately, and enhance process and outputs with greater agility across their campaign activity. Agentic AI has the potential to be a true game-changer for them. And ultimately it may mean that the way they use GenAI can be harnessed to greater effect.

Creating compelling content is still important, but without the right processes and systems around it, its effectiveness will be diminished. Content should not just be created because it can be done cheaper, faster, etc. It still needs to exude creativity and fulfill a specific purpose, based on audience, format, and channel. So, as the volume of AI-generated content increases, the focus will start to shift.

Marketers will need to establish the right balance. However, the speed at which these inevitable changes are implemented will depend on how far organizations go in their use of AI tools across the creative process. And to what extent the data that sits behind their content outputs is sufficient to generate the results they are looking to achieve.

The future of content and creativity

As organizations seek profitability through the implementation of AI strategies at varying levels of complexity, we will eventually see the playing field level out. Every organization's technology stack will — if not in 2025, very soon after — have some form of AI implementation in place.

Expectations for profitability will not go away. Nor will the demands of customers for rich and compelling content. Therefore, the interplay between creativity and data has to remain front and center. Organizations that are prepared for the pendulum to swing back to creativity and strategy, which will stem from content homogenizations will be those that continue to reap the gains that are sown with their AI systems.

²⁴ Harvard Business Review, "[What is agentic ai and how will it change work](#)," December 2024

07 Why ethical and authentic marketing campaigns are as essential to AI as they have been to sustainability



Sean Donovan

Vice President,
Global Accounts

“Authentic” is a much used and often over-hyped word. It was Merriam-Webster’s 2023 word of the year, and for many years has been an adjective that B2B businesses have adopted as a core brand value, essential to the tone of voice portrayed in communications. It’s a central theme in the creation of trust, and without trust B2B customers will not buy.

In an age of hyper-personalization and a desire to be more human, increasing demand for genuine and real connections is hardly surprising. Especially because trust is becoming harder to gain and much easier to lose.

In Europe, 72% of [#B2B](#) marketers place a high importance on authenticity in their [#branding](#), and the Data Confidence Divide report reveals that 59% of all marketers rank authenticity among their most important brand attributes.²⁵

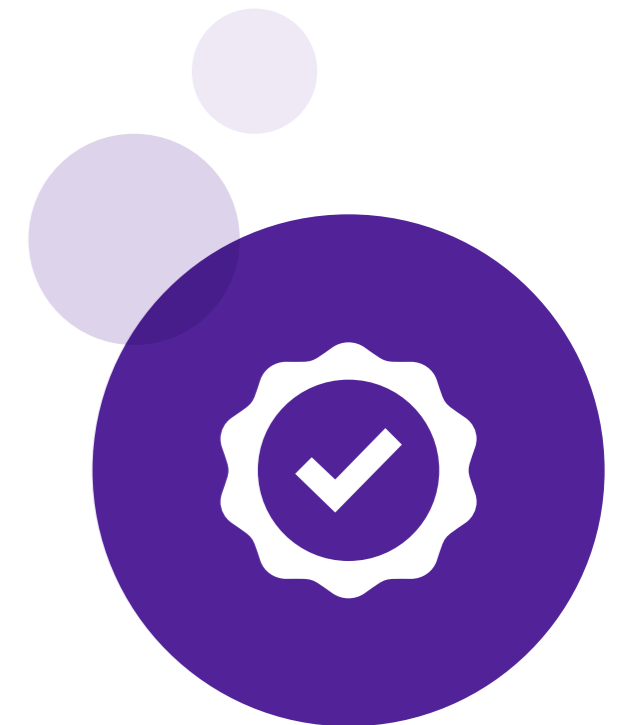
Establishing trust and authenticity

Brands must express authenticity to build trust, using it to establish reliability and create genuine customer connections that will help further growth. In the face of continuous decline in trust across many institutions (government, financial system, and big business, to name three), it’s critical that authenticity continues to push to the top of brand and business agendas—and not fall behind simple product features and benefits.

As you would expect, most B2B brands push products and solutions, but other subject areas have also been promoted for several years now, such as DEI and sustainability. However, it’s rare to see DEI messaging these days. For instance, a study conducted by executive search firm Bridge Partners in November 2024, found that investment in DEI among US companies dropped from 77% of companies prioritizing DEI in 2023 to just 66% in 2024.²⁶

²⁵ Anteriad, “[The 2024 B2B marketing outlook: The data confidence divide](#)”.

²⁶ Bridge Partners, “[The 2024 Inclusion Barometer, April 2024](#)”.



The same is seemingly true with sustainability messaging. A PwC survey from September 2024 found a decline in boardroom focus on ESG, with only about half (47%) of respondents reporting that ESG issues are regularly part of the board's agenda. This is down from 52% last year and from 55% in 2022, although notably still well above the 34% reported by directors in 2019.²⁷

These declines appear to some degree at odds with the wider global narrative—but do indicate that organizations are realizing if they can't deliver on the promises they are making—their ability to be authentic diminishes to a greater degree. And that can have a more damaging impact.

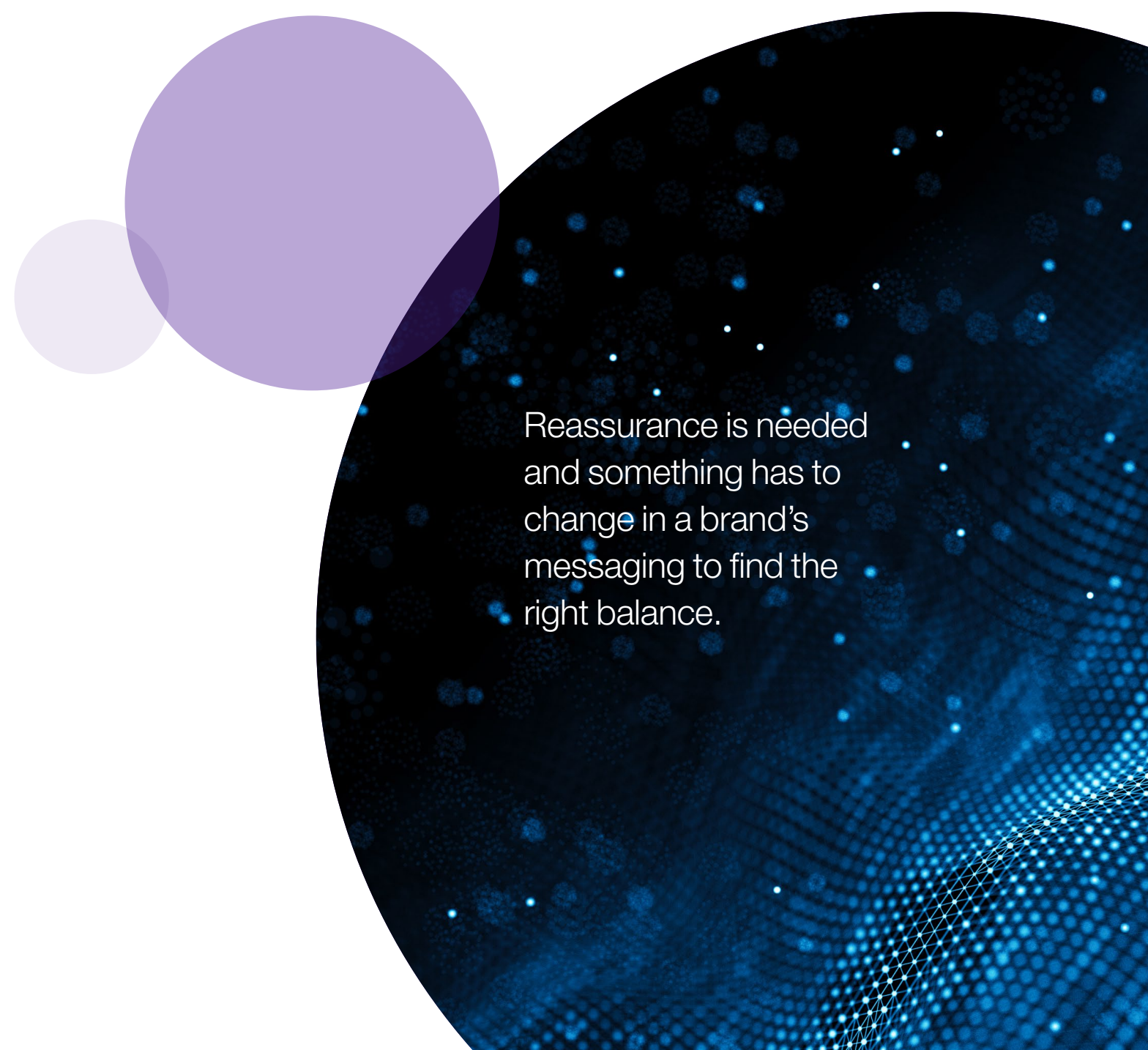
Making authenticity a priority

In Metia's 2024 B2B Trends report, authenticity and building trust were seen as critical attributes in the world of sustainability as businesses fought against the accusations of greenwashing. Businesses could now no longer simply talk about sustainability efforts. Instead, in response to the International Financial Reporting Standards that went into effect in January 2024, they had to demonstrate authentic actions by documenting and publishing their commitments and actions. It is our belief that the AI industry will follow a similar pattern.

Establishing reassurance

When it comes to AI marketing, most big B2B brands, especially in the tech sector, are back to seemingly only pushing product features and benefits. AI has an extraordinary number of potential benefits—the advances in medicine alone make it a wonderful thing—but it suffers from poor understanding. Customers, employees, and organizations are fearful of its potential ethical misuse relating to privacy, bias, and the role of human judgment. Reassurance is needed and something has to change in brands messaging to find the right balance.

In the long term, regulation and legislature will drive reassurance. The EU Artificial Intelligence Act came into force in August 2024, with AI developers and deployers having the immediate primary responsibility to ensure AI programs deliver on the promises. Most provisions will not take effect until 2026, though, so marketers will need to make great strides in 2025 in building effective strategies to ensure they are truly delivering revolutionary customer/employee experiences.



Reassurance is needed
and something has to
change in a brand's
messaging to find the
right balance.

²⁷ PwC, "PwC's 2024 Corporate Directors' Survey – How are boards addressing the current uncertainty?" October 2024.

+1 How will the public relations, paid media and developer landscape change in 2025?



2025 is expected to be the year where businesses move from AI experimentation to purpose-driven AI implementation. The precision with which marketers identify and build campaigns is increasingly shaped by intent data—and with a greater commitment to being as authentic as possible. There is undeniably a lot to consider when shaping and determining the most effective way forward.

Beyond the primary trends shared in this report, we've sourced additional insights from marketing specialists from across our global business to help you identify the most effective strategies to support your marketing activations in 2025.



Sarah Mason
Associate Director

Three ways to shape your PR strategy in 2025

Human-centricity

One of the trends that permeates this report is the growing importance of AI in streamlining routine processes, driving efficiencies while surfacing and presenting information to those that need it. AI is already delivering value in marketing communications, but it can never replace people when it comes to spotting opportunities, creating compelling storylines, writing original content, and in building personal relationships with journalists and analysts.

The importance of ingenuity

Large language models (LLMs) are extremely useful for conducting background research and distilling information. However, they are no substitutes for the creation and sharing of original, genuine thought leadership content. An article that's written by a skilled storyteller and based on fresh ideas and firsthand knowledge will be far more impactful and engaging for readers than a piece generated by an LLM.

Original content drives lasting value

If everyone were to become reliant on LLMs for content creation—essentially rehashing versions of what everyone else has already said—it would be no surprise for audiences to switch off and stop listening as every communication parrots a homogenous consensus. Brands that want to stand out must instead focus on creating original content that will direct the narrative, engage target audiences, and stimulate conversation both directly and indirectly via the media, analysts, and other influencers.



Amelia Bowles
Paid Media Lead

Three ways to boost your paid media strategy in 2025

Hyper-specific audience segmentation

LinkedIn's removal of lookalike audiences last year dramatically reshaped B2B media strategies, compelling marketers to reimagine audience targeting. The platform's "Audience Expansion" tool consistently proves a suboptimal and imperfect replacement, often attracting irrelevant demographics like retirees, teachers, and students—far removed from professional targets. As a result, 2025 will see paid media teams doubling down on hyper-specific audience segmentation. By leveraging account-based marketing techniques and focusing on curated target company lists, teams are reclaiming control in audience expansion. While this increased focus adds complexity, it also enhances precision, ensuring campaigns reach the most relevant decision-makers.

Paid media and AI

AI is poised to play a transformative role in paid media strategies in 2025. When used properly, it acts as an invaluable junior assistant, great for ideation, sense-checking ad copy, and expanding creative directions. However, there's a need for a human touch to avoid generic outputs. Large language models are a useful starting point for crafting ad copy but often produce formulaic content. In 2025, successful paid media strategies will blend AI-generated outputs with human creativity to maintain uniqueness. Additionally, as platforms increasingly rely on AI for media buying and optimization, there's a growing tension between automation and the need for expert oversight. While AI can streamline processes, retaining expert human input ensures campaigns remain flexible, targeted, and effective.

A new realm for creativity

Finally, creativity will take center stage in 2025 B2B marketing. With digital marketing saturation at an all-time high, brands must adopt bold, guerrilla-style tactics to differentiate themselves. Unconventional approaches that evoke emotional responses—historically rare in B2B—will become a strategic imperative. 2025 will be the "year of the comeback" for innovation, challenging teams to push boundaries and capture audience attention through unexpected, compelling approaches. By blending emotional resonance with innovative strategies, B2B marketers can redefine engagement and drive impact in the increasingly competitive digital landscape.



Daniel Tanner
Technical Lead

Three ways to advance your web strategy in 2025

The rise of voice search and conversational UIs

Voice search and voice-based user interfaces are set to transform how users interact with websites in 2025, driven by innovations like Google Gemini. This new approach emphasizes conversational commands rather than traditional text inputs, making website navigation more intuitive. From searching for specific pages to activating actions like "scroll down" or "play video," voice commands enhance accessibility, particularly for sectors like disability support, where tools like JAWS and NVDA already integrate similar features. As personal device AI becomes increasingly conversational, B2B websites must adapt, incorporating voice-activated chatbots and navigation tools to improve engagement and accessibility. This progression is a natural step as voice-first interfaces become central to digital experiences.

The growing impact of motion UI

Motion UI is gaining momentum as businesses recognize its potential to captivate users and streamline complex interactions. Subtle animations, scrolling effects, and dynamic diagrams not only make interfaces more engaging but also provide valuable visual feedback, improving user experience. By incorporating animated elements, businesses can simplify intricate processes, enhance clarity, and leave lasting impressions. Motion UI isn't just about aesthetics—it's a strategic tool for creating intuitive and interactive user journeys, making it essential for B2B websites aiming to stand out.

AI-powered tools redefine digital experiences

AI tools are evolving rapidly, offering personalized, value-driven experiences for users. Advanced chatbots, for instance, can adapt responses based on user inputs, moving beyond basic FAQ functions to become dynamic virtual assistants. AI-powered calculators and configurators will also help businesses differentiate themselves, providing clear ROI insights and simplifying decision-making for potential clients. Additionally, CMS platforms like HubSpot and WordPress are integrating AI-driven content generation and analysis tools. These features enhance content alignment with brand guidelines, improve SEO, and offer actionable feedback to strengthen messaging. In 2025, leveraging AI-powered tools will be critical for maintaining competitive edge in B2B.

New for 2025?

We hope this report has been informative and provides useful insight for your 2025 planning.

If you're curious to learn more, you'll find a host of additional content and resources at www.metia.com.

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4
Products

Scorecards | Whitespace | AI Suite | CodeSM

30+
Years experience

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Audience | Brand | Growth | Compete Innovation | Content | Customer journey

Insight
Qualitative | Quantitative | Linguistic modelling | Social media and marketing analytics

Influence
Media relations | Analyst relations

Advocacy
References | Content | Social

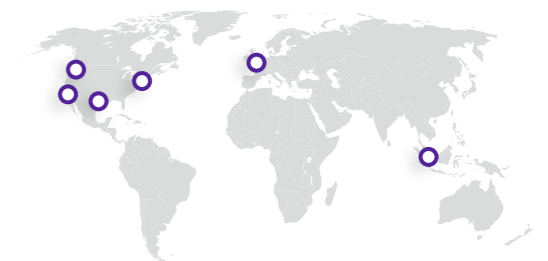
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Lead generation and relationships
Marketing automation | ABM | eDM | CRM | Social media marketing | Search engine marketing | Community management

Partner Ecosystems
Developer and partner marketing

6
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