CHANGE IS A PRACTICE, NOT AN ASPIRATION.

IF YOU DON’T FEEL THE PAIN, YOU ARE JUST TALKING ABOUT CHANGE, NOT CHANGING.

CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REVIEW</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transformation: Looking Back and Forward</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hot Topics Q&amp;A: What People Were Talking About</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PREVIEW</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connecting to a Mobile Consumer</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virtual and Augmented Reality. From Gimmick to Game Changer</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TV Transformed, Just Not Yet</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Securing a Content Future</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transforming the Face of Talent Management</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Predicting Purchase Behaviour</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creating a Customer Obsessed Enterprise</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail Is Dead. Long Live Retail</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GUEST WRITERS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fragments, Narratives, Services in the Land of the Giants</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Guide to Virtual Reality</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Marketing and Technology Divide</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Power of Authenticity</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 TRENDS</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOTES</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Welcome to Review Preview No. 6. For this edition we are continuing our focus on Transforming Marketing.

Transformation is possibly the topic of the decade for many in marketing and it can even seem like a term that’s a bit over-used. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that the Internet of things (IoT) is transforming almost everything in our daily lives, personal and professional.

The biggest transformer and driver of the IoT are mobile devices, and they have the most profound impact on everything we do. The number of mobile devices used today is almost equal to the world’s population; there are over 7.2 billion mobile phones worldwide. Mobile devices are our appendage, and we are connected to them and them to us practically 24/7. This has even given rise to another term, FOMO, fear of missing out.

As appose to the devices themselves, it is the opportunity to reach and engage with anyone, anytime, anywhere that has really caught the imagination and innovation of us marketers. Many brands however, have not fully understood the mobile consumer and have not yet designed user experiences that connect the needs of the consumer to the brand. Is it form or function, or both, that brands should be aiming for when designing mobile experiences? Of course, it all starts with understanding the consumer and then mapping what the brand experience should be. Rachel Pasqua further explores this phenomenon in her article “Connecting to a Mobile Consumer”.

The proliferation of mobile devices has also profoundly impacted consumer shopping behavior. Shopping is entrenched in a multichannel experience and has given rise to the omnichannel omnivore consumer that shops on- and offline, and increasingly both at the same time. To understand the stages of the purchase pathway, MEC launched MEC Momentum in 2013. With over 133 studies conducted to date, MEC and our participating clients have an in-depth view of what influences purchase behavior at different stages of the purchase pathway. But one thing is to comprehend, what if we could also predict this behavior? To understand how consumers will shop in the future, we created MEC Velocity, using powerful agent based modeling techniques that build simulations that run into the future, to predict consumer behavior and interactions.

James Northway delves into this in his article “Predicting Purchase Behavior”.

While as consumers, our behavior has been greatly influenced and driven by this disruption from a digitally enabled world, does transformation in business happen from turning things upside down and inside out? One dictionary definition of transformation is “a thorough or dramatic change in form or appearance”. Are seismic changes the only way to transform what we do in marketing? Does the size of the change really matter? Transformation is on-going and at varying scale, and savvy marketers and their partners plan, fund, activate, evaluate and iterate to stay ahead.

Smaller, but nevertheless highly impactful, changes in how, when and where we work and the accommodation of our personal time, should be made to effect the new talent and recruiting paradigm – absolutely essential for the next generation of companies to compete in today’s hyper-connected data and technology world. Marie-Clare Barker explores this in her article “Transforming the Face of Talent Management”.

Another promising disruptive technology, virtual and augmented reality, may be poised as the next big thing to transform brand experiences. How will brands take advantage of this technology and is consumer adoption ready for marketing applications? Whitney Fishman Zember arouses our curiosity in her article “Virtual and Augmented Reality. From Gimmick to Game Changer”.

These and other thought-provoking articles can be found inside this issue. Review Preview is a guide for exploring changes that will impact your business, your customers’ lives and yours as well, written by a broad spectrum of MEC’s global expertise. We have also invited guest writers to give their perspective and challenge your thinking and inspire you to take action. Take notes on the pages, share and discuss with colleagues, and refer back to this guide throughout the year.

We invite you to engage with us and to share what is transforming marketing, now and next, and what you will do to create change, big and small.

Carl Fremont
Chief Digital Officer, Global
REVIEW
In this section of Review Preview, we look back 20 years to 1996 with the advent of the commercialization of the World Wide Web. There are differing views on when the phrase internet became widely used, but it was popularly adopted around the same time. This was the early stage of the big bang of disruption.

2015 also marked the 20th anniversary of Fast Company Magazine which has been on the forefront of reporting this evolution of modern day business and marketing. Launched by Alan Webber and Bill Taylor, two former Harvard Business Review editors, Fast Company was founded on a single premise: A global revolution was changing business, and business was changing the world. The premiere issue of Fast Company featured articles on “Work is Personal”, “Computing is Social” and “Knowledge is Power”. The cover declared “Break the Rules”. This manifesto is still relevant even if we interpret it in a different context today.

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Dive or thrive
A lot has changed in the past 20 years. While many early stage companies of the digital age have withered or ceased, many others have thrived and spawned whole new sectors of business that did not exist before, disrupting how we work and live our lives.

Dive
A review of some of these disruptors reveals how they arose on the premise of changing the order of things, only to be disrupted or changed themselves.

WebCrawler – the first search engine to display full text search results. WebCrawler was originally a separate search engine with its own database and displayed advertising results in separate areas of the page. In 1995 WebCrawler was bought by AOL and sold to Excite and InfoSpace respectively. Today it is a meta search engine combining the search results of Google and Bing.

Netscape Navigator – an early leading web browser originally from the Mosaic Communications Corporation. Netscape Corporation was bought by AOL which eventually shuttered the service in 2008.

AltaVista – a search engine launched in 1995 that became the exclusive search provider of Yahoo. AltaVista was bought and sold a number of times, ending up with Overture which was bought by Yahoo. In 2011 Yahoo shut down AltaVista and all search results returned to a Yahoo page.

Lycos – an original search engine and portal started in 1994, spun out of Carnegie Mellon University. Lycos today seeks to establish itself as a network of email, webhosting, social networking and entertainment websites.

Prodigy – by 1994, Prodigy became a pioneer in selling both ‘dial-up’ connections to the World Wide Web and hosting services for web publishers. In 2008 Prodigy became part of AT&T which no longer supports Prodigy web pages.

Napster – the name has actually been given to two music-focused online services. It was originally founded as a pioneering peer-to-peer file sharing internet service that emphasized sharing audio files, typically music, encoded in MP3 format. The original company ran into legal difficulties over copyright infringement, ceased operations and was eventually acquired by Roxio. In its second incarnation, Napster became an online music store until it was acquired by Rhapsody from Best Buy in 2011.

GeoCities – a site that lets you build your own home pages and the first we saw of user-generated content. When GeoCities was acquired by Yahoo in 1999, it was the third most visited website. In 2009 Yahoo shut down GeoCities in the US, and today it operates only in Japan.
MSN - along with Windows 95’s release, Microsoft debuted The Microsoft Network, a subscription-based dial-up online service that it later turned into an internet service provider named MSN Dial-up. At the same time, the company launched a new web portal named Microsoft Internet Start and set it as the first default home page of Internet Explorer, its original web browser. In 2015 Microsoft stepped back from advertising and struck a deal with AOL to take over responsibility for sales of display, mobile and video ads on Microsoft properties in the US and eight other markets.

Myspace and Friendster - before there was Facebook, Friendster and Myspace pioneered the social media landscape. Friendster no longer exists and Myspace, acquired by Specific Media and Justin Timberlake in 2011, is a fraction of what it once was.

Thrive

Many more companies have risen as digital disruptors and while some have struggled to find their place in the new ecosystems, others have become giants who own wide swaths of the market by continuously finding new opportunities to evolve and leverage their data, technology and audiences.

Google – in 2015, Google Inc. created a new public holding company, Alphabet Inc., in a move to restructure by moving subsidiaries from Google to Alphabet, narrowing Google’s scope. Google may have been criticized for being an advertising walled garden but there is no denying their global reach and impact on all facets of marketing, search, display, mobile, video and emerging technologies like virtual and augmented reality.

AOL – having gone through many owners and iterations, this web pioneer was acquired by Verizon to leverage a data juggernaut for greater audience monetization.

Facebook – more than 1.4 billion people use Facebook to connect with what matters to them, over 900 million of these visit every day, and 700 million interact on their mobile devices.

Alibaba – this Chinese ecommerce giant provides consumer-to-consumer, business-to-consumer and business-to-business sales services via web portals. It also provides electronic payment services, a shopping search engine and data-centric cloud computing services.

Amazon – what began as an online bookstore has expanded to a major international ecommerce and advertising platform. Amazon video also offers VOD services in multiple markets.

Netflix – this streaming service has transformed how television is made, and how we consume it. With over 69 million subscribers worldwide, Netflix is poised to continue to disrupt the video content consuming market.

Yahoo – a portal pioneer who’s main feature was its directory, a constantly updated listing of thousands of sites online. In 2003, after acquiring the search companies Inktomi and Overture, Yahoo launched its own machine-produced search engine. Many would say that Yahoo’s best days are behind them but with its sizable global reach, data access and content and technology capabilities, Yahoo remains a formidable marketing platform.

Square – the company markets several software and hardware payment products, including Square Register and Square Reader, and it has expanded into small business services such as Square Payroll and the financing program Square Capital.

VidCon – a multi-genre digital video conference held since 2010. Originally conceived by Hank and John Green of the VlogBrothers YouTube channel, the convention is the largest of its kind in the world, gathering over 20,000 online video viewers, creators and industry representatives from across the globe.

What’s now and next is not new

Marketing’s transformation seem to have picked up pace exponentially over the 20 years since the invention of the commercial internet. However, many of the principles of this transformation are not new. The advances in technology and data access that have driven today’s one-to-one audience-based marketing and dynamic messaging, enabling custom brand communication at scale, began decades earlier in a more analogue manner.

In 1996, at the early stages of the internet, Lester Wunderman, Chairman Emeritus of Wunderman, spoke at the Direct Marketing Association’s 79th Annual Conference in New Orleans. In his keynote, “Which Way to the Future”, visionary Wunderman proclaimed:

“We are being swept ahead by new communications and information technologies, interactive systems, advertisers’ growing focus on customer service and their awareness that they need to identify and build relationships with the end users of their products and services because owning the customer experience and journey is the new priority. To prepare for what lies ahead, marketing must become known and practiced as a strategic rather than a tactical tool. Marketing must learn to intercept and effect the behavior of consumers no matter how and where they shop. We must learn to build relational databases. We must learn to convert one-way responses into two-way dialogue. And these dialogues won’t pay off until they become enduring relationships. Marketing must be based on information retained and used collaboratively by consumers and producers of products and services to their mutual benefit. It must disintermediate expensive and redundant layers of distribution and barriers to communication. It must make the home the new marketplace of choice for people who don’t have the time or the need to retail shop. I believe we must move to the brand experience; building relationships, databases, information and dialogues and targeted individual messages.”

This was the foresight of Lester Wunderman, two decades ago. Successful, thriving companies have expeditiously incorporated these principles into their business models. They understand that customer relationship building through personalized communications and value exchanges are keys to continuing to disrupt and remain relevant. By understanding, adopting, adapting and embracing digital ecosystems of value that connects resources, networks and platforms inside and outside the company, businesses will be poised well for the next 20 plus years.
HOT TOPICS Q&A
WHAT PEOPLE WERE TALKING ABOUT

CROSS-SCREEN
Q: How should we be thinking about cross-screen for our campaigns?
A: Cross-screen measurement and tracking solutions are maturing quickly, and we now have a number of deterministic (known users) and probabilistic (probable users) options available to us. As a first step we recommend that marketers measure the impact of cross-device on current campaigns. This highlights the level of impression duplication across devices and allows us to plan better journeys for future campaigns. Once we understand the device journeys, we can then recommend cross-device solutions to target ads in the most efficient way – this includes sequential storytelling across multiple devices.
Ben Rickard, Digital Partner and Head of Mobile, Global Solutions EMEA

ATTRIBUTION
Q: How can we close the attribution cycle with brands that are not involved with ecommerce?
A: Extending sales-based attribution modeling to offline scenarios requires ‘digitalizing’ the purchase experience. This becomes a hot topic when dealing with brands that are not yet involved with ecommerce. Having a clear site planning and defining the conversions we are looking to track, is critical. For example, consumer data, such as lead generation forms, coupon codes and reservation scheduling systems, must be acquired at some point in the digital purchase path. Then retail operatives must acquire and record the same data during the sales process and enter it into a dedicated digital platform. After integrating all the data sets, probabilistic (probable users) models may be applied to the whole journey.
Bruno Cicero, Director of Analytics and Insight, LATAM

DATA USAGE
Q: How can a marketer extend data driven targeting strategies to the creative message to ensure that the right message is being delivered to the right user?
A: Programmatic creative was a hot topic this past year. Programmatic creative is powered by dynamic creative optimization platforms. These platforms are not new to the market as retailers have been deploying the technology for retargeting product information for years. What is new among dynamic creative platforms, is the ability to leverage the technology for branding by pulling in a wide array of data assets including audience behaviors, product details and macro assets, like weather, to deliver the right combination and call to action to the right user. The applicable use cases for dynamic creative technology are now universal and limitless.
Josh Berman, Head of Digital Product Development, Global

VIEWABILITY
Q: Is viewability, ensuring digital ads are 100% viewable and being seen by humans, possible to achieve? In one poll conducted in January 2015, 65% of respondents identified viewability as the biggest issue for 2015. Of these, 60% thought that the majority of publishers would not achieve this by end of 2015.
A: The squeaky wheel wins. MEC/GroupM has been pushing hard to achieve 100% viewability for digital media. Because of this persistence, the vast majority of impressions bought in the group are paid for only if we can verify that they are viewable. We also suspect that publishers are allocating inventory based on client demands; if we press for 100%, we get it. If others are satisfied with 70% or 50%, that’s what they get.
Other developments:
- Verification software gets better at measuring fraud
- We can now measure mobile in-app viewability in some cases
- We’re applying viewability standards to programmatic buys
Greg Smith, Director of Technology, Catalyst Digital, NA
CONTENT

Q1: Can content marketing lift sales? Content marketing’s proven effectiveness is definitely a hot topic of 2015: “Prove to me my content investment can drive sales, particularly in ecommerce, and I’ll invest more in content” is the repeated challenge.

A1: The higher quality engagement that comes from an always-on content marketing plan is now emerging as a key driver of a re-engineered online purchase journey. Some online retailers with significant content marketing investments report that shoppers who travel to their online store through owned content sites, spend 50% more than other shoppers and tend to buy higher-margin products. Additionally, conversion rates are 700 points higher and purchase frequency is 50% higher. Results like these have CMO’s leaning into the content marketing plan with more interest and investment.

Q2: In a world of accelerating disruption, CMO’s are asking: Can content become a barrier to entry for unknown competitors?

A2: Content marketing can indeed build a hard-to-replicate barrier to entry by delivering deeper engagement, increased organic customer acquisition and a walled-garden sales funnel that CMO’s control – rather than third party intermediaries. Barriers to entry are increasingly important given the recent report from consulting firm Deloitte that states that one-third of the Australian economy faces imminent and substantial disruption by digital technologies and business models.

Tim Flattery, Chief Innovation Officer, Australia

TECH STACK

Q: How can advertisers create a fully effective technology stack with hundreds of different software technologies crowding an ever-increasing number of categories?

A: Advertisers who adopt a plug-and-play infrastructure have the advantage of integrating the best in market solution for a specific technological need. Continuous evaluation and adoption of new and effective technologies promotes innovation and an advantage over the competition.

Bruce Kiernan, Practice Lead, Performance Marketing, NA

AD BLOCKING

Q: Globally, usage of ad blockers grew by 41% YoY (Q2 2014-Q2 2015). In many markets the percentage of consumers using ad blocks is higher than 20%. Does this mean that consumers are ‘rebelling’ against digital advertising? And how should marketers and agencies address ad blocking?

A: Avoiding ads is not a new trend. It’s something that has been done always and in every media category. We’d use the remote to skip TV ads, change the radio station or flip to the next a page in the newspaper. What’s new is that when it comes to digital media, we can measure ad avoidance. There is also much to do to prevent it. But again, it’s nothing new: It’s about delivering content that matters to the consumers – and in digital we have everything we need to do to this. With smart usage of data and technology we can be relevant to consumers and their actual needs. No more and no less.

Tomasz Rzepniewski, Managing Partner, Digital and New Services, Poland

SNAPCHAT

Q: Is Snapchat someplace my brand has to be?

A: Snapchat is still developing as a platform but at its current growth rate it may very well surpass Twitter both when it comes to monthly average users and daily average users during 2016 (AdWeek, July 28 2015). If your brand is trying to reach a broad swath of millennials or younger, Snapchat is emerging as a key platform. Sitting at the intersection of messaging, video and mobile, Snapchat has shown that it has features this group craves, even if ad tech on the platform is still developing. During 2016 we expect the ability to target specific audiences to become greatly enhanced.

Noah Mallin, Senior Partner, Social Practice Lead, NA
It is increasingly popular to adopt the label 'mobile first', yet the phrase remains widely misunderstood. Many interpret it to mean mobile only but this oversimplifies a complex concept. A more precise definition is: Placing initial strategic focus on the most popular screen, i.e. smartphones, then layering in additional content and functionality for all the other screens that populate the modern customer journey. However, this is arguably only part of the bigger picture.

Progressive marketers understand that mobile-first isn’t about smartphones, it’s about human mobility – after all, it’s the person that is in motion, not the device. Today’s consumers have information at their fingertips literally 24/7 (most sleep with their phones within reach), and this new normal is triggering rapid changes in behavior and radical shifts in expectations. It’s simply a given that all experiences, branded or otherwise, should work seamlessly on and across any device.

A responsive website isn’t a differentiator anymore, it’s the status quo. The demands of a digital world continually activated, amplified and augmented by handheld devices are far more bespoke. The content delivered must be more engaging, the information more contextually relevant and all of the aforementioned more personally meaningful to the individual.

As a result, planning doesn’t start with the device but with consumer behavior in a multiscreen, mobile-first world. Why, when and how are people using one device versus another? What activities prevail on each? How are they using them to shop? To self-educate? To entertain themselves? And, perhaps most important, what problems are they trying to solve? The great paradox of digital is that the overwhelming information at our disposal makes life simultaneously easier and more complex. Paralysis by analysis looms large, the more choice you have, the harder it is to make a choice at all, and helping consumers make the right decisions, from getting directions to making a purchase, may be where brands can add the most value of all.

For example, a consumer shopping for batteries might consider a variety of questions, the answers to which will dictate the final purchase. Which will last longest? Which is the greener choice? Which is the best investment? A website can provide the answers, but mobile enables a brand to offer information more proactively to customers in proximity to the product. Case in point, in a recent MEC marketing initiative for Energizer Eco-Advanced in-store beacons triggered informative messaging directly at point of sale through popular 3rd party shopping apps. The marketing was rooted in an understanding of the needs states of battery shoppers, the questions they have and the challenges they face in the path to purchase. As a result, the customer experience designed and partnerships established empowered Energizer to give consumers the confidence to make a smart, informed purchase decision.

So for brands that wish to adopt the mobile first label, a remapping of the customer journey is in order. It’s no longer a linear path (and maybe it never was) but an ongoing process, and it’s imperative to let go of our outdated notions and strive to understand our customer unique needs states in a mobile-first world. Then and only then, can a brand design the right experiences, e.g. mobile applications, HTML websites, in-store touchpoints, that will drive consideration and purchase and, most desirable of all, positive long-term sentiment and brand advocacy. It’s our belief that the brands that understand how to use mobility to be present in these micromoments – via utility, entertainment, and the many other levers of engagement – are the brands that will truly thrive.

**Action:** Mobile first is all about consumers, not devices. Use data to analyze consumer behavior and map the consumer purchase journey. What are your customer’s needs? How can your brand help them? Only then start thinking about which experiences on which devices.
Virtual reality (VR), which immerses someone in a 360-degree view of a new world, and augmented reality (AR), which overlays virtual 3D graphics onto someone’s reality, are buzzwords that have been focal points at numerous industry events, articles and news updates in 2015. Many industry experts have hailed VR especially as the most impactful invention since the internet. However, when they hear the words ‘virtual reality’, most consumers remember the gimmicks of the 90s stunt/promotion-focused video games. Others think of Facebook which made headlines purchasing VR device developer Oculus Rift. Only a few currently ponder the endless possibilities VR can offer us in everyday life. But that’s sure to quickly change.

As major players like Facebook, Google and Microsoft continue to invest heavily in VR and AR technology, we will see public perception shift from gimmick to game changer, provided that the content developed for VR and AR provides real utility. And the technology doesn’t need to be complicated. While HoloLens, Microsoft’s AR solution, requires specific knowledge and understanding of new types of hardware and software, Google’s Cardboard leverages a smartphone, folded pieces of reinforced paper and only basic software understanding to tap into the power of VR. Initiatives like the over one million New York Times subscribers who received a Google Cardboard thanks to General Electric, will continue to pique consumer interest while proving the technology isn’t as complex or expensive to access as many think. As the technology continues to advance and providers set price points, the devices entering the marketplace in 2016 will help brands determine how to adopt them for communication plans.

Both virtual reality and augmented reality offer different paths of opportunity. Because VR immerses users in an artificial world and AR incorporates locations and objects from the real world, both provide smart brands with tools for exploration. With the KitKat Virtual Break Finder, Nestlé seems to have found a sweet spot, leveraging the KitKat brand proposition and VR to offer consumers an exciting break of their choice. Using their smartphone and a KitKat branded VR cardboard viewer, consumers can experience a KitKat “ideal break” and for example spend two minutes on a sunny beach rather than the real-life dreariness of waiting for the bus. Meanwhile, AR offers a new content-led landscape for brands with seemingly endless opportunities to blend virtual and real life. In the UK for example, consumers can use their smartphones to turn normal Domino’s out of home billboards into AR experiences, all to drive mobile orders.

The potential applications for VR and AR are quickly growing, and it is critical that brands rapidly adopt the technology. However, the reality is that most businesses are not ready for VR or AR. Being prepared means starting with a strong understanding of what VR and AR are, how they are impacting (or could impact) your business, and what baseline technology infrastructure or understanding your company may need to be confident – and ensure you can be nimble in your investment and testing of VR and AR technologies.

We are already seeing savvy brands leverage this creative canvas to capture audiences with a true sensory emersion and authentic connection. As the creative bar is being continuously raised thanks to testing and learning, we can expect a lot more content to surface.

Action: Now is the time to connect with device and content providers to understand their launch strategies and how brands can work alongside them to be part of how consumers will adopt both VR and AR in their everyday lives. Work with data and consumer insights to make any VR and/or AR investments valuable to consumers and connected to the brand proposition rather than just gimmicky one-off offerings.
A recent analysis published on Business Insider estimated that ESPN has lost over $2.5b in subscriber revenue since 2011. While the article suggests cord cutting as a driver for lost revenue (this can be debated somewhat), this headline is very representative of where we are as an industry with cord cutting. We keep looking for a shoe to drop but while change is happening, it’s not the precipitous fall off the cliff some seem to want to portray. At least not yet.

2015 vs. 2014 represented a modest change in total pay TV, with only a net decrease of 0.1% in subscribers. The last quarter of 2015, however, indicated a 0.7% decline which fuels the thought that change is accelerating (Wall Street Journal). When analyzing the decline by customer segment, there is strong evidence that millennials, who make up 20% of the American TV audience, have a higher propensity to either cut the cord or shave the cord; reducing but not cutting paid TV. According to Nielsen research, more than 25% of millennials have cut the cord. Couple these figures with new direct-to-consumer offerings from HBO, Sling TV and others, and you get the prediction of rapid change. Some are forecasting 2016-2018 as being the inflection point for mass cord-cutting.

In the face of uncertainty, marketers should always take a proactive approach. As the American business legend and former chairman of General Electric Jack Welch liked to say, “Change before you have to”. So how create a winning strategy to manage the risks posed by cord-cutting?

1. **Understand your customer segment(s).** This should drive both how much of a shift to expect as well as whether to implement change sooner or later.

2. **Take a screen agnostic approach.** All research show that cord cutters are focused on the content they want, when they want. The medium clearly winning out in this trend are smartphones where millennials in particular spend nearly 40 hours a month.

3. **Premium content remains... premium content.** Cord cutting is not a vote against content, it is a vote in favor of the content that consumers want. It distills the strongest content vehicles, and while there could be cost inflation, it at least affords marketers the clarity of knowing they will get a premium audience. The power of a having a strong program during its season or catching a live sporting event still remains insulated from cord cutting trends.

4. **Develop a healthy testing approach.** Many of the traditional pay TV companies are actively experimenting with new models. CBS All Access continues to reduce ad load but offers targeting with more detailed data to deliver more effective reach. Dish Network’s Sling TV is experimenting with dynamic ad delivery to allow greater personalization in the hopes of stronger ROI.

5. **Use native and content strategies.** Complement ads with other strategies: Native formats, branded entertainment, influencer marketing and a plethora of other concepts are already successful tools in the marketer’s toolkit, and these will continue to evolve. Marketers need to become versed in both paid and earned/owned approaches to maintain reach and effectiveness in the future.

6. **Utilize data wherever possible.** Measurement companies Rentrak and comScore are merging with the stated mission to create the leading cross platform data set to help identify audiences anywhere. ACR chips for real-time audience measurement are also used to verify content that households are viewing on TV screens and then used to map any other properties and screens those households utilize.

**Action:** Although much debated, statistics show that cord cutting is still not the strong trend that has been expected for some years now. Nevertheless, as cord cutting/cord shaving figures are picking up, it’s time to be prepared. Check your marketing against this article’s steps 1-6 and be well prepared for the future change to today’s dominating TV model.
Content is currently the buzz word on every marketer’s lips. Some industry leaders have asserted that it is the only marketing left, the king, even the kingdom. Others take a more quizzical and sometimes sceptical stance about its definition, its importance and its value. Whatever the point of view, it is indisputable that content marketing has risen dramatically up the agenda over the past few years. Yet as an industry that is still emerging, it is very likely that the next few years will be far more significant.

As we know all too well, the media landscape is evolving at an unprecedented rate, consumers have increasing choice and control, and brands face many challenges in getting their messages across effectively. Traditional advertising is in many cases becoming less effective, and brands want to not only reach their audiences but also drive deeper engagement that will positively influence the consumer journey. The rise of mobile, increased digital capability and social platforms, new technologies, and the quantity and quality of data are all converging to present exciting and unparalleled opportunity for marketers to create effective content campaigns. And after a period of test and learn, companies are now going all in. Spend on content marketing is projected to double over the next five years to $313 billion (PQ Media 2015).

Among all the hype, there are some key considerations for brands that want their content marketing to be a success story. As the statistics prove, many brands now believe that content is increasingly important in their marketing and are adjusting their budgets accordingly. Yet while being bombarded from all sides by those organisations that offer content services and solutions, there is often a lack of clear guidance as to why, where, when and how content fit into brands’ media and marketing plans.

Given the plethora of channels, the ability to distribute content at scale is now relatively easy, and there is inevitably the temptation for brands to just do that. However, with an ever-increasing amount of content in the system, and a significant decrease in the overall levels of consumer engagement (TrackMaven 2014), it has never been more critical to be clear about the role of content for the brand. More content is not better, more content is just more content, and consumers will switch it off if it isn’t adding any value to their lives.

Too often, content providers start with a creative idea. Given the above, what should now be mandatory for brands, is a clarity of purpose, a strategic approach to content that is tied back to their business ambitions, clearly establishing who the content is for, what need it is meeting and then determining what type of content is most relevant for them.

Creative content should be rooted in robust consumer and market insight, thus maximizing the chances of it meeting the goals that the brand wants to achieve. An idea is brilliant if, and only if, the right audience responds to it and behaves in ways that lead to the right outcomes.

So while the debate rages about the importance of creative content versus the delivery system that carries the message, the reality is that to win in an increasingly competitive marketplace, brands need to strike a balance that will put relevant and creative content in relevant places at the most relevant time.

It’s a complex challenge but a simple choice. Brands must talk with people, not at them. Engage, not interrupt. Those that fail will just be adding to the cacophony of content noise. Those that succeed, will deliver untold brand and business benefit.

Action: Develop a content strategy that ties back to the business ambitions. Establish a clear role for content within the marketing plan, analyse the market and the audience, determining how best to engage with them to positively influence the consumer journey. Be bold, purposeful and innovative in creation and delivery. Measure its effectiveness and put the learnings into practice.
As tech and digital innovations have changed the way we as marketers approach business, many forget to take a look at the company culture and realise how the shift in digital and tech have also impacted (and should impact) how we work, the people we employ and the places where we work. In order to sustain a successful business model in today’s digital era, it’s time to rethink our approach in the area of people and culture.

21st century talent management

First of all, technology has completely changed the game. It is no longer necessary to measure output based on hours spent at desks when we can engage with a multinational mobile workforce that is connected in real-time.

Secondly, for the modern workforce it’s no longer about work versus spare time, it is not even about work-life balance. It’s about seeing people as individuals who want to grow through work as well as through other areas of their life, with a level of flexibility. As businesses we need to encourage personal and professional development that make sense to the individual. That entails embracing the fact that volunteering might develop an employee just as much as a course in ‘digital research and measurement’.

The Ubers, Teslas and Googles of this world are attractive workplaces because they are disrupters that leverage new technology to change people’s lives. How to compete against that? By making our company a space where employees can make an impact. Where innovation, entrepreneurship and risk-taking is encouraged. And where we stand for something that is clear, easy to understand and can be personalized to make sense to people in their own lives as well.

Then, when people feel it’s time to move on, and statistically that can be after three years when you employ a millennial, we must let them go; knowing that we’ve done our best to make this time the best in their career, and that we’ve helped them grow into the next stage. If successful, we will have an army of ex-employees speaking on our behalf, as our ambassadors, highlighting how we gave them a great experience, how they met friends there, and how they will always feel a connection with us. Employee advocacy is critical in a time when competition for talent is becoming more and more intense as the transformed marketing world demands even more specialized and diverse skill sets.

New, flexible workspaces

This style of talent management should be reflected in the office. Exit cubicles and enter workplaces that cater to the needs of a free-thinking global workforce. From open space to private work places, from cafes to onsite gyms and treadmill walk-and-work stations, the new offices not only transform space and use new technology but are putting people first and their needs at the heart of design and culture.

For example, MEC in Mexico City has implemented hot-desking that allows multidisciplinary teams to work together and inspire each other. Real-time data to build insights, is projected onto video walls in the open office space. In the MEC Amsterdam office wireless technology releases everyone from the boundaries of their desk, and the office interior has been designed to inspire creativity, work-play and out-of-the-box-thinking. The new workspaces encourage both planned and spontaneous connections, and they break down barriers between specialisms, roles, functions and services. In other words, the modern office space mirrors the paradigm shift in modern work life, and the companies that get this right will be successful in securing the talent necessary to reach growth in a transformed world.

Action: Re-examine your physical and virtual environment. Is it sustainable and intelligent? Are you supplying technology that enables flexibility? Look at the work culture. Do you give people the freedom to meld professional and personal? Are the processes and ways of working affecting the right culture and driving performance? Is what you stand for as a business clear, meaningful, aspirational and can be customized by your employees?
Wouldn’t you like to be able to predict how your customers shop? Wouldn’t it be useful to know how your campaign initiatives will impact shopper decisions - in advance? Comprehensive data sets and a technology borrowed from epidemiology, now make it possible to predict consumer purchase journeys on brands, over time.

In 2013, MEC launched MEC Momentum, an unprecedented new approach to understanding the consumer purchase pathway. To date, we have run 133 studies in 53 categories across 31 countries, among more than 230,000 consumers. This massive amount of data has enabled us to establish consumer behaviour within categories – and has led us to the obvious next step: From understanding consumers’ current behaviour to predicting their future. With MEC Velocity we’ve entered the world of predictive marketing.

Welcome to the future: Predictive marketing

How do we predict how consumers will shop in the future? By using the techniques applied to solving supply chain logistics, traffic management optimisation, or the way virologists foresee how a disease spreads throughout a population over time. The method is called agent based modelling, and it uses a bottom up approach where every consumer (agent) has different rules, intentions and beliefs. Additionally, MEC Velocity incorporates how consumers are able to interact and influence each other, an element that is absent in other predictive approaches. This is particular powerful when planning campaigns that encourage consumer engagements, drive word of mouth or use of social media.

As a result, MEC Velocity enables us to build simulations that run into the future, predicting consumer behaviour and interactions, and their impact on sales and market share in a category. We can then create experiments by changing key metrics such as passive stage bias or campaign engagement to see how fast and by how much this flows through into changes in consumer behaviour and then sales. This allows us to predict the business benefit of longer term advertising investment strategies.

Early results show that in general, the impact of such strategies take longer to appear than normally expected, but that they also build for longer and can ultimately deliver very large changes in sales. Equally exciting is the ability to run simulations for specific segments or audiences within a market or even build segments based on simulated future behaviour. These audiences can then be created and targeted through programmatic technologies.

With MEC Velocity we’ve taken the leap into predictive marketing and a new way of thinking and planning that will have an enormous impact on advertising, brand and business growth. The beauty of MEC Velocity is that as we add more rich data sets to the model, we become more and more accurate in our predictions. This allows us to be nimble and opportunistic in our planning across all channels, ensuring that we remain at the forefront of driving transformational solutions. And that will give brands genuine momentum.

Action: The use of predictive modelling techniques in strategic planning will change how we think and plan marketing activities. Think about how you are making predictions or setting expectations on changes to sales over the medium to long term, and how this might be improved.
Technology has firmly shifted the balance of power in favor of consumers who can now research, compare and purchase anything instantly and have it delivered anywhere. As a result, a marketer’s historical differentiation needs to evolve to be customer centric where the enterprise focuses its strategy, energy and budget on processes that enhance knowledge of and engagement with customers. Forrester calls this a “customer obsessed enterprise”. To create a customer obsessed enterprise, marketers need an audience centric strategy that includes data, technology, content and analytics as four core pillars.

Data is the foundation but for many marketers the siloes across brands and lines of business have made accessing data in a centralized way challenging. A critical first step is to develop a plan that aggregates a marketer’s 1st party data at a unique customer level across all marketing and sales channels. Once this 360 customer view is complete, 2nd and 3rd party data can be combined to fill in any gaps in the knowledge. It is important that data is consistent across all channels and touchpoints to ensure greater relevancy and more efficient targeting.

The integration between databases and marketing technologies is essential to a successful audience centric strategy. Large technology companies like Adobe, Oracle and Google are building end to end audience centric technology stacks across paid, owned and earned channels. Once this 360 customer view is complete, 2nd and 3rd party data can be combined to fill in any gaps in the knowledge. It is important that data is consistent across all channels and touchpoints to ensure greater relevancy and more efficient targeting.

With the ability to define and target consumers consistently across all touchpoints, marketers need to focus on creating personalized experiences and delivering the right content at the right time. Mapping content needs across the entire customer journey is imperative to activating an audience centric strategy. Creating enough content to develop a myriad of personalized experiences is a significant challenge. There are two solutions to this challenge. The first is having a strong understanding of the customer journey and leveraging advanced simulation models, like MEC Velocity, to predict the journeys with the highest ROI.

This strategic approach enables marketers to hone in on the content required to drive the greatest business impact. Even with this approach there could still be a significant number of content permutations, so enter the second solution: Dynamic creative technologies, or DCO for short. DCO creates personalized content experiences in real time based on user information that can span across display, video and landing pages. Dynamic creative technology is now an essential component in a marketer’s audience centric arsenal.

Lastly, but perhaps the most critical component to an audience centric strategy, is developing a holistic measurement and analytics plan with a test and learn roadmap as a core focus. Questions about the impact of each marketing exposure, the interplay between various marketing tactics, the sequencing of content in terms of the number of brand and direct response messaging, and the optimal frequency of messages needed to convert the user, become top of mind in an audience centric world. These questions can be answered as long as the data contained in the various platforms can be portable to an analytics team to crunch the answers. It’s the insights gleaned from the analysis that will ultimately improve an audience centric approach and therefore drive improved media efficiencies, greater business impact and higher ROI for marketers.

Action: Get rid of the silos and make customer data accessible across brands and business units. Use data as the foundation for a strategy that includes technology, content and analytics to create an efficient customer centric marketing cycle.
Ecommerce breaks the power dynamic of traditional retail where the retailer held all the power. They chose what products they bought from manufacturers, and how they sold them to consumers. Retail sales teams would decide which products to place where and how to activate them. A difficult decision that often resulted in cluttered shelves where brands were left to compete to offer the most attractive promotions and the flashiest POS material package to cater as much to the retailer decision makers as to the consumer.

That power dynamic has now switched dramatically, with the consumers firmly in charge. Carrying their decision making tools with them in their pocket, always ready to search for information, read reviews or shop, consumers have come to expect the same readiness from brands. Helped by technology and consumer expectations, brands and manufacturers are now able to build entirely new value propositions around the consumer, through business models like mass personalisation, automatic subscription and instant delivery.

Crucially, the ecommerce experience goes way beyond the brand website and should not only be reflected throughout the internet but in physical stores as well. As tools like MEC Momentum can help to better understand how consumers behave, we are starting to understand the massive influence that ecommerce has on offline sales, acting as it does as an influential consumer touchpoint.

The brands with success in this new ecommerce landscape are the brands that understand how to build a strong and coherent content strategy across all consumer touchpoints. New technology and the web retailer’s access to in-depth and quantifiable data gives unprecedented possibilities for brands to tailor content to a consumer that more and more has come to expect a personalised experience, based on what they’ve previously bought, what they like and how they like to shop. This is mainly due to frontrunners in the area, brands like Apple and Amazon that have showed consumers how they can make their shopping experience both more relevant and personal with a clever use of data. They’ve set the bar very high, and all brands need to provide that level of consumer knowledge and engagement to their ecommerce touchpoints, and it goes well beyond just consistency of brand look-and-feel. The data and technology advancements allow brands to unlock and monetise consumer insights with real-time solutions, customisable audiences, endless creative opportunities and versions and resourceful touchpoint activations – whether on a brand’s own website, on social media or via third party retailers.

With $1.9 trillion of sales projected in 2016, it is easy to think of ecommerce as just a sales channel. This is a temptation that brands must resist. From a media standpoint, ecommerce is not just about conversion media, but in a world with still shorter time to influence consumers and high consumer expectations, brands must think about what will allow them to be the first port of call for a consumer. The window between desire and delivery is rapidly shrinking, and so the need for strong brands is now greater than ever.

Action: Ecommerce is about much more than giving the consumers a place to put in their credit card details. Brands must tell a story to stand out; be visual because that’s what counts on the pocket decision maker tool (aka the mobile); make sure to communicate on all the various platforms that their consumers frequent; and don’t be afraid to tackle the competition. In ecommerce all is so much more equal than ever before.
What do we know? The communications world is dominated by giant systems. Social systems like Facebook, Twitter and Line. Messaging systems like Messenger, Snapchat and WeChat. Operating systems like Android and iOS. Discovery systems like Google, Facebook and the rest.

These systems create interlocking constellations of activity and of individuals, and they touch adjoining constellations like Amazon, Alibaba, Netflix and others that form, together with the physical world, the galaxies we now inhabit.

This creates a requirement for brands to develop platform specific assets that reflect the functionality and use state of these systems, while maintaining the perennial imperative of creating an aggregated narrative. Such a narrative will allow people to know who you are, to assess your emotional and functional relevance and to make doing business with you, now and forever, as simply as they can glide through digital time and space.

In many regards, in principle at least, the distribution side of the communication system is complete; EOD, everything on demand, is now normal. The manufacturing side of the system is work in progress. Of course, change is constant, but the shift from a broadcast to a networked world is done.

So what does the new creative asteroid field look like? Imagine one thousand jigsaw pieces, each representing a clue which can be assembled into multiple equally coherent pictures. That’s what brand communications 2020 will look like.

In pursuit of that state then, left brain/right brain worlds of creativity and data are in collision and only in collusion, attached by the liquid glue of technology, will the riddle be solved of an end state that accommodates the snap, the tweet, the augmented and the virtual with the platforms on which we transact and create relationships that endure.

It’s worth noting that we also need to maintain a thoughtful equilibrium between the attraction of instantly available data and its longitudinal value. Now sometimes comes at the expense of then.

What we also know? Digital is no longer a channel or a medium, it’s simply the enabler of a parallel universe as the internet protocol has become the operating system for life itself. There is (almost) no analog activity that can’t be replicated or enhanced digitally. This means that anything can be said, done, bought, sold, embraced or rejected, and that it can happen in environments over which individual brand owners have diminishing control.

That control lies at the awkward intersection of the individual and those platforms with massive, but always incomplete, knowledge of those individuals.

And here lies the problem. There is no communication system that involves a single touch and no single touch to which the complete attribution of effect can be ascribed. Those who own the systems think that theirs is at the center of the universe in much the same way that most in the pre-Galilean world believed that the sun orbited the earth. The truth is that the individual is at the center of their own universe and our world revolves around them and yet remains always in reach, just a swipe away. Consumer centricity is no longer an idea, it’s an imperative, and brand owners and their partners have no choice but to create the atoms, manage where they can, and allow where they cannot manage their assembly into narratives, and keep doing it on multiple interlocking platforms of communication, content and service.
Virtual reality is coming to the fore in 2016 and it has the potential to be the freshest new media technology in many years. The key to using VR well is understanding its ability to close the gap between user and message, to take them somewhere rather than just show them something.

Get past the gaming concepts that first come to mind; that’s just the beginning. Think in terms of any use that connects users with products, places and people that can’t easily be put together in reality. Then consider this essential toolbox:

Empathy – it’s the new e-word, superseding engagement in VR. After all, you can’t help but be engaged with VR unless you close your eyes or rip off the headset. Instead, get tuned into empathy by making your VR content approachable, easily navigable without confusion and allowing the user to feel as if they are experiencing something they couldn’t before – not a previous experience converted to VR.

(Pro tip: Like the erstwhile and always-doomed 3D TV, not everything is better just because it’s in VR. Make VR content that really deserves to be a dome you place the user in.)

Impressions – VR will offer a field of potential impressions all around the user and each user will become our partner in determining which ones get lit up on a per-session basis. The impression lies where the user’s attention and interests take them, not where we design or script the focus of message as we do today in flat media.

Unintention – because VR is a form of wearable technology, it is part of the coming era of unintentional inputs where users project and describe their interests by their behaviors, not just by tapping, typing or liking. Direction and duration of gaze, degree and force of movement, and the order in which the user stacks those, are the new tea leaves. VR can give us a barrel tasting of the user’s real self.

Powerful stuff. But after 21 years at CNET, I’ve seen more than a few powerful technologies clumsily trip over the hurdles. Here are VR’s:

Headgear – it’s ungainly, leaves us feeling vulnerable (and possibly nauseous) in our real surroundings and requires a much bigger commitment than just picking up a smartphone to snack. And it can be expensive, though that is where I am long on low-cost headgear that uses a smartphone as its guts, though the results are on a lower level.

Awareness – VR is such a leap, users will have few analogs for it. The nearest are 3D TV and IMAX cinema, but neither of those describe the VR experience and, in the case of 3D TV, would give it a bad name.

Production – it’s hard. Scripting for 360 degrees of relevance is a big mental job and forces you to realize that many stories just aren’t VR stories. After that you grapple with currently cumbersome cameras, editing flow and output processes.

Platform – never take your eye off the users, most of whom will only tolerate VR gear that is affordable, easy to use and friction-free to enjoy. Tread carefully when asking a user to go to a special place to find VR content; make it as much a part of their normal digital travels as possible.

Measurement – the new world of impressions begs for a new kind of measurement that folds in information about point of gaze, duration of gaze and sequence of gazes.

VR doesn’t necessarily replace any media form today, rather it has a credible shot at creating a new seat at the table. Approach it that way and with respect for the medium and where it naturally makes sense, and you may help us all discover something powerful and truly new.
2015 is the year where those in the know finally agreed that the mobile future is in fact present and accounted for. It might have been late 2014. Nevertheless, there is still a ways to go to improve how mobile best can be used by marketers, and a lot of people are working hard at it. In the meantime, we can now set our sights on identifying the next tech milestone destined for scaled adoption. In a digital age where change is constant, it is only natural that we keep an eye out for the next big thing.

The buzz surrounding CES, the yearly consumer electronics and tech show in Las Vegas, suggests that augmented and virtual reality (AR/VR) may well be to CES 2016 what tablets were to 2010, wearables were to 2012 and the internet of things was to 2014 (evidence as to why the CES producer organization CEA this year changed their acronym to CTA, with Technology replacing Electronics).

Virtual reality’s application in immersive gaming and in empathetic journalism seem ready for adoption once headsets become affordable (and, for some, not too embarrassing to wear). Another interesting application destined for VR is the retail experience. Imagine having a front row seat at a New York Fashion Week show, so close to the models that you can see the glimmer of the threading in the their clothes as they strut past. Imagine ordering your next car from the Mercedes factory in Stuttgart, where the hum of the pristine engine would lull the angriest infant to sleep. Augmented reality also holds promise in the retail environment, enabling users to virtually try on packaged cosmetics, access consumer-friendly information, for example about nutrition, allergies and sourcing, and of course receive offers and coupons.

While e- and m-commerce moved the point of sale to the digital screen, virtual reality widens the scope of commerce by enabling retailers to create new merchandising opportunities to intrigue and delight audiences. Point of sale once referred to the engagement with consumers closest to the cash register – and the marketing and merchandising opportunities closest to the actual purchase. End caps, take-ones and floor mats are quaint devices that have sustained simply because they work. Point of sale is frontier territory for digital innovation; beacons and geo-fencing are experiments being tentatively adopted by retailers because in the delicate balance between innovation and privacy, an obvious dollop of trepidation exists. But, when put into the hands of the user, mobile devices can be user-controlled shopping tools that enable clever conversion-focused applications.

As we assess technology innovations, virtual reality and others, we are reminded of the gap between marketing application and user adoption. As we see with mobile, scaled adoption of smartphones does not equate to scaled marketing application, nor to best marketing utility.

This example underscores the best way to leverage CES: As a guidance system. How do you assess what is in front of you as a part of a world of networked devices and applications? How do you anticipate scaled adoption to inform timing of investment? Is there a competitive advantage to early adoption? How do you develop or find skills to develop use cases? What is required of marketing organizations to accommodate innovation and new forms of marketing? These complexities are part of what makes it exciting to be in the midst of the seemingly endless change that technology begets.

Marketing transformation today requires a confluence of vision, pragmatism, creativity and an extra shot of bravery.
Marketing today has become incredibly both technical and complex. Every CMO and CMT has access to the same digital tools and data as their most fierce competitor. These tools give better access to the consumer but in the end it is not the access that makes the brand impression or buying decision, it’s the story.

Getting in front of the consumer takes technical creativity. Making an emotional impression on that consumer such that it affects their perception of the brand and their decision to buy, takes art.

When we launched Project Daniel (www.notimpossiblenow.com/labs/project-daniel) at CES, the yearly consumer electronics show in Las Vegas, we were up against the most planned and well-designed marketing strategies from some of the largest technology and product companies in the world. Yet during that week and in the weeks that followed, the story of Project Daniel captured the majority of the media attention. Within 14 short weeks, it catapulted to $420 million earned media impressions. This was achieved with zero paid media. To get overly buzzwordy, it was as organic, authentic and viral as storytelling and marketing can be. The largest companies in the world were not able to rival those numbers, even with substantial paid media behind their campaigns. Intel was our partner in Project Daniel, and when Intel launched their paid campaign, we soon moved from the millions to over a billion impressions.

This was motivated by the visceral and emotional response of consumers to the story. Not Impossible and Intel told a humanistic, relatable story that was not canned or predictable. In the end, this is what fueled its success. The global audience craves real stories – funny, sad, shocking, tear-jerking – but always genuine, intimate and emotional.

Advertising technology will continue to evolve and get better. It will be increasingly more precise and more relevant in fulfilling the end-goals that consumer brands want to reach. Many times advertising technology will get the ball all the way up to the goal line. And it is a very crowded goal line. Yet it is the responsibility of the story to push the ball across that line. Tech gets you to the red zone. Emotion gets you points on the board.

Everything Not Impossible stands for focuses around technology, but technology alone will fall flat. When the stories we tell, are compelling, powerful and emotional, they will, thanks to technology, be celebrated and shared around the world.
7 TRENDS

VR: FROM GIMMICK TO GAME CHANGER
Virtual reality has finally arrived, offering marketers a true medium to deliver a multisensory experience bringing sight, sound and motion to life and opening up a new creative canvas to deliver on a brand’s promise more completely for consumers.

GLOBALIZATION AT SCALE
Advances in technology are creating a seemingly flatter world, acting as an equalizer and forcing brands to reconsider their role within local and global marketplaces. Marketers are adapting the notion ‘think globally, act locally’ as they leverage new data and resources to perfect the art of targeting on a global stage.

THE EVOLVING OTT MARKETPLACE
As consumers increasingly adopt subscription video on demand services (SVOD), TV networks are fighting for relevancy by bolstering their own streaming services. The results will be opportunities for marketers to exclusively partner with digital-first programming and new streaming services, as well as the chance to test emerging targeting technologies and strategies.

BUYING THE FUTURE: PROGRAMMATIC’S EVOLUTION
As programmatic continues to fundamentally change the business of media buying, both publishers and agencies are evolving their strategies, shattering decades-old models and opening up new opportunities for transformation.

FROM REAL-TIME MARKETING TO REAL-TIME CONTENT
Brands are leaning in to evolve beyond carefully-crafted shareable content and search strategies, using live video platforms like Periscope or Facebook Live to offer consumers irreplaceable real-time ‘here today, gone tomorrow’ access and experiences.

OMNICHANNEL OMNIVORES
When it comes to shopping, mobile is changing consumers’ final moment of truth and transaction. They not only expect the ability to purchase directly from brands in on- and offline spaces in mobile-first ways [app, website, tap to pay, etc.] but also the mobile-enabled ability to take the store out of the store and buy via a variety of paid and earned channels.

THE EXPERIENCE IMPERATIVE
Today’s discerning consumers expect a one-to-one dialogue with brands. This means brands must embrace a consumer centric mindset across all facets of business to gain and maintain competitive advantage, using technology and its resulting data to deliver personalized, relevant messaging and experiences at all touchpoints.
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