



Marketing Analytics
State of Play 2022

Challenges and Priorities

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Executive summary

Despite the prevalence of tools and solutions that provide automated data integration, the time and effort required for manual data integration continues to be ranked as the top challenge for marketing professionals. And, with few exceptions, this holds true regardless of job seniority, region, or industry, respondents.

This should be an immediate red flag for marketers and analysts alike. With more and more data available to businesses, spread out across more and more locations, manually wrangling data via spreadsheets is an increasingly time-consuming and resource heavy process. And this in turn has important consequences for the business. First, time spent manually wrangling data prevents staff from working on more valuable projects that can deliver greater value to the business. Second, because of the time required to manually integrate data, the time-to-value is significantly increased. Marketers only ever receive a retrospective view of campaign performance and marketing impact, preventing them from making proactive, or even predictive, strategic decisions.

Disconnect between marketers and analysts

Thirdly, and most worryingly, manual data wrangling often leads to inaccuracies resulting from human error. Of the 41% of respondents who cited manual data wrangling as a significant challenge, more than half (53%) said they also had a low-level of trust in their data due to inaccuracies and mistakes. Of particular concern is that this lack of trust is significantly bigger among data analysts than marketers highlighting a problematic disconnect between the two roles. While 41% of data analysts say that inaccurate data is a significant challenge, only 30% of marketers agree

ranking it their lowest challenge.

This discrepancy should be alarming. Since analysts are the ones working closest to the data, any concerns about inaccuracies or mistakes need to be communicated to their marketer colleagues. Otherwise, key strategic decisions around, for example, budget allocation, are based on data their analysts do not fully trust. And, with the size of marketing spend per month increasing, this could translate into enormous amounts of wasted or misdirected revenue.

Personalized content and audience building

Challenges aside, personalized content and audience building are the clear strategic focus for marketing in 2022. This is unsurprising given concerns around third-party cookie deprecation and the increasing strictness of privacy laws. Content in the future is likely to have to work harder for businesses to gain access to customers' zero and first-party data and creating a tailored and transparent value proposition is a good strategy for achieving this. However, despite this campaign reporting being regarded as the lowest strategic priority for 2022, businesses that see themselves as very strong at campaign reporting, are on average 3 times as likely to be

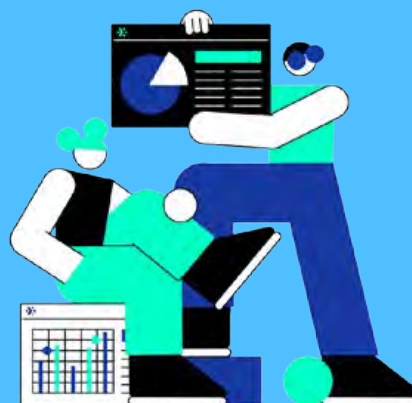
very strong at personalized content or audience building and 3.5 times more likely to be very strong at at least one other strategic capability. This speaks very directly to the fact that campaign reporting is the baseline starting point. Ultimately, businesses that choose to invest in campaign reporting are more likely to succeed at improving their personalized content and audience building capabilities. What's more, 75% of respondents who said they are very strong at campaign reporting will continue to make this area a high priority for investment in 2022 further highlighting the benefits.

Businesses are advised to:



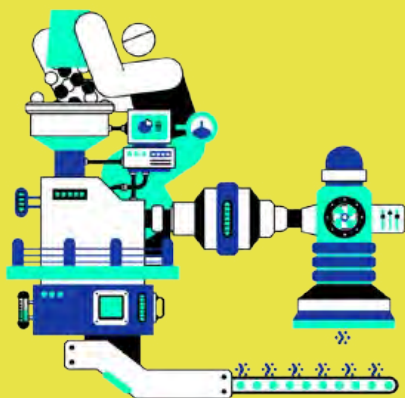
Explore

How best to improve their personalized content and audience building capabilities as key strategies for overcoming the challenges of cookie deprecation and data privacy laws.



Ensure

Campaign reporting capabilities are as strong as possible as a key starting point for improving other strategic capabilities.



Reduce

Time and effort spent on manual data wrangling. This will not only save resources and free up time for staff to provide more value, it will also help to reduce inaccuracies in the data and reduce the time to value.



Reduce

The gap between how marketers and analysts approach and understand data by introducing shared goals, platforms, processes, and ways of working.



Key Findings



Personalized content (66%) and audience building (65%) are the top two strategies for marketers and data analysts in 2022.

Strategic priorities ranked

- 1 Audience building and targeting
- 2 Personalized content delivery / customer experience
- 3 Campaign optimization
- 4 Precision targeting (e.g. CDP)
- 5 Campaign reporting and measurement

Key challenges ranked

- 1 Too much time and manual effort needed to wrangle data for reporting
- 2 Inability to measure ROI on marketing spend
- 3 Lack of visibility to report across all marketing channels and activity
- 4 Precision targeting (e.g. CDP)
- 5 Campaign reporting and measurement

3.5x

Businesses that consider themselves very strong at campaign reporting are 3.5 times more likely to consider themselves very strong in another strategic area and twice as likely to prioritize further investment in 2022.

41%

Manual data wrangling is ranked the biggest challenge with 41% of marketers and analysts saying too much time and manual effort needed to wrangle data for reporting is a significant problem.

41%

2 in 5 marketing data analysts have trust issues around their data due to data inconsistencies or errors, but marketers do not share these concerns – highlighting a significant disconnect between marketers and analysts

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Top Strategic Priorities for 2022



Overview

Personalized content and audience building look set to become key tactics to overcome cookie deprecation in 2022.

However, those with effective campaign reporting are more likely to succeed with respondents who are already very strong at campaign reporting, 3.5 times more likely to be very strong in another strategic capability. Moreover, those who are already benefiting from a strong level of campaign reporting are twice as likely to be pushing more investment into this area.

This suggests that those businesses are seeing a greater return on their investment into campaign reporting as it enhances their capabilities in other strategic areas. At this same time, it will only further the gap between those companies that still need to improve. As such, businesses that are looking to prioritize personalized content and audience building in 2022 are advised to ensure their campaign reporting capability is at a sufficient level.

Strategic priorities ranked

What are your strategic priorities for the coming 12 months?

- 1 Audience building and targeting
- 2 Personalized content delivery / customer experience
- 3 Campaign optimization
- 4 Precision targeting (e.g. CDP)
- 5 Campaign reporting and measurement

Strategic priorities: Audience building and targeting with personalized content

On average, audience building and targeting is the top priority for 2022 with 65% of respondents highlighting this as a key strategic focus over the next 12 months. With 66% of respondents also stating it is a priority for next year, personalized content delivery and customer experience come a close second. With the death of third-party cookies and the increasing strictness of data privacy laws, this shouldn't be too surprising. Building lasting relationships with new and existing customers is the key to earning access to valuable first and zero-party data. At the same time, marketers need to create a transparent value proposition to build trust, and championing personalized content is a great option to help engage and understand consumers.

65%

On average, audience building and targeting is the top priority for 2022 with 65% of respondents highlighting this as a key strategic focus over the next 12 months.

55%

55% of respondents consider campaign reporting important, nonetheless it is seen as the least important strategic focus for 2022.

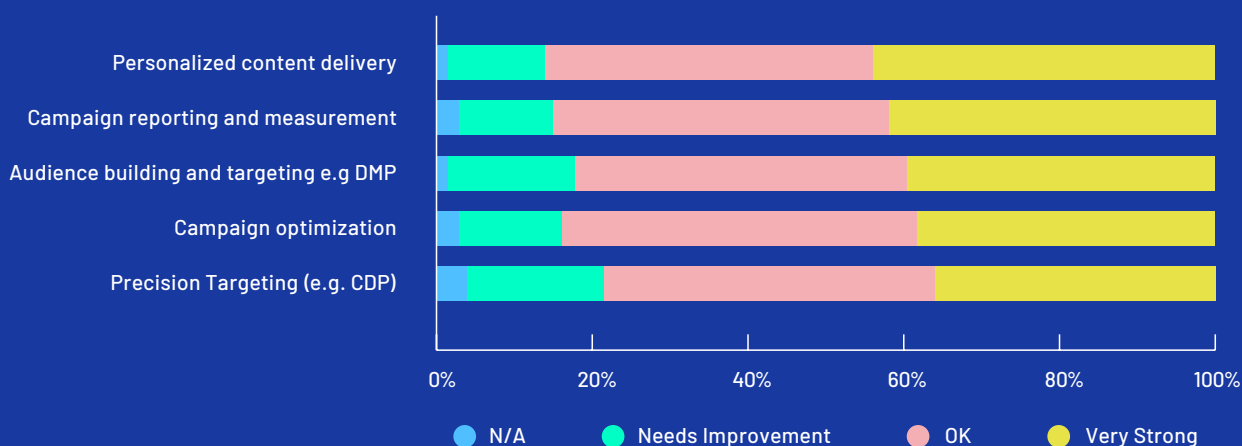


What are their current capabilities?

Despite the above, less than half of respondents considered their organization's current capability for delivering personalized content as very strong, with 2 out of 5 believing it only to be 'OK' and 12% identifying it as an area that required significant improvement. Likewise, only 40% of respondents felt that their audience building and targeting capability was strong with 16% identifying it as an area that required significant improvement.

Again, this should not be entirely surprising. Cookie deprecation and privacy laws have to some extent revealed an overreliance on strategies such as multi-touch attribution, often to the detriment of all else, and it will take time for businesses to develop new capabilities.

Businesses' current marketing capabilities



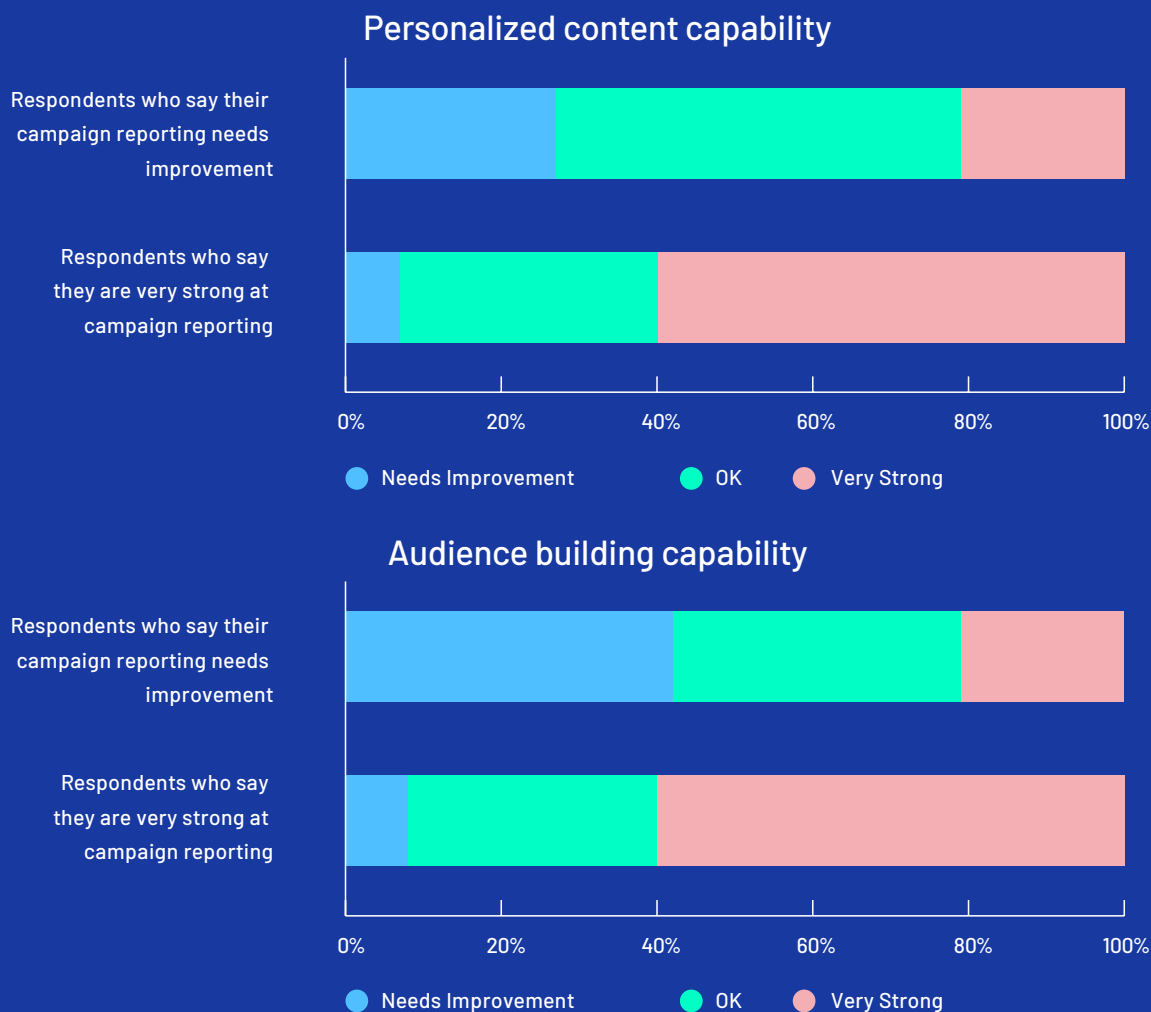
Strategy conundrum: Campaign reporting is high reward, but low priority

Although, with 55% of respondents stating it is a key priority, campaign reporting is still important, it is nonetheless seen as the least important strategic focus for 2022. However, respondents who said that they are very strong at campaign reporting are 3 times more likely to also be strong in personalized content delivery and audience building than those who say their campaign reporting needs improvement. In fact, on average, those who are very strong at campaign reporting, are 3.5 times as likely to be strong at another strategic area.

At the same time, respondents who ranked campaign reporting as a high priority are roughly twice as likely to report strong capabilities around personalized content and audience building and targeting. This implies that, despite a low priority for 2022, having a strong campaign reporting capability is likely to help accelerate more strategically important capabilities.

75%

75% of respondents who already believe they are strong at campaign reporting, also see it as an important strategic focus in 2022.



Investments snowball as capabilities increase

Furthermore, 75% of respondents who already believe they are strong at campaign reporting, also see it as an important strategic focus in 2022. In fact, those who are already strong at campaign reporting are almost twice as likely to focus on investing in this capability than those that consider themselves only ok, and almost three times as likely than those that consider it to be an area that requires significant improvement.

Ultimately, across every option, the level of respondents' current capability is in direct proportion to the strategic priority to continue improving on that capability over the next year. In other words, organizations who are already strong in a particular strategic area, are much more likely to make that same capability a key area of investment over the next 12 months.



My biggest pain point is a lack of real-time insights which compromises the quality of marketing campaigns.

Vikas Mittal, American Marketing Association



Current Challenges and Solutions



Overview

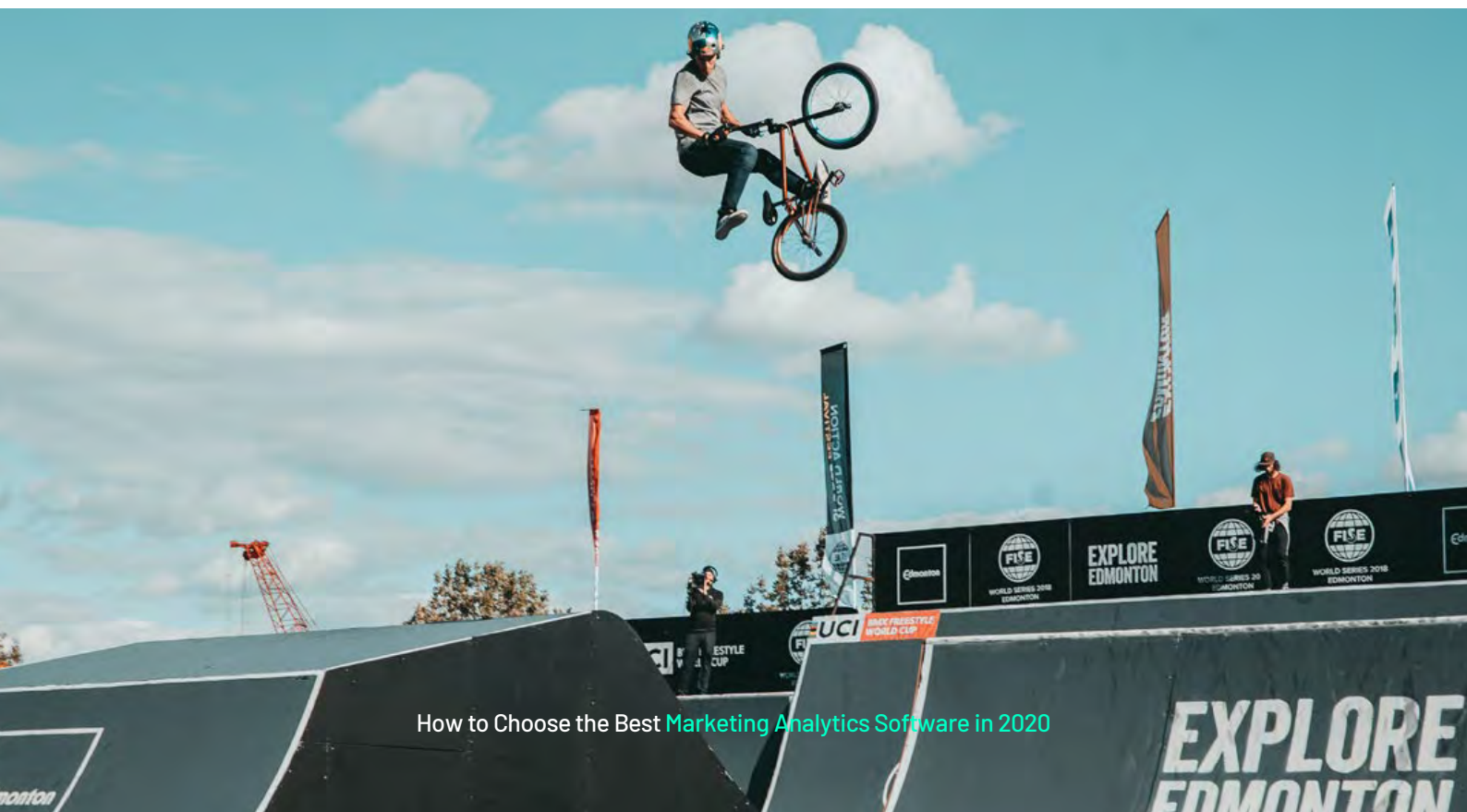
Manual data reporting is the key challenge businesses need to overcome in 2022 and businesses are advised to look at automated data integration platforms that can eliminate this issue.

This will not only speed up the time to value from their data, it will also reduce the likelihood of inaccuracies or errors. What's more, by freeing up staff time, more focus can be given to measuring the ROI on marketing spend and improving visibility over campaigns – the second and third highest ranked challenges respectively.

In fact, by reducing inaccuracies, automated data integration is a good foundation for tackling these challenges in the first place. By reducing the time to value, it also means businesses can achieve much closer to real-time campaign and ROI data.

What key challenges do you face in your role?

- 1 Too much time and manual effort needed to wrangle data for reporting
- 2 Inability to measure ROI on marketing spend
- 3 Lack of visibility to report across all marketing channels and activity
- 4 Lack of data-driven insights to drive marketing strategy
- 5 Uncertainty for how to optimize allocation of marketing budget





Top challenge: Manual data wrangling

Across the board, respondents ranked the amount of manual time and effort to wrangle data for reporting as their #1 challenge. 41% say manual data wrangling is a significant challenge, and this holds true for both marketers and analysts, small and large companies, and across most industries.

That manual data integration is still a significant concern for a number of businesses is alarming. Not only does manual data wrangling take considerable time, effort, and resources, it also increases the chances of mistakes or inaccuracies, greatly impacting the value that companies can leverage from it.

This challenge is also not restricted to low-level employees, instead becoming more visible the higher up you go – 54% of C-suite respondents recognize manual data wrangling as a significant challenge compared to just 38% of those at Manager level. For CTOs/CDOs roles specifically, this rises to as much as 6 out of 10. This is likely because the impact manual data wrangling has across the department is much more visible from higher up, highlighting how critical the issue is for marketing departments as a whole.

54%

54% of C-suite respondents recognize manual data wrangling as a significant challenge

38%

compared to just 38% of those at manager level.

Measuring ROI and visibility

After manual data wrangling, the key challenges are measuring ROI on marketing spend and getting visibility over all the data with 38% and 36% of respondents citing this as a significant challenge respectively. That marketing departments still struggle in these areas is related to the key challenge of manual data wrangling.

With the time and effort required to manually integrate data for market reports, visibility is naturally impaired and more often than not, can only provide a retrospective look at campaigns that have already occurred. Subsequently, without that level of visibility, marketing departments will only continue to struggle to measure the ROI and assess the overall impact of their efforts.

70%

Integrating all data sources is a key feature in any analytics platform with 7 out of 10 stating this is a priority



Data priority: Integrating all your data sources

Correspondingly, across the board, respondents agree that integrating all their data sources is a key feature in any analytics platform with 7 out of 10 stating this is a priority. This makes sense since by automating the integration of their data, businesses will not only eliminate manual reporting but also greatly improve visibility by providing a single source of truth. This in turn will make calculating ROI much easier.

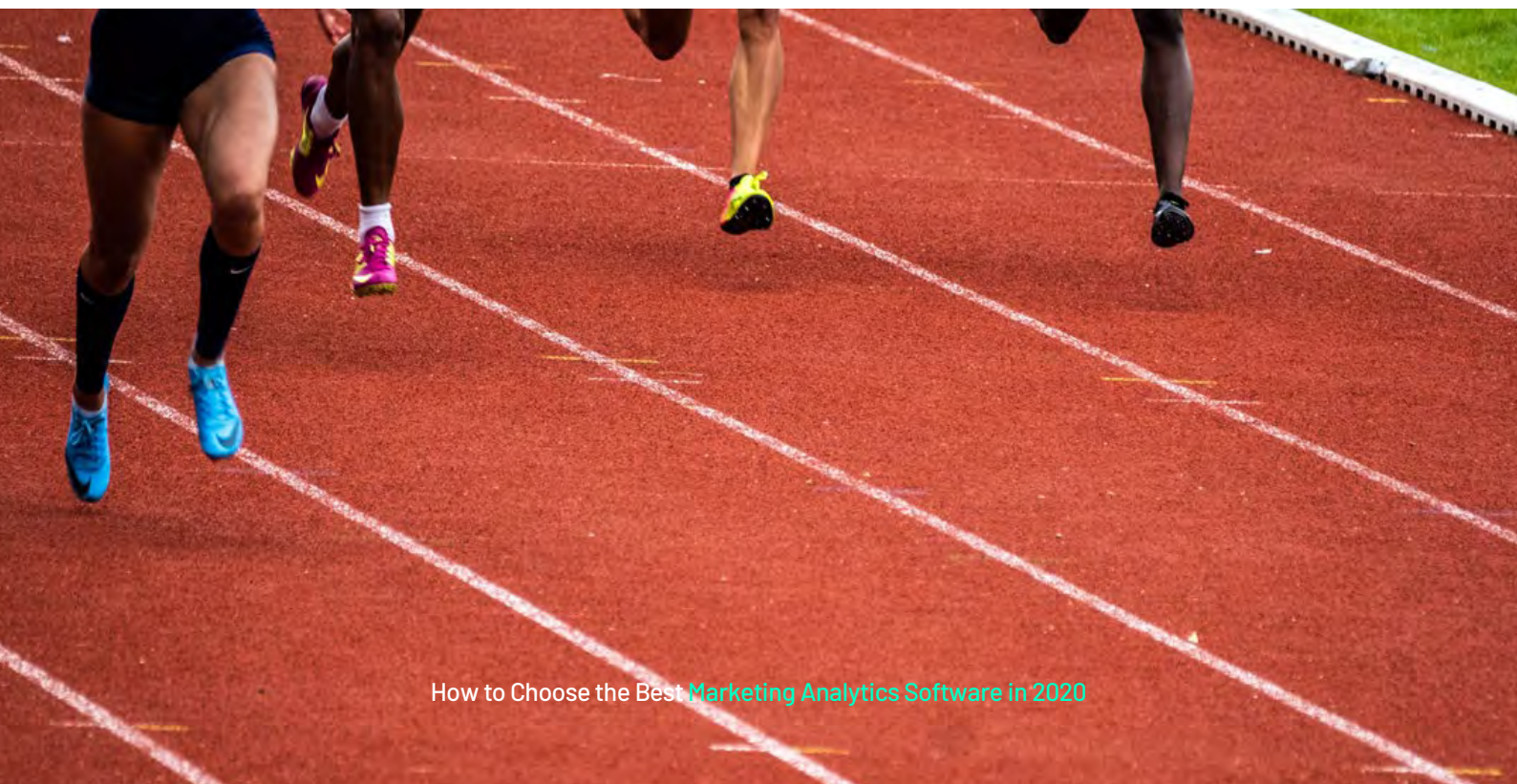
What features do you prioritize in a data platform?

- 1 Integrates with all of your data sources
- 2 Complete end-to-end solution
- 3 Ability to highlight the next best action or optimization
- 4 Fast time-to-value
- 5 Self-service reporting platform



My biggest pain point is that data is spread across too many different siloed locations, and we don't have a single source of truth to aggregate it.

Data Analyst, USA, Director, Media and Entertainment





Marketers vs Analysts



Overview

There is an alarming disconnect between marketers and data analysts – crucially when it comes to their trust in the accuracy of the data they handle.

Businesses need to tackle this as a matter of priority. If data analysts have concerns over their data, this must be communicated to the marketers who are making decisions based on this data.

Moreover, if data analysts have trust issues with their data, business leaders should be looking at ways to solve this.

This disconnect is also revealed in the different features that the two roles prioritize in their data platform. While marketers favor usability, analysts are much more concerned about the capability of a system. While this makes sense given the focus of each role, it can lead to data platforms that are ignoring the needs of one or the other role. Businesses are advised to try and bridge this gap and ensure that both parties have a voice when new data capabilities are being deployed.

Marketers Vs Analysts challenges

What key challenges do you face in your role? Marketers:

- 1 Too much time and manual effort needed to wrangle data for reporting
- 2 Inability to measure ROI on marketing spend
- 3 Lack of visibility to report across all marketing channels and activity
- 4 Inability to demonstrate the business impact of marketing efforts
- 5 Lack of visibility to report across all marketing channels and activity

What key challenges do you face in your role? Analysts:

- 1 Too much time and manual effort needed to wrangle data for reporting
- 2 Lack of visibility to report across all marketing channels and activity
- 3 Lack of data-driven insights to drive marketing strategy
- 4 Low trust in marketing reporting due to data inconsistencies and/or errors
- 5 Inability to measure ROI on marketing spend



Data conundrum: Analysts don't trust the data that drives decisions

While largely the key challenges for analysts and marketers are comparable, there is one glaring difference. While some 41% of analysts state that low trust in marketing reporting due to data inconsistencies or errors is a significant challenge, just 30% of marketers see this as a problem. This represents the single biggest difference in opinion between the two roles – in fact, respondents are more than twice as likely to disagree about this than any other challenge they face. And, worryingly, less than 1 in 10 respondents believe that inaccurate data is not a challenge at all.

30%

Of marketers state a low trust in marketing reporting

41%

Of analysts state a low trust in marketing reporting

Disconnect at the highest levels

Again, this is not restricted to low-level employees. More than half (51%) of data analysts working at the C-suite level (CTOs/CDOs) highlight a lack of trust in their marketing data as a significant challenge compared to just 34% of CMOs. That such a high number of C-level executives have concerns about their data should raise alarm bells, as should the disconnect between the two roles.

Ultimately, analysts have trust concerns around the accuracy of their data, but these aren't being relayed to marketers. This means that strategic decisions around budget allocation, for example, could potentially be made based on inaccurate data and, even for smaller businesses, this could easily translate into significant amounts of misallocated or wasted funds.

34%

Of CMOs see low trust in their marketing data as a significant challenge

51%

Of CTOs/CDOs see low trust in their marketing data as a significant challenge

What features do you prioritize in a data platform? Marketers:

- 1 Integrates with all of your data sources
- 2 Ability to highlight the next best action or optimization
- 3 Complete end-to-end solution
- 4 Ability to manage platform without help of IT
- 5 Self-service reporting platform

What features do you prioritize in a data platform? Analysts:

- 1 Integrates with all of your data sources
- 2 Complete end-to-end solution
- 3 Fast time to value
- 4 Ability to send data to a database / data warehouse / lake
- 5 Platform and marketing experts available to consult on best practices



Data conundrum: Capability vs. usability

While analysts (74%) and marketers (66%) agree that integrating all their data sources is the biggest priority, analysts are much more vocal about prioritizing technical capabilities highlighting another significant gap between their role and that of marketers. While 72% of analysts prioritize the ability to send data to a warehouse, just 53% of marketers prioritize these features.

Instead, for marketers, the focus is on usability. Naturally, marketers want a platform that can deliver actionable insights from their data, evident in the fact that the ability to highlight the next best action or optimization is their second most important priority in a data platform. However, the technical capabilities of a system are often what underpin the more sophisticated capabilities that marketers seek. As such, businesses are advised to consider both voices when seeking the right solution.

72%

While 72% of analysts prioritize the ability to send data to a warehouse

53%

just 53% of marketers prioritize this features



My biggest pain point is helping people not in the marketing department understand the value and the ROI using the data at hand.

Marketer, USA, Director, Property Management



05

Industries
Compared



Overview

While marketers and analysts from different industries share similar challenges and priorities, there are some key differences worth exploring.

Unsurprisingly given the highly digital nature of the industry, eCommerce businesses are much more likely to have stronger strategic capabilities than those in other verticals. At the other end of the spectrum, media and entertainment companies are the least likely to consider themselves strong in these areas. Marketing and business leaders are encouraged to reach out to other industries to discover how they are tackling particular issues around the data to find new solutions.

Industries most likely to say their organization is very strong at the following capabilities

53%

eCommerce
Campaign reporting and measurement

47%

eCommerce
Campaign optimization

41%

marketing agencies
Precision targeting (e.g. CDP)

51%

eCommerce
Audience building and targeting (e.g. DMP)

54%

eCommerce
Personalized content delivery / customer experience



eCommerce strongest all-round

Precision targeting aside, eCommerce businesses were much more likely to rate themselves as very strong at all other strategic capabilities. On average, 47% of eCommerce respondents rated themselves as very strong in at least one strategic area. This is perhaps unsurprising given that eCommerce is a newer, digital-only, industry, with a large amount of data readily available. At the same time, the acceleration of online shopping as a result of COVID-19 has forced eCommerce businesses to rapidly improve over the past 18 months.

47%

On average, 47% of eCommerce respondents rate themselves as very strong in at least one strategic area.

Industries most likely to say their organization needs to improve at the following capabilities

14%

media and entertainment
Campaign reporting and measurement

15%

eCommerce
Campaign optimization

28%

media and entertainment
Precision targeting (e.g. CDP)

20%

telecom
Audience building and targeting (e.g. DMP)

18%

media and entertainment
Personalized content delivery / customer experience

Media and entertainment most likely to need improvement

At the other end of the scale, media and entertainment businesses are most likely to need to improve their strategic capabilities. In fact, on average, media and entertainment respondents were twice as likely as eCommerce respondents to state that their business needed to improve in any given strategic area. One reason for this is that media and entertainment businesses often need to integrate and combine data from both online and offline sources which can cause issues.



Manual reporting less of a challenge for financial services

While all other industries ranked manual data wrangling as the biggest challenge, financial services is the only industry to buck this trend. Instead, marketers and analysts from financial businesses ranked a lack of data-driven insights to drive marketing strategy as their biggest challenge with 43% of respondents citing it as a significant problem. This difference may come down to the nature of the financial industry lending itself to having either strong teams of data analysts, sophisticated data integration solutions in place, or both.

Top ranked challenge for each industry

43%

Finance

Lack of data-driven insights to drive marketing strategy

14%

eCommerce

Too much time and manual effort needed to wrangle data for reporting

34%

agencies

Too much time and manual effort needed to wrangle data for reporting

39%

media and entertainment

Too much time and manual effort needed to wrangle data for reporting

44%

technology

Too much time and manual effort needed to wrangle data for reporting



My biggest pain point is that it's impossible to compare data across so many different systems.

Data Analyst, USA, Specialist, Telecom



UK, US and Germany Compared



Overview

While marketers and analysts in the US and UK share many of the same challenges and strategic priorities for 2022 as each other, there are nonetheless some key differences.

This is of particular interest for international businesses with multiple regional marketing departments. Instead of adopting a 'one-size-fits-all' approach, businesses are advised to analyze the relative strengths and weaknesses of each country they operate in and devise relevant strategies to tackle them. Smaller businesses operating from just a single country can benefit from reaching out to their international peers to learn what solutions could be applied at home.

Strengths differ between countries

When it comes to current strategic capabilities, the biggest difference is between German respondents ranking campaign optimization as their biggest strength; a capability both the USA and UK placed fourth. Almost half of German respondents consider themselves very strong in this area (46%) while in the UK and US that drops to just a third (36%).

In the UK, campaign reporting and optimization was ranked the greatest strength with 44% of respondents rating their organization as very strong in this area. However, reporting and optimization are actually considered marginally stronger in the US with 45% rating themselves as very strong despite this not being the highest-ranked capability. In the US, personalized content delivery and audience building are ranked their greatest strength with more than half of respondents rating themselves as very strong.

46%

Almost half of German respondents consider themselves very strong at campaign optimization

36%

while in the UK and US that drops to just a third

Global weakness: Precision targeting

Globally, precision targeting is considered the weakest strategic capability with only a third of respondents reporting they were strong in this area and some 17% believing it is an area that needs significant improvement, specifically in the UK where this figure rises to 21% – more than 1 out of 5 respondents. This might be explained by cookie deprecation shifting the focus away from targeting individuals and onto a more sustainable, top-down approach.

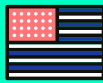


17%

On average, 17% of people believe precision targeting is an area that needs significant improvement

21%

but in the UK this figure rises to 21%



Current strategic capability ranked by Country			
			
1	Personalized content delivery / customer experience	Campaign reporting and measurement	Campaign optimization
2	Campaign reporting and measurement	Personalized content delivery / customer experience	Personalized content delivery / customer experience
3	Audience building and targeting (e.g. DMP)	Audience building and targeting (e.g. DMP)	Campaign reporting and measurement
4	Campaign optimization	Campaign optimization	Audience building and targeting (e.g. DMP)
5	Precision targeting (e.g. CDP)	Precision targeting (e.g. CDP)	Precision targeting (e.g. CDP)

Top UK and US challenge: Data wrangling

In both the US and the UK, time and effort spent wrangling data is ranked as the biggest challenge with some 40% of respondents identifying it as challenging or very challenging in the US compared to 43% in the UK. Conversely, only 1 in 8 US respondents don't consider this a challenge at all, and in the UK this falls to 1 in 17.

40%

Time and effort spent wrangling data is ranked as the biggest challenge with some 40% of respondents in the US

21%

compared to 43% in the UK.



Strategic priorities for 2022 ranked by Country			
			
1	Too much time and manual effort needed to wrangle data for reporting	Too much time and manual effort needed to wrangle data for reporting	Inability to demonstrate the business impact of marketing efforts/Inability to measure ROI on marketing spend
2	Lack of visibility to report across all marketing channels and activity	Lack of data-driven insights to drive marketing strategy	
3	Lack of data-driven insights to drive marketing strategy/Inability to measure ROI on marketing spend	Lack of visibility to report across all marketing channels and activity	Lack of recommendations on how to improve marketing performance based on data
4		Uncertainty for how to optimize allocation of marketing budget	Too much time and manual effort needed to wrangle data for reporting
5	Low trust in marketing reporting due to data inconsistencies and/or errors	Inability to measure ROI on marketing spend	Uncertainty for how to optimize allocation of marketing budget

Top challenge for Germany: Getting value from data

While in the USA and UK, the top challenge is getting the data, in Germany the focus is on getting value out of the data. Demonstrating the business impact of marketing efforts and the inability to measure ROI on marketing spend were both ranked the biggest challenges for German marketers and data analysts with some 2 out of 5 of respondents highlighting each as a significant challenge. In fact, only 3% of German respondents believe they have no trouble in demonstrating the impact of marketing compared to 12% in the UK and 17% in the USA.

In fact, only 3% of German respondents believe they have no trouble in demonstrating the impact of marketing compared to 12% in the UK and 17% in the USA



My biggest pain point is that data is inconsistent and incomplete.

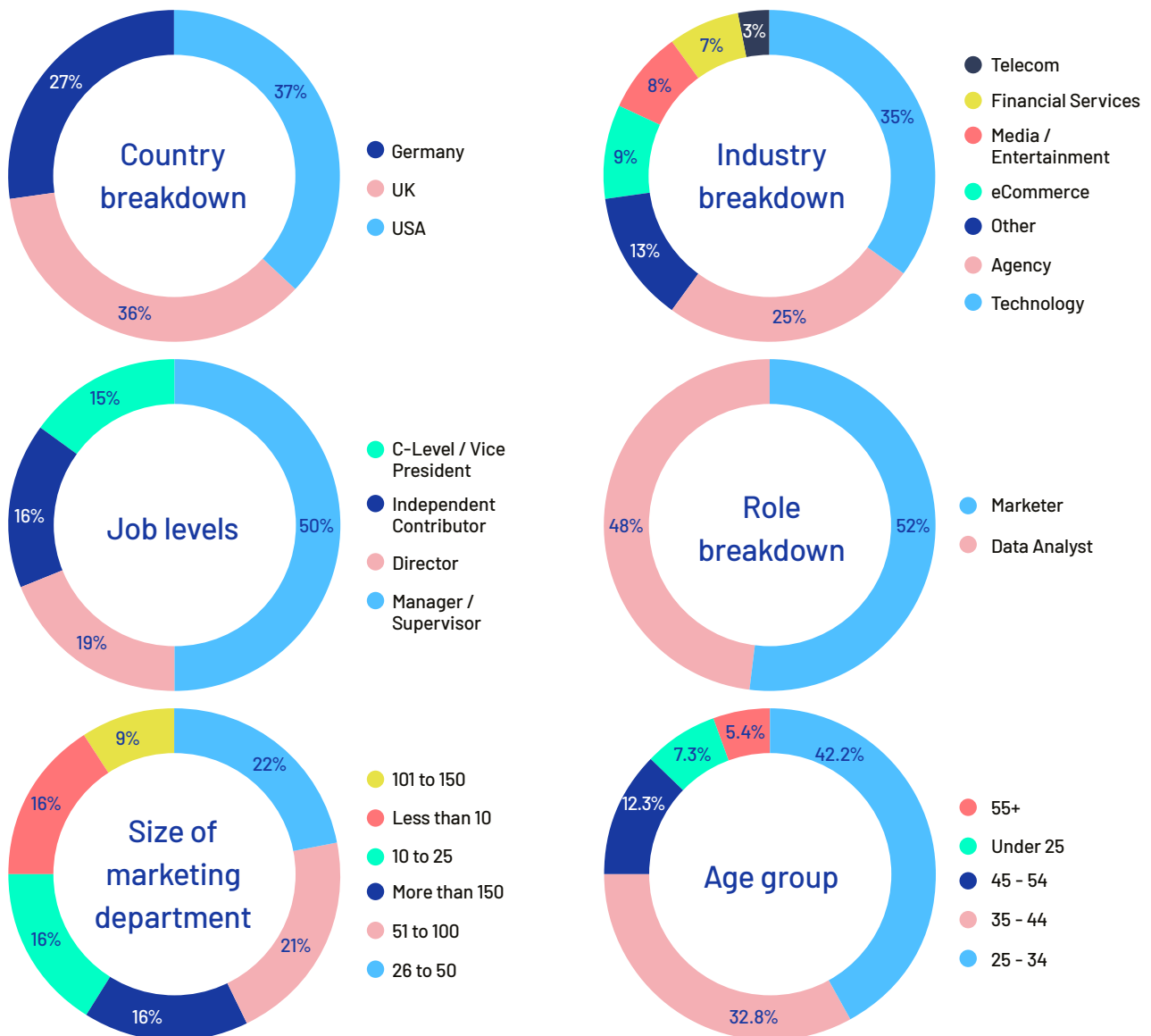
Marketer, Germany, Specialist, Construction



About the research

In August 2021, Sirkin Research, commissioned by Adverity, surveyed 964 Marketers and Data / Business Intelligence Analysts across the United States, United Kingdom, and Germany about Marketing Analytics. The survey covered topics ranging from current capabilities, key challenges, and strategic priorities of organizations' use of marketing data and analytical maturity. Respondents represented a large range of industries, including Technology, Marketing Agencies, and eCommerce.

Demographics



About Sirkin Research

[Sirkin Research](#) is the leading custom research service for B2B marketers. They have spent the last 15 years working with some of the fastest-growing marketing, technology and financial brands in the world, from Copenhagen to London to New York City, helping them understand and generate demand from their audience, based on hyper-relevant, data-driven insight.

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