

From Stretched to Strengthened

Insights from the
Global Chief Marketing
Officer Study

“Every shipment we deliver we are branding ourselves. With every interaction with your customer you are building your brand – for better or for worse.”

CMO, Transportation company, United States

Transportation CMOs are in the hot seat: their enterprises recognize the value of marketing and demand a rapid measurable return on invested capital.

How are chief marketing officers (CMOs) helping their enterprises cope with the fundamental shifts transforming business and the world? To find out, we conducted 1,734 face-to-face interviews with CMOs in 64 countries, including 43 marketing leaders from the Transportation industry.

Our interviews reveal that CMOs see four challenges as pervasive, universal game-changers: the data explosion, social media, proliferation of channels and devices, and shifting consumer demographics. To respond to this, CMOs in the most successful enterprises are focusing on customer relationships, not just transactions. They are committed to helping employees exemplify their organization’s “corporate character.” And they are looking for ways to demonstrate marketing’s return on investment (ROI).

In the course of our conversations with CMOs worldwide, an overwhelming consensus emerged. The vast majority of CMOs believe there are three key imperatives that will enable them to respond to the marketing challenges in today’s complex world. They must understand and deliver value to empowered customers; create lasting relationships with those customers; and measure marketing’s contribution to the business in relevant, quantifiable terms.

Deliver value
to empowered
customers

Capture value,
measure results

Foster lasting
connections



Transportation industry insights

► **Swimming, treading water or drowning?**

- CMOs are facing significant challenges and most feel underprepared to manage them. Overall, the data explosion, social media, growth of channel and device choices and shifting consumer demographics were the top four concerns for all CMOs. Transportation CMOs say the top challenges for which they feel underprepared are privacy concerns, social media, a coming data explosion and shifting consumer demographics.

► **Deliver value to empowered customers**

- Many organizations struggle to develop customer insights because they primarily focus on understanding markets rather than individuals. Overall, at least 80 percent of CMOs rely on traditional sources of information, such as market research and competitive benchmarking, to make strategic decisions. Transportation CMOs rely on market research, competitive benchmarking and customer service feedback for decision making.
- Across all industries, the two biggest barriers hindering CMOs from adopting new tools and technologies are cost and lack of certainty about ROI. Transportation CMOs are in agreement, with 63 percent citing cost as the biggest barrier and 41 percent citing lack of ROI certainty. At 53 percent, tool implementation issues were also highly cited by Transportation CMOs.

► **Foster lasting connections**

- In this digital era, organizations need to understand customers and act quickly on what they learn. As Transportation CMOs manage the shift toward digital technologies, enhancing customer loyalty/advocacy is their top priority.
- More than half of the CMOs say their corporate character is well understood in the marketplace. Yet 57 percent also say more work remains to get employees on board. In Transportation, 51 percent of CMOs believe their corporate character is understood and 65 percent say more work remains.

► **Capture value, measure results**

- Sixty-three percent of respondents believe marketing ROI will become the most important measure of success over the next three to five years. CMOs from Transportation companies diverge with their peers from other industries on this point. Transportation CMOs cited overall sales as the most important gauge of marketing success and customer experience as the second most important factor.
- The majority of Transportation CMOs believe corporate transparency requires marketing to make five key changes: enhance engagement with customers, manage brand reputation within and beyond the company, strengthen collaboration across the enterprise, expand data collection, analysis and insight capabilities, and orchestrate a single view of the brand.

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