

Marketing Relevance In An Omnichannel World

How Data And Measurement Are Key
To Customer Engagement

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Executive Summary

Today's customers are more demanding than ever. They want the right information, at the right time, on any device of their choosing. Due to this high level of customer empowerment, marketers' jobs are becoming increasingly difficult. For marketers to succeed in this environment, online experiences need to be personalized, relevant, and engaging to capture customers' fragmented attention. As the number of channels that marketers coordinate continues to grow, success requires seamless execution of omnichannel (also sometimes called cross-channel) marketing.

This trend is driving marketers into a frenzy to better understand their customers and more accurately anticipate their needs. Combining first-party data with third-party data in order to predict customer behavior enables contextually relevant, value-driven engagement. Programmatic ad buying, now a mainstream component of digital marketing, further makes real-time measurement of campaign effectiveness a vital requirement. Although this continuous cycle of data ingestion, campaign execution, and success measurement holds a lot of promise for marketers, it also leaves them seeking help to automate at least part of the process.

In March 2015, Neustar commissioned Forrester Consulting to evaluate the stages of omnichannel marketing maturity in terms of marketers' ability to meet their customers' needs. In addition, Forrester developed a hypothesis to test the assertion that marketers are unprepared for omnichannel marketing due to organizational, data management, campaign execution, and measurement challenges. These obstacles prevent them from delivering seamless, contextually relevant experiences that deepen engagement across channels and platforms. Furthermore, the success of omnichannel marketing hinges upon the ability to develop a "complete picture of the customer" regardless of channel or device.

This is where we found most firms are failing. In conducting an in-depth survey and interviews with omnichannel marketing professionals, Forrester found that mature omnichannel marketers integrate more descriptive data (behavioral and attitudinal) and have more robust measurement capabilities in order to deliver on their omnichannel marketing goals.

KEY FINDINGS

Forrester's study yielded three key findings:

- › **Marketers understand the need to increase their omnichannel marketing capabilities.** In the age of the customer, marketers are increasingly aware that they cannot act in isolated channel siloes. Surveyed marketers understand that in order to capture customers' increasingly fragmented attention, they must execute seamless, consistent, and personalized experiences across devices and online and offline channels.
- › **Measurement and data quality challenges hinder omnichannel growth.** In order to execute across channels, marketers must first understand how their customers are currently engaging with them. Without insights into behaviors, preferences, and attitudes, campaigns will continue to fall flat. Marketers will overcome this roadblock by stitching together disparate data sources to gain a more complete view of the customer to create contextual experiences.
- › **There is a path for marketers to evolve with time.** Although the gap may feel wide, it is not impassable. By prioritizing areas of growth based on their customer needs and company maturity level, marketers can begin developing processes and implementing technologies that will help them collect the right data, share it across channels, and measure effectiveness. The key is not implementing too much change so quickly that it becomes overwhelming. Instead, gradually guide the company along the steps of successful omnichannel marketing execution.

Online experiences need to be personalized, relevant, and engaging. As the number of channels that marketers need to coordinate continues to grow, success requires seamless execution of omnichannel marketing.

Marketers Continue To Strive For Seamless Delivery Of Omnichannel Experiences

Forrester Research defines today's consumer empowerment as the age of the customer. That means customers are now more mobile, consume more information, and buy more online than ever before.¹ They follow their own purchase paths, crossing back and forth between online and offline channels. With shopping opportunities open to them 24x7, customers no longer adhere to how marketers want them to engage with messaging.

In order to capitalize on this transition, marketers must build capabilities that engage customers on customers' terms. To accomplish this, coordinating and delivering personalized experiences consistently across channels is imperative. This evolution from channel-specific to omnichannel campaigns provides marketers with the opportunity to improve relevance and deliver sustainable competitive advantage.

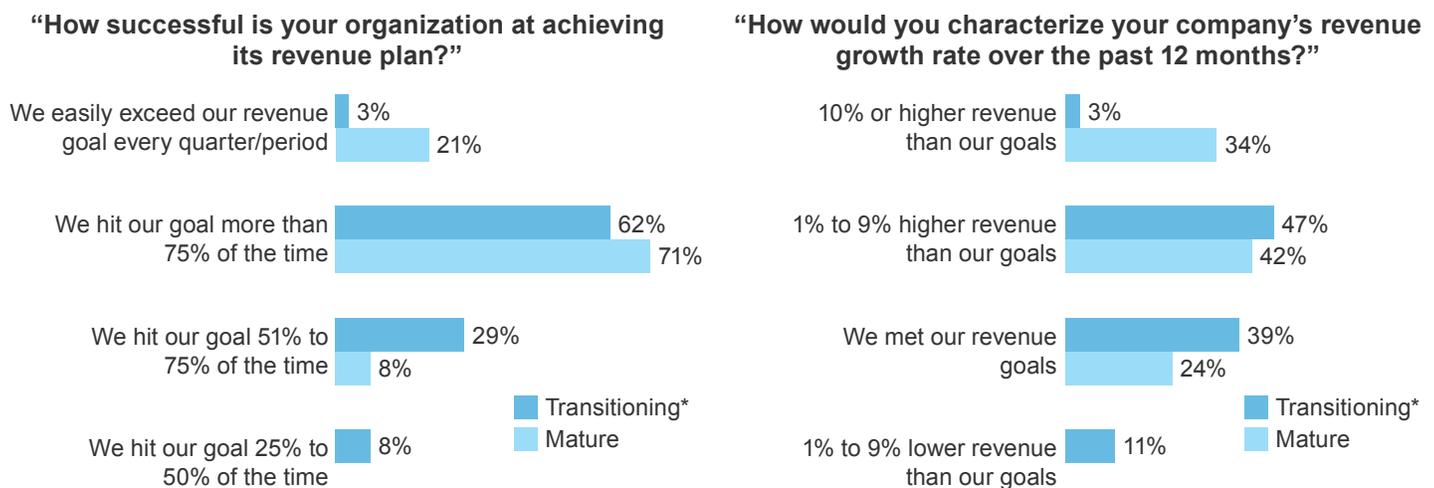
To aid in creating more contextual experiences, marketers are implementing marketing technologies, including data management platforms (DMPs) and customer analytics, to identify, engage, and understand customers across channels. However, in order for these technologies to function efficiently, they must be carefully implemented and treated as a core competency instead of as an appendage to existing marketing processes — instigating the culture change required to compete in the age of the customer. Therefore, marketers must drive the business technology (BT) agenda that will integrate systems and processes to win, serve, and retain customers.²

Achieving omnichannel success enables firms to:

- › **Drive profitability.** Marketers who identify themselves as mature omnichannel marketers are more likely to achieve their revenue plans and see growth than those who identify themselves as transitioning (see Figure 1).
- › **Address key initiatives.** Marketers understand that omnichannel marketing has the potential to have a high or extremely high impact on their key drivers of success: increasing online sales (62%), increasing customer satisfaction or similar metrics (59%), and increasing profitability (55%) (see Figure 2).

FIGURE 1

Marketers Who Self-Identified As Mature Omnichannel Marketers Are More Likely To Achieve Their Revenue Plans And See Growth



Base: 38 US B2C channel marketing decision-makers who identify their orgs as mature multichannel marketers

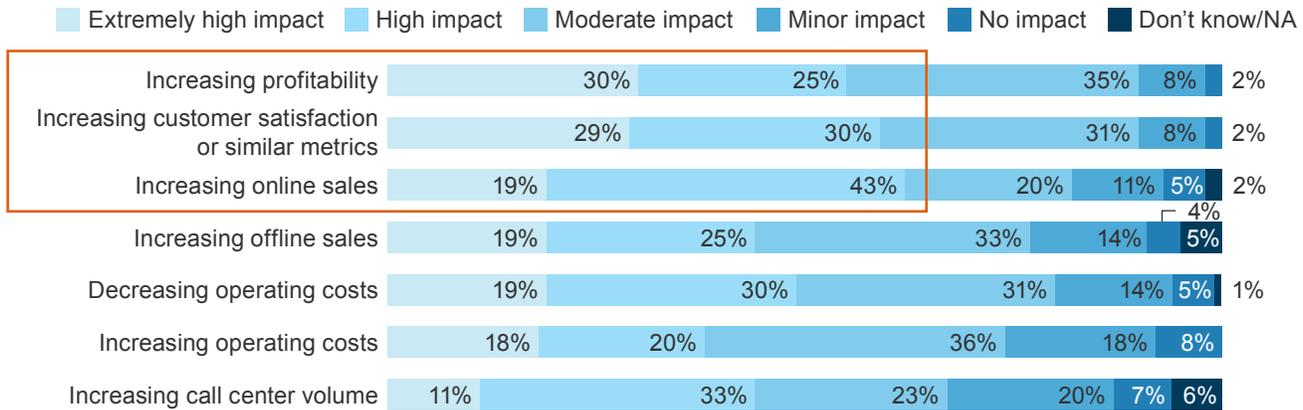
*Base: 38 US B2C channel marketing decision-makers who identify their orgs as transitioning multichannel marketers

Source: A commissioned study conducted by Forrester Consulting on behalf of Neustar, April 2015

FIGURE 2

Omnichannel Marketing Has A High Impact On Marketing's Key Drivers Of Success

“Please indicate the level of impact that implementing cross-channel marketing has had on the following.”



Base: 96 US B2C channel marketing decision-makers

Source: A commissioned study conducted by Forrester Consulting on behalf of Neustar, April 2015

› **Deliver engaging customer experiences.** Omnichannel marketers use data and analytics to make informed decisions regarding customer strategies, regardless of industry or audience. Measurement is a key component to take customer engagement to the next level. In fact, 94% of marketers are trying to either always or sometimes unify cross-channel measurement to understand the holistic experience of the customer across devices.³

Inability To Execute Keeps Marketers From Reaching Full Omnichannel Potential

Although omnichannel marketing is a primary goal for the majority of marketers, executing on that strategy is proving to be a challenge, based on our survey of 96 marketers across industries.

According to marketers surveyed, the success of omnichannel continues to hinge on “the customer” and the ability to deliver seamless, contextually relevant experiences that deepen engagement. Omnichannel capabilities, such as rich audience profiles across multiple channels of engagement, are critical for success. Mastery of these capabilities is imperative for building a foundation that will allow marketers to execute effectively moving forward.

MEASURING OMNICHANNEL MARKETING MATURITY

In order to understand the current state of marketers’ ability to execute successful omnichannel programs, Forrester examined their omnichannel maturity across four dimensions:

- › **Organizational structure.** A collaborative environment with executive sponsorship enables marketers to act upon their omnichannel initiatives, including common goals and the ability to measure them.
- › **Contextual understanding.** Leveraging CRM and third-party data to deliver contextually relevant customer experiences to target audiences is critical, including the ability to incorporate preferences, actionable recommendations, and predictive determination of value.
- › **Customer identification.** Recognizing customers based on their interactions across devices and channels is necessary to deliver personalized experiences. This is inclusive of browser (cookie) and mobile device data to construct a single view of customers.
- › **Measurement and attribution.** Collection, integration, and normalization of interaction data should be optimally leveraged for measurement and attribution analysis. This

unified measurement approach helps marketers understand their customers' holistic experiences, including the ability to close the loop from online to offline interactions.

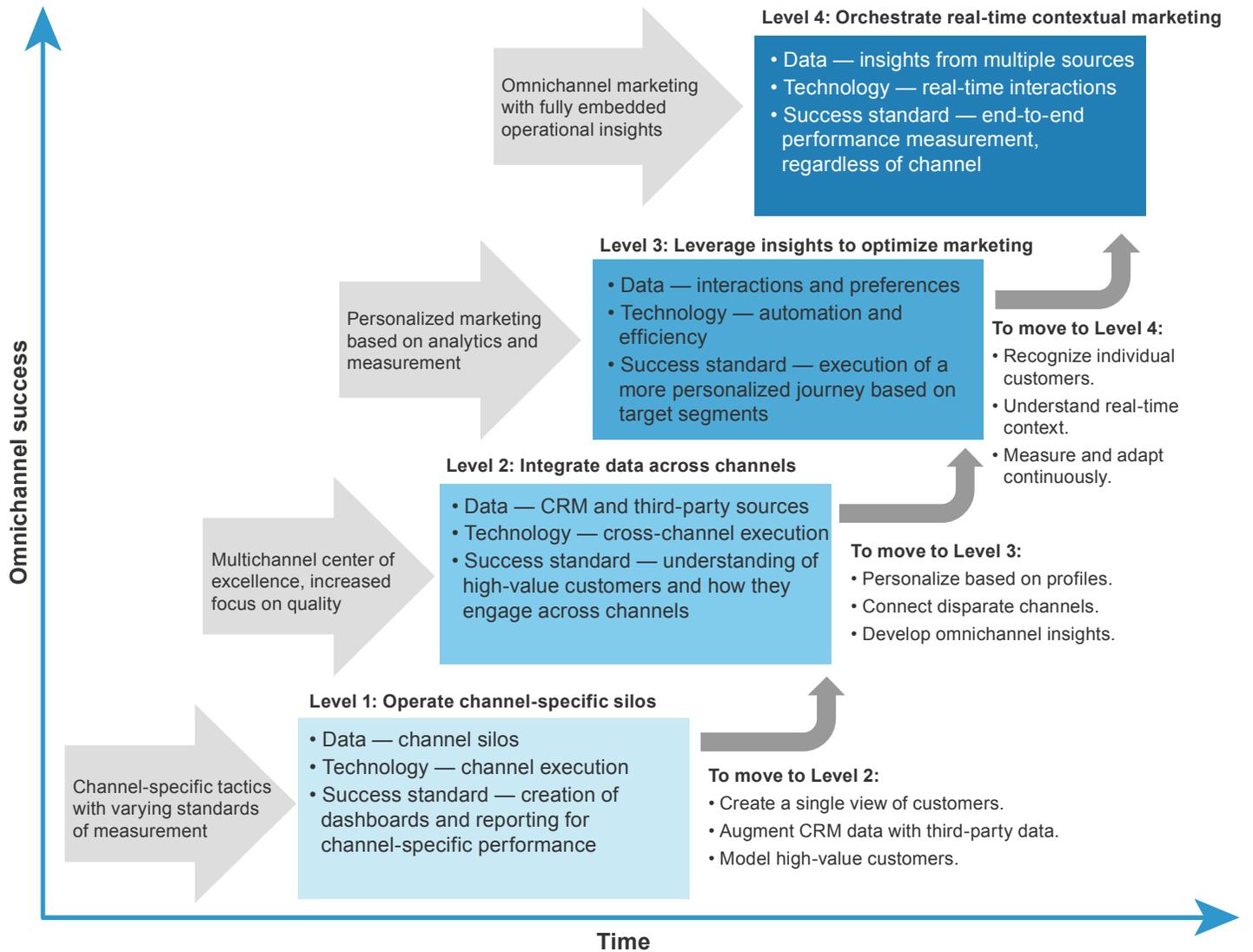
The ability of a company to execute across these four dimensions translates into one of four levels of omnichannel maturity. The model provides marketers with a clear understanding of where they stand and how to build capabilities to increase omnichannel maturity (see Figure 3). Key factors to evolve across layers include gaining leadership buy-in and setting customer experience as a companywide goal. The four levels of omnichannel maturity are:

- › **Level 1 — operate channel-specific silos.** These marketers need to advance their siloed capabilities. They never or rarely are able to execute omnichannel campaigns, and they use rudimentary tools like spreadsheets to manage customer lists and channel-specific response metrics. Their marketing efforts depend on separate teams who leverage disconnected technologies and services for email, web content management, or social media listening. To move to the next level, they need to begin stitching data together to understand customer interactions and break down organizational silos. To accomplish this, they should invest in customer data management to apply deeper insights to both inbound and outbound communications.
- › **Level 2 — integrate data across channels.** These marketers are beginning to build more mature capabilities, but still have a long road ahead. At this level, though they have invested in cross-channel campaign, marketing resource, and marketing asset management tools for automation and greater efficiency, they rarely or only sometimes deploy consistent campaigns across all channels. They realize the importance of regular updates to synchronize CRM and audience data and have begun modeling high-value audiences with insights derived from offline and third-party data. To move to the next level, they need to integrate all digital and offline channels, and analyze the resulting data for insights to understand high-value customers. To accomplish this, they should leverage their investments in enterprise marketing technologies to enable consistency across all digital and offline channels.
- › **Level 3 — leverage insights to optimize marketing.** These marketers have established a cross-channel practice, and they are beginning to optimize their

marketing strategy. At this level, they begin to deploy predictive analytics for propensity, churn, upsell, and cross-sell, and they use a value-based approach to measurement (e.g., customer lifetime value.) Because they take a more comprehensive approach to data management and audience modeling, they have begun to explore programmatic ad buying. To move to the next level, they must operationalize analytical processes and align customer metrics with business key performance indicators (KPIs). To accomplish this, they need to continuously apply and refine technologies that focus on increasing data capabilities and personalization. This includes data mining, modeling, and predictive analytics along with online testing and targeting to optimize performance.

- › **Level 4 — orchestrate real-time contextual marketing.** These marketers are leading the pack and are almost always executing on unified, customer-centric capabilities. At this level, they have become customer-focused (rather than channel-focused) and are able to leverage continuously refreshed data to automate contextually relevant real-time offers across inbound and outbound channels, both digital and offline. They align technologies that support direct marketing campaigns and content with data management and demand-side platforms that drive digital advertising and media content. Advanced measurement capabilities such as cross-channel attribution and marketing mix modeling enable them to calibrate marketing investments aligned with customer demand and business objectives. To continue to differentiate, they should focus on more seamless integration to deliver consistent experiences across the entire customer life cycle. Deploying real-time interaction management will balance messaging across appropriate customer touchpoints.

FIGURE 3
Omnichannel Marketing Maturity Model



Source: A commissioned study conducted by Forrester Consulting on behalf of Neustar, April 2015

MARKETERS CONTINUE TO MATURE THEIR OMNICHANNEL CAPABILITIES

As omnichannel marketing continues to evolve, marketers continue to play catch-up with their capabilities. Only 40% of marketers in our survey feel they are mature, with another 40% feeling they are transitioning to omnichannel marketing. This evolution leaves plenty of room for growth.

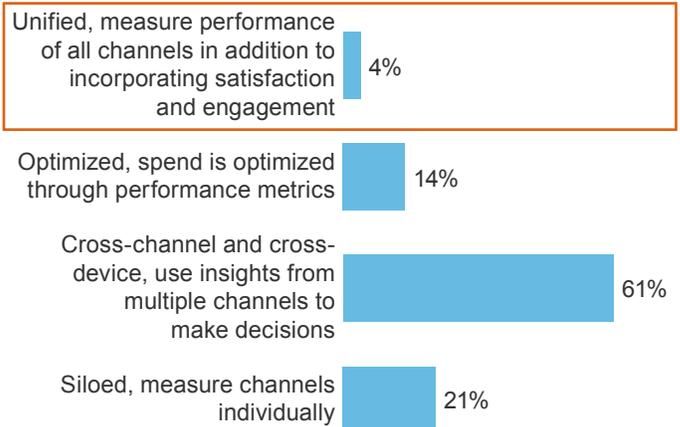
The key challenges marketers need to overcome are:

- › **Mastering cross-device identification.** Customers leverage the Internet anytime, anywhere, and Forrester's research shows that 41% of US online adults access the Internet on their smartphone several times per day.⁴ Due to the growth in mobile Internet access, both mature and transitioning companies reported that creating a consistent cross-device experience is their top challenge.
- › **Measuring performance across channels.** Even though marketers are reporting some success, measurement continues to be a key challenge. Only 4% of marketers reported having a unified measurement strategy, with 14% reporting an optimized strategy (see Figure 4). This is also reflected in understanding customer omnichannel interactions, with 35% of marketers indicating it is one of their top three challenges (see Figure 5).
- › **Turning data and analytics into insights and actions.** Even when marketers are able to collect cross-channel data, they don't always use it to have an effective impact on the omnichannel customer experience. Although 82% of marketers claim to track customer interactions across channels, only 60% know how to engage their high-value customers, and 51% will distribute the same content to all customers (see Figure 6).
- › **Centralizing the organization around omnichannel goals.** In order to execute on omnichannel marketing goals, company alignment is integral. Mature companies are more likely (45%) than transitioning (29%) to have integrated teams across marketing and technology to quickly react to customer preferences.⁵ Transitioning companies will continue to face challenges unless they centralize marketing goals on audience engagement, rather than on channel metrics.

FIGURE 4

Only 4% Of Marketers Report They Have A Unified Measurement Strategy For Marketing Campaigns

“How would you describe the measurement strategy for your marketing campaigns?”



Base: 96 US B2C channel marketing decision-makers

Source: A commissioned study conducted by Forrester Consulting on behalf of Neustar, April 2015

“Our greatest challenge is trying to figure out where the consumer is, and how to reach them. Younger consumers want the ‘Amazon’ experience. But we need to appeal to all audiences and deliver a rich customer experience.”

— Director of advertising, large US insurer

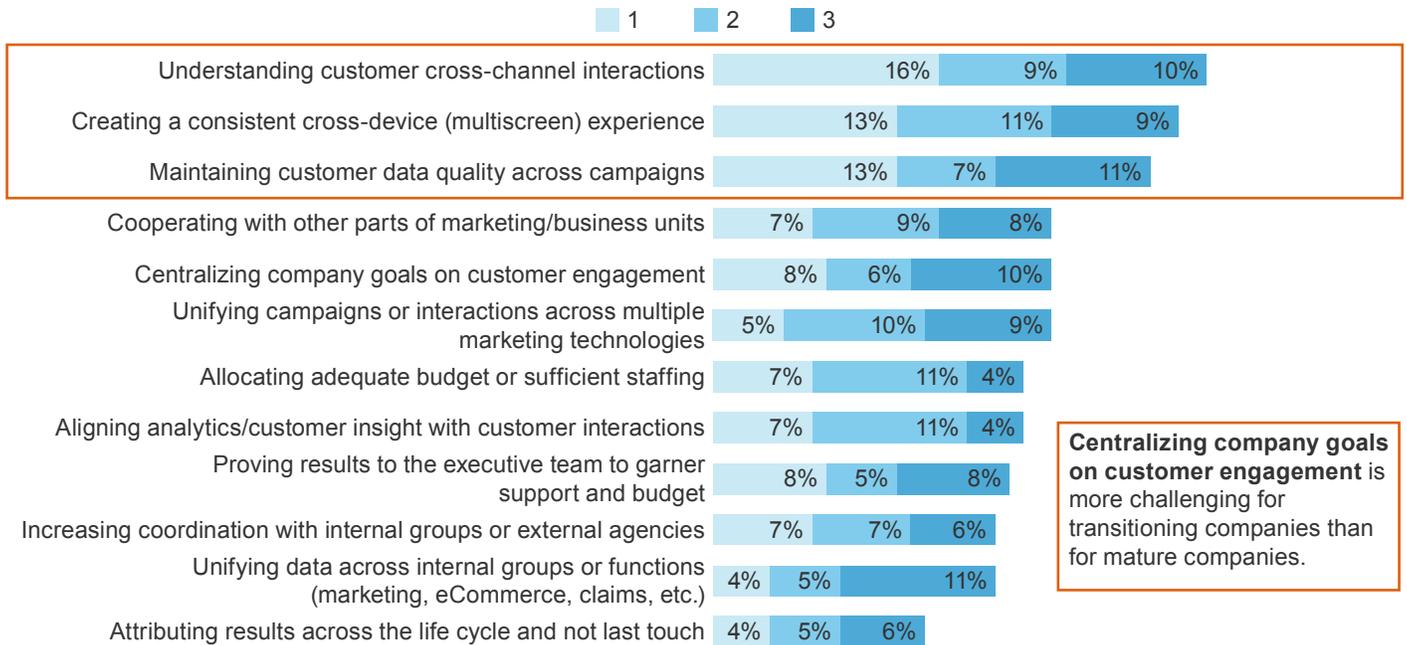
“We were slow to develop really solid data integration tools, and it’s now a challenge to our business model. When we turn a prospect into a customer, we don’t have the data to know everything we could about them through their eCommerce experience.”

— Marketing director, large US telecom

FIGURE 5

Respondents' Top Marketing Challenges Relate To The Omnichannel Experience

“What are your firm's biggest challenges to accomplishing your marketing goals?”



Base: 96 US B2C channel marketing decision-makers

Source: A commissioned study conducted by Forrester Consulting on behalf of Neustar, April 2015

FIGURE 6

Eighty-Two Percent Of Respondents Can Track Omnichannel Customer Interactions, But 51% Will Distribute The Same Content To All Customers

“Please indicate whether the following statements about your cross-channel customer recognition capabilities are true or false.”

(Those who indicated “true”)



Base: 96 US B2C channel marketing decision-makers

Source: A commissioned study conducted by Forrester Consulting on behalf of Neustar, April 2015

To Achieve Omnichannel Success, Wisely Leverage Customer Data

In order to overcome these omnichannel marketing challenges, marketers need to leverage their data assets to personalize experiences based on customer needs. Simple segmentations based on demographics and high-level preferences will no longer suffice. Instead, marketers must merge traditional customer data with third-party data to uncover behavioral and attitudinal insights to better engage high-value customers. To achieve omnichannel success, marketers must:

- › **Leverage behavioral and attitudinal data across channels.** In order to create engaging, personalized messaging, you need to know what your customers are doing, where they are doing it, and why they are doing it. Behavioral data, such as a customers' purchasing habits, channel usage, and click-through rates, can help marketers understand where customers are interacting across channels and what is most relevant to them in terms of content. Attitudinal data — what customers think is important and how they feel about the brand — provides the “why.” Mature marketers are more likely to

track behavioral and attitudinal data across channels than those who are transitioning — 19 and 47 percentage points more, respectively (see Figure 7).. Those who are transitioning are more likely to be in the planning stages of tracking this type of data. Linking behavior and attitudinal information to more traditional demographic information helps marketers customize communications to a customer's inferred preferences.

- › **Recognize and target customers across touchpoints.** Seventy-nine percent of mature marketers today said they are able to track user behavior across channels in regards to their omnichannel targeting programs.⁶ These marketers' ability to understand omnichannel engagement enables them to better predict and adapt to customer needs regardless of touchpoints.

“If your interactions with customers are just based off of generalities, you end up with something spurious, something disingenuous. You need to have a full view of the customer.”

— Marketing director, large US telecom

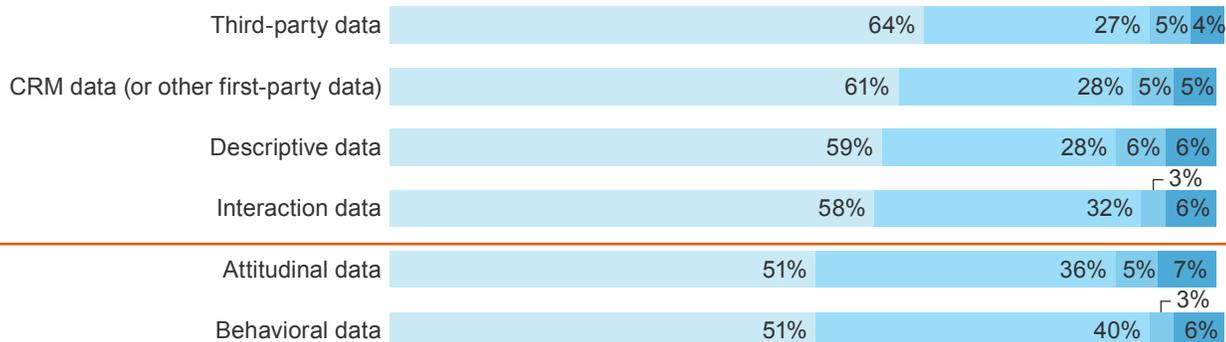
- › **Centralize analytics to more quickly turn insights into action.** Figure 5 shows that cooperating with other parts of the business is the fourth biggest challenge for

FIGURE 7

Mature Marketers Are 19% And 47% Percentage Points More Likely To Track Behavioral And Attitudinal Data Across Channels

“Are you able to link the following data types across channels?”

■ Yes, we are able to today ■ No, but we plan to in the future ■ No, we have no plans to do so ■ Don't know



Mature cross-channel orgs are more often able to link behavioral (66% versus 47% transitioning) and attitudinal data (76% versus 29% transitioning) cross-channel today.

Base: 96 US B2C channel marketing decision-makers

Source: A commissioned study conducted by Forrester Consulting on behalf of Neustar, April 2015

marketers looking to create an omnichannel experience. In order to streamline data from insights into action, mature companies are more likely to always have integrated teams across marketing and technology. They are also more likely to sometimes or always provide actionable recommendations based on the performance of marketing and media initiatives.

- › **Combine marketing technologies to maximize data-driven capabilities.** Mature marketers create sophisticated data and analytics environments to derive actionable insights. They further implement identity resolution/linkage, marketing attribution, and multiple demand-side platforms (DSPs) to effectively leverage these insights to orchestrate omnichannel marketing. In particular, mature organizations are 23% more likely to implement three or more DSPs.

Key omnichannel technology capabilities to strive for are:

Data integration. Unify CRM applications and customer data management capabilities to ensure data quality. Continuously ingest data to model customer value and create value-driven customer interactions.

Data effectiveness. Augment customer data with third-party data to gain a more complete and accurate picture of the customer. Leverage identity resolution and measurement tools to understand what's working with which customers and improve customer engagement. Leverage multiple DSPs to support programmatic media across all devices.

Customer life-cycle management. Integrate enterprise marketing technologies to enable the recognition and identification of customers as they move across channels and devices, both online and offline.

Real-time interaction management (RTIM). Focus on a holistic approach to capture and attribute campaign success across channels, in real time where possible. Leverage enterprise marketing software, advanced analytics, DSPs, and digital marketing as they converge to deliver real-time interaction management.

Key Recommendations

Building capabilities to become a more mature omnichannel marketing organization is a step-by-step process that cannot be rushed. Trying to implement everything at once will overwhelm marketing organizations, paralyzing their ability to act. To succeed in creating a sustainable omnichannel marketing program, marketers must:

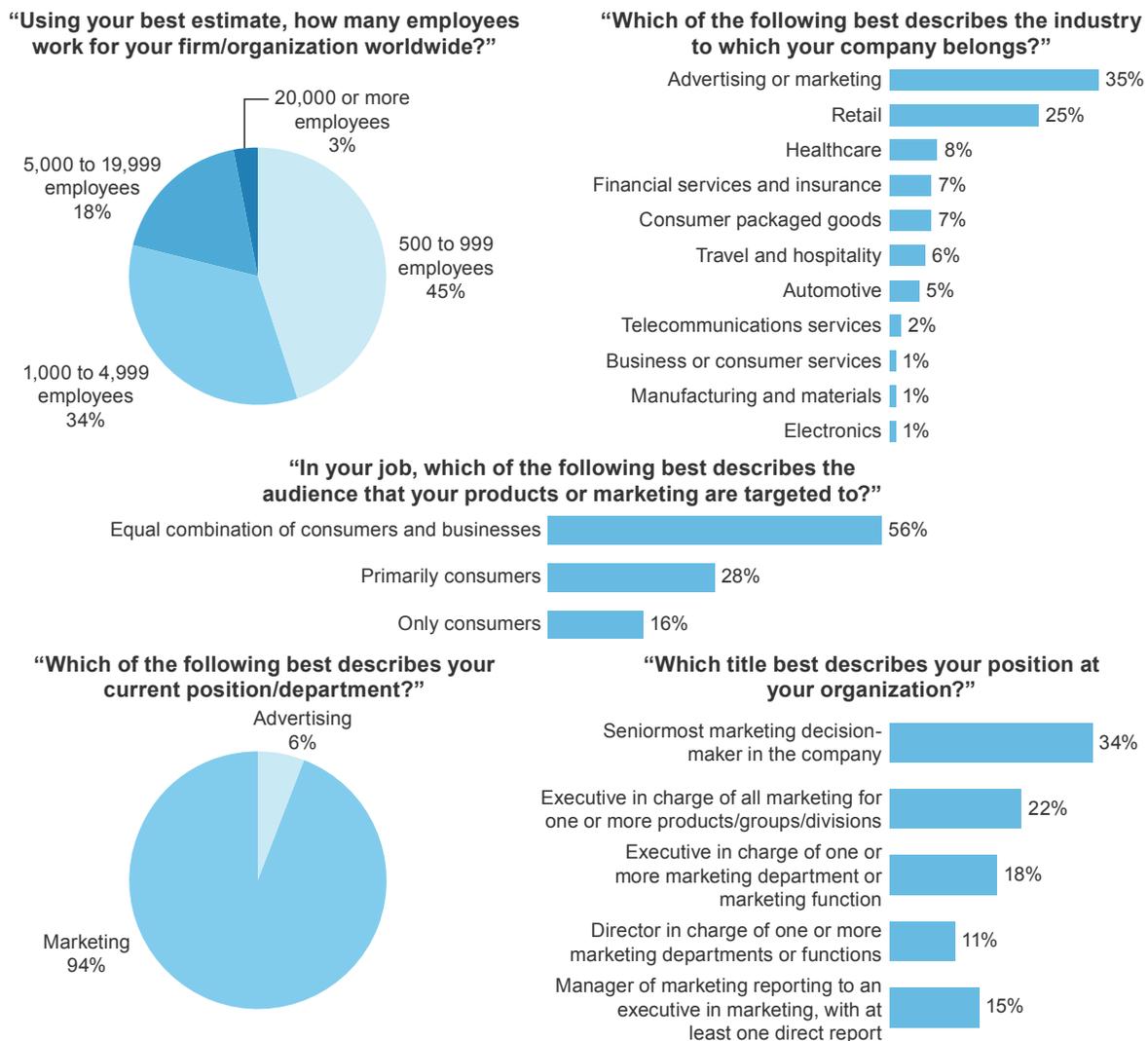
- › **Engage with the right customers.** In order to achieve revenue goals in the age of the customer, companies need to focus less on advertising to all customers and more on creating lasting relationships with the right customers. Realigning priorities to adapt to this change will help marketers prioritize data points to identify their most valuable customers. Defining KPIs around customer engagement with these high-value audiences is key to this culture change.
- › **Integrate the right customer data and analytics to turn insights into action.** Most companies have mounds of data, but analyzing it for insights into the creation of contextually relevant customer experiences is where marketers continue to fail. Understand what data is currently available and what systems are being used. Assess potential technologies that will help analyze the right data, and apply the resulting insights across marketing programs. Close the loop with measurement to create comprehensive omnichannel marketing insights.
- › **Build on core capabilities to enable omnichannel maturity.** Success with omnichannel marketing does not happen overnight. Marketers must evolve across the four dimensions of omnichannel maturity: organization, contextual understanding, customer identification, and measurement and attribution. Identify areas of weakness within these dimensions to integrate the right processes and/or technologies to bring you closer to achieving your cross-channel goals.

Appendix A: Methodology

In this study, Forrester conducted an online survey of 96 B2C organizations in the US to evaluate cross-channel marketing maturity. Survey participants included decision-makers in channel marketing influencing multiple marketing channels. Questions provided to the participants asked about the organization's cross-channel marketing attitudes and behaviors, the benefits of cross-channel marketing, and the technologies that enable and assist cross-channel marketers. Forrester also interviewed two cross-channel marketing decision-makers to gain additional insight. Interview participants were offered a financial incentive as a thank you for time spent on the survey. The study began in March 2015 and was completed in April 2015.

Appendix B: Demographics/Data

FIGURE 8
Survey Demographics

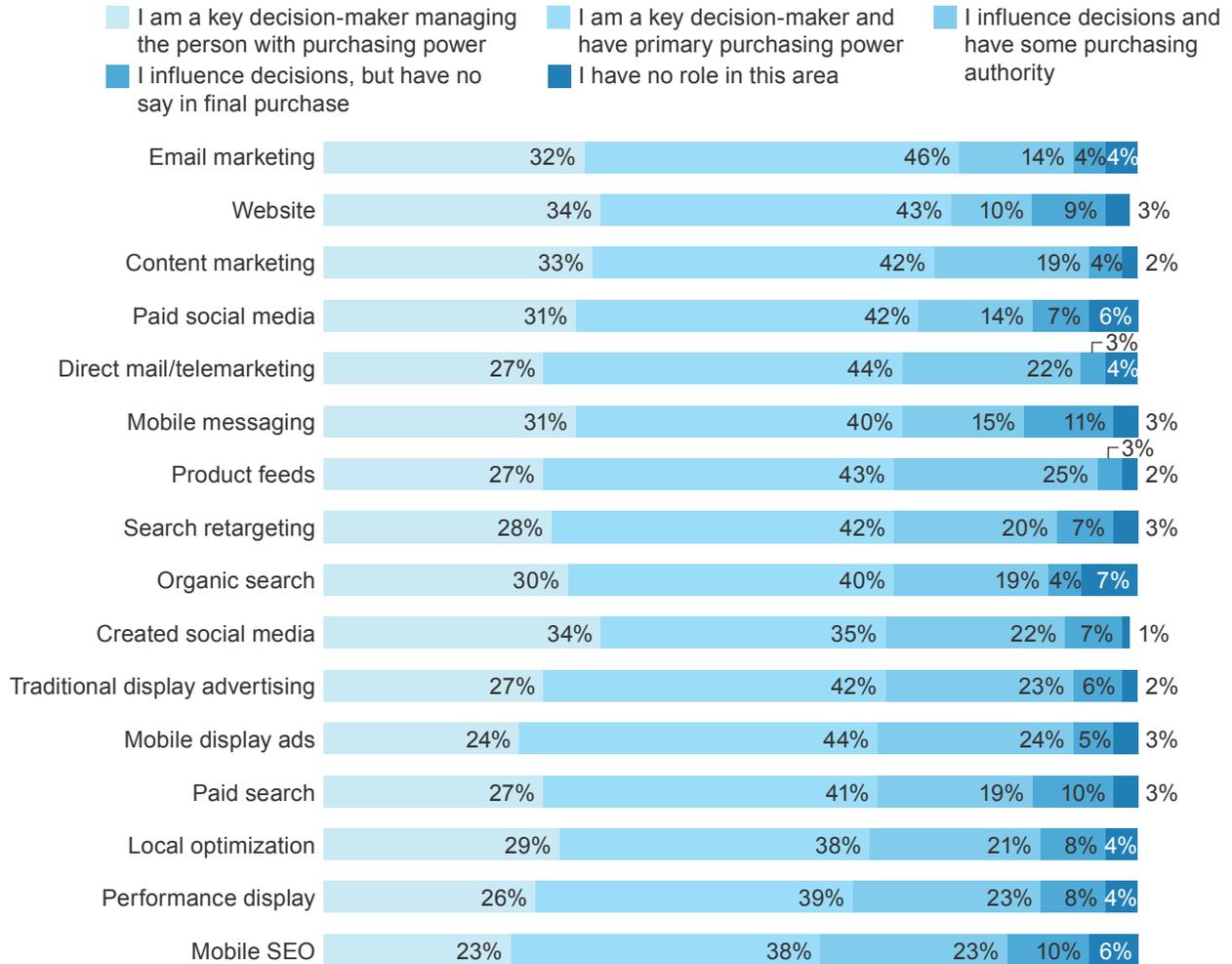


Base: 96 US B2C channel marketing decision-makers

Source: A commissioned study conducted by Forrester Consulting on behalf of Neustar, April 2015

FIGURE 9
Survey Demographics: Channel Marketing Responsibilities

“What best describes your role with your company's involvement in the following channels?”



Base: 96 US B2C channel marketing decision-makers
 (percentages may not total 100 because of rounding)

Source: A commissioned study conducted by Forrester Consulting on behalf of Neustar, April 2015

Appendix C: Endnotes

¹ The age of the customer is here. To prove this, we analyzed recent economic and survey data and reviewed the practices of over a dozen companies that have made customer-focused transformations. We found that customers are now more mobile, consume more reviews, and buy more online than ever before. Source: “Winning In The Age Of The Customer,” Forrester Research, Inc., April 6, 2015.

² Yet most firms still treat technology as discrete tools to procure rather than as a core competency to exploit. As a result, customer insights (CI) professionals responsible for their firm's marketing technology strategy miss the opportunity to shape and execute their firm's business technology (BT) agenda — a to-do list across roles for applying technology, systems, and processes to win, serve, and retain customers. Source: “Unlock Customer Context With Marketing Technology,” Forrester Research, Inc., January 2, 2015.

³ Source: A commissioned study conducted by Forrester Consulting on behalf of Neustar, April 2015.

⁴ Source: “Winning In The Age Of The Customer” Forrester Research, Inc., April 6, 2015.

⁵ Source: A commissioned study conducted by Forrester Consulting on behalf of Neustar, April 2015.

⁶ Source: A commissioned study conducted by Forrester Consulting on behalf of Neustar, April 2015.