moengage + marketoonist

The State of Cross-Channel Marketing

2025 Report



Shifting Mindsets:

A Gateway to Change with Insights from 800+ B2C Marketers

A Snapshot of Top **2025 Trends**

Before you dive into this year's State of Cross-Channel Marketing report, here's a quick glimpse of the top trends we've discovered:

Increasing customer engagement is more important than finding new customers.

Delivering personalized experiences is more challenging than budget constraints.

Using integrated marketing technology is the #1 precursor to cross-channel marketing success.





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Foreword

We need our senses of humor more than ever in marketing.

Marketing has never been static. We've always had to evolve our thinking as new technology, tools and data become available. But the pace of change today is dizzying, and it can help to laugh at ourselves to make sense of it all (or at least realize that we're not going through it alone).

More than twenty years ago, I started drawing a weekly marketing cartoon. When I first started posting cartoons about my marketing life, it was cathartic to discover that marketers everywhere were going through many of the same things. A perennial challenge is cross-channel marketing — the holy grail of delivering the right message to the right person at the right time.

This is my second back-to-back collaboration with MoEngage. Usually my cartoons are inspired by my personal experiences in marketing or the anecdotal stories of others. But MoEngage collected tangible data as source material: a clear snapshot on the approaches, obstacles, and opportunities of 847 B2C marketers (including many Marketoonist readers).

We mined all of this data for insights, and I focused on the most significant takeaways in a series of cartoons that visualize the state of cross-channel marketing in 2025.

Between 2024 and 2025, the overarching theme we uncovered is "Shifting Mindsets." Even in the span of just one year, marketers evolved their thinking on what it takes for effective cross-channel marketing. This includes the role of customer loyalty, how we adopt AI, our approach to personalization, and our investment in technology.

One interesting side note is that email as a marketing channel continues to thrive, defying the incessant predictions that "email is dead."

As we navigate this mindset shift in marketing, hopefully these cartoons help the medicine go down. And perhaps remind us that our work is too important to be taken too seriously.



Tom Fishburne
Creator of Marketoonist



Executive Summary

With the current state of cross-channel marketing in flux, this year's report highlights several mindset shifts among B2C marketers. They are swapping customer acquisition for customer loyalty, exploring channel diversification to surpass their competition, investing in advanced personalization tactics and newer channels, and replacing their focus on raw customer data with technology that can help them wield it.

The data shows that today's brands prioritize sending more real-time and contextually relevant communications and execute customer engagement at an advanced level. However, the overreliance on manual processes and rigid technology is impeding their growth. Yet they are willing to invest in technology and AI to scale their engagement programs while working to overcome challenges with executing hyper-personalization at scale and predicting consumer behavior.

Of the 847 B2C marketers we surveyed,

51.9%

said that increasing customer engagement was their #1 objective

52.6% said delivering personalized experiences was their top cl experiences was their top challenge

said utilizing a comprehensive tech stack was the key to success

But that's just the tip of the iceberg.



By the end of this report, you'll discover:

- The top priorities for today's B2C marketing professionals
- The biggest challenges facing consumer marketing teams
- What it takes to build a successful cross-channel marketing program
- How teams are utilizing technology and AI to enhance customer engagement

Who We Surveyed

Methodology

Survey timeline

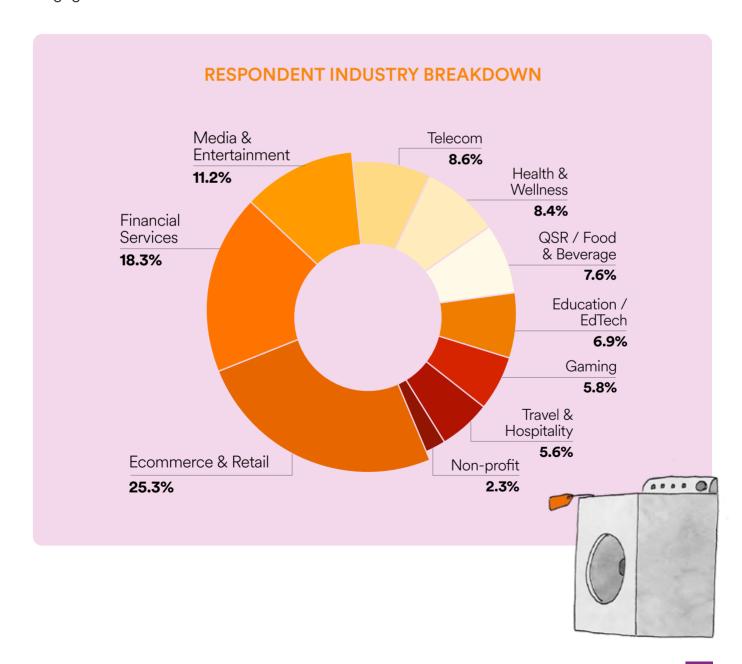
Total survey responses

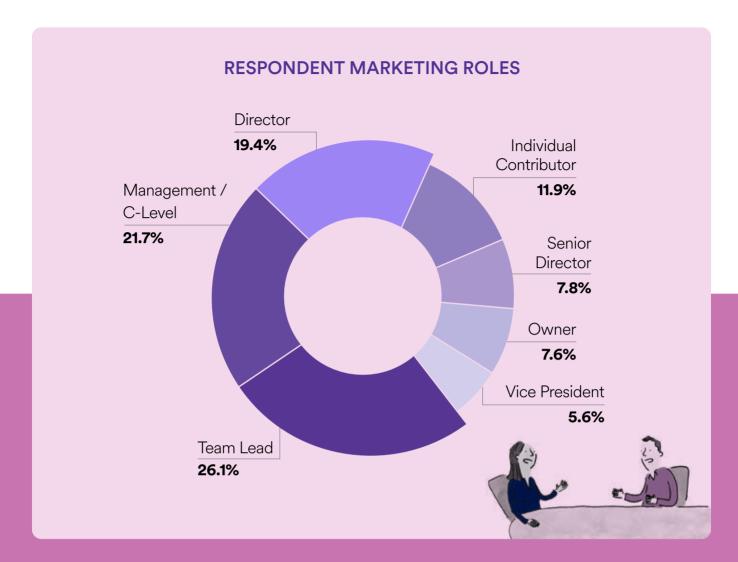
December 2024

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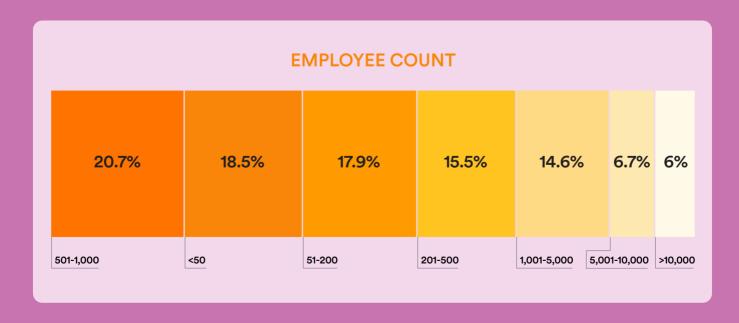
Profile of Respondents

We surveyed hundreds of B2C marketing professionals from various industries and job roles, to understand the current state of cross-channel marketing and customer engagement.





Additionally, the respondents represented organizations of varied sizes, including SMBs, Mid-Markets, and Enterprises.





Current Stateof Marketing

The current state of marketing is characterized by the increasing importance of customer-centric approaches that foster long-term engagement and loyalty. There is a visible shift towards the usage of more channels for digital engagement. Also, the adoption of previously under-utilized platforms like WhatsApp is on the rise, reflecting the changing market dynamics. Apart from this, we are witnessing a transformation in investment patterns, with a high surge in Martech spending. This emphasizes that there's been a mindset shift amongst B2C marketers toward prioritizing customer engagement and the tools that facilitate it.

Revenue Growth

80.2% of the respondents work at companies that experienced more than 5% growth in this year, with **31%** experiencing over 25% revenue growth.



TAKEAWAYS

- The high percentage of companies experiencing revenue growth aligns with post-pandemic recovery and the increasing adoption of digital customer engagement strategies. Industries like Retail and E-Commerce, BFSI, and Media and entertainment are at the forefront of this transformation.
- Oue to the high percentage of respondents who have experienced growth, we can say that these brands are on the right track to customer engagement.



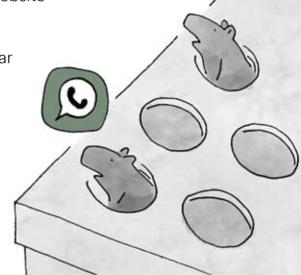
Marketing Channels

 Email remains the #1 channel used (82.4%), as well as the one that's perceived most effective (73.5%).

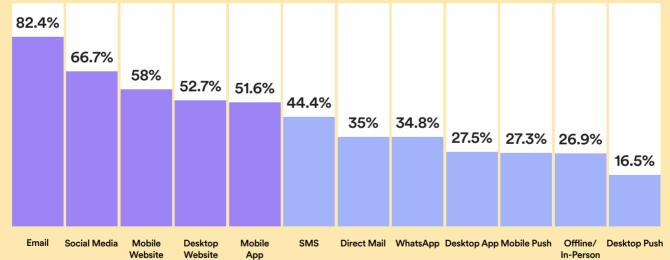
In the list of the top five most used channels, Mobile Website moved ahead of Desktop Website.

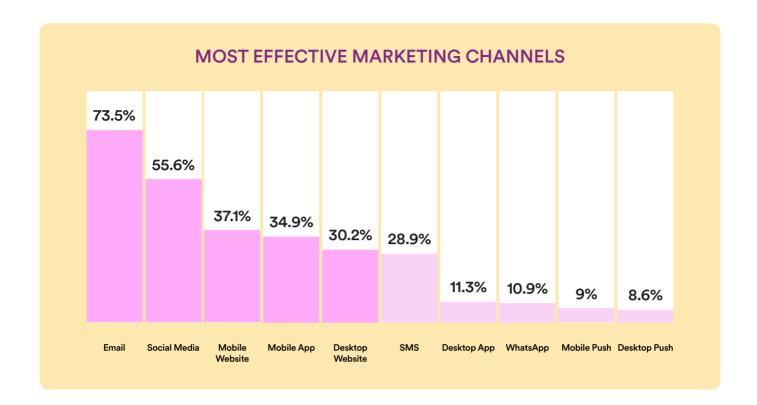
 The usage of WhatsApp has more than doubled this year (from 13.5% to 34.8%).

 26.9% of respondents are using offline channels for marketing.

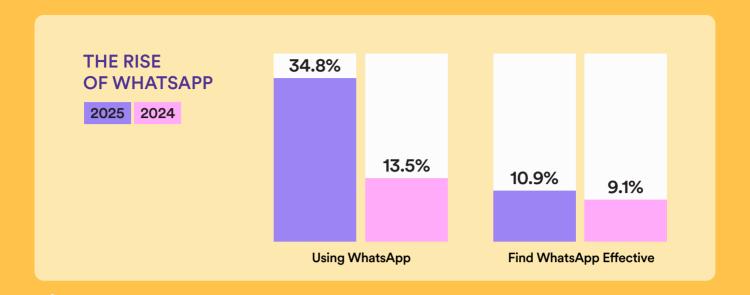


MARKETING CHANNELS BEING USED









Fun Fact:

WhatsApp usage is growing more than mobile and web push notifications. It is also considered a more effective channel than last year.

TAKEAWAYS

(y) Email is clearly... still not dead!

☆ Pro tip:

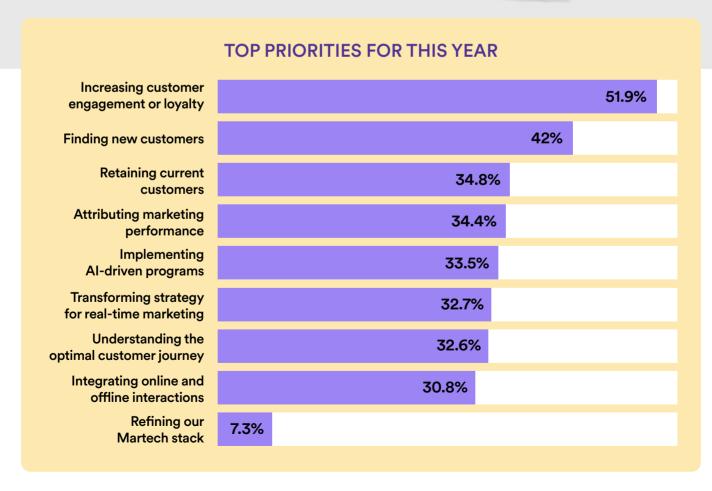
If you want to level up your email marketing game this year, check out our **Email Benchmarks Report for 2025.**

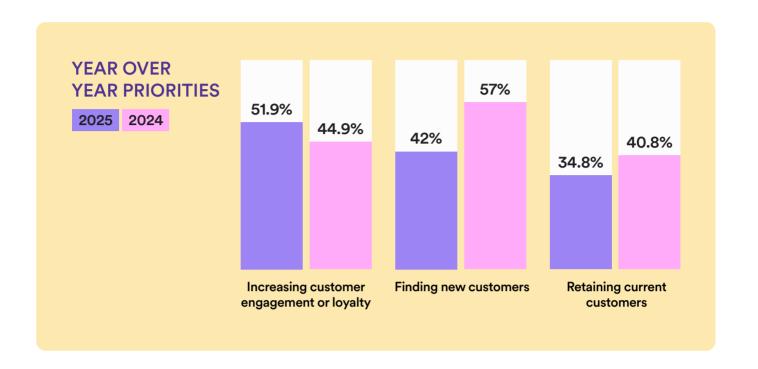
- Not much has changed in terms of overall channel usage and perceived effectiveness year over year. However, we are seeing more marketers experiment with newer channels (such as WhatsApp). This could be due to shifting consumer preferences (as of 2024, there are approximately 100 million users using WhatsApp across the United States!) and marketers' attempts to break through the noise.
- While everything moves digital, many marketers are still leveraging offline channels for customer engagement. This makes having a seamless cross-channel marketing program even more relevant regardless of where the data is coming from.

Business Objectives

- "Increasing customer engagement or loyalty" (51.9%) was the #1 response this year by a landslide
- "Finding new customers" (42.0%), which was the number #1 response last year has moved to the second position







TAKEAWAYS



Unlike in the past, more marketers are prioritizing customer engagement or loyalty over acquisition. This is a more sustainable and customer-centric approach to cross-channel marketing, which values quality over quantity and long-term profit over short-term gains.



Investment Trends

79.3% of marketers plan to invest more in marketing technology to improve customer experiences in the next 12 months, which is a signicant increase from last year (64.9%).

No new investment 79.3%
No new investment 13.4%
Decrease in investment 7.3%

EXPECTED
MARTECH SPEND
IN 2025

No new investment 28.4%
Decrease in investment 64.9%

EXPECTED
MARTECH SPEND
IN 2024

TAKEAWAYS



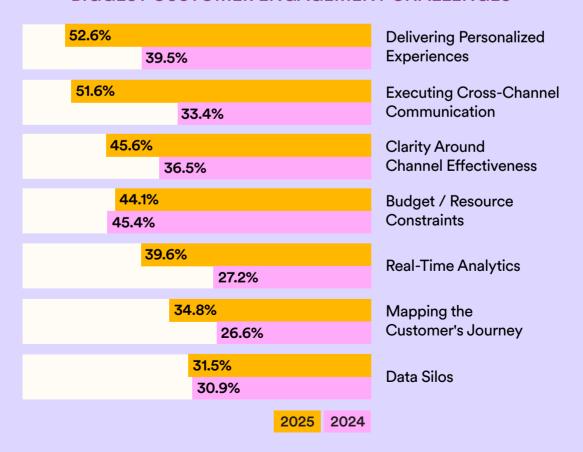
The significant increase in investment in marketing technology YOY also signifies a mindset shift, with greater emphasis placed on customer engagement. It means marketers are willing to allocate higher budgets to refine cross-channel customer journeys, increase the effectiveness of their campaigns, and ultimately boost their business's bottom line. This correlates to the revenue growth experienced by a majority of the respondents.

Top Challenges and Solutions



Marketers today face a complex business landscape, increasingly limited by the slow execution of their campaigns and strategies due to reliance on manual processes and legacy tools. They are also grappling with limited performance measurement capabilities, siloed data, and unactionable insights, which inhibit their ability to optimize campaigns in real time. In response, they have started prioritizing modern Customer Engagement Platforms (CEPs) which can facilitate personalization and cross-channel engagement, focusing on those which receive positive reviews on websites like G2, Gartner, and/or Forrester. AI/ML capabilities and customer service levels are also crucial criteria for technology investments.

BIGGEST CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT CHALLENGES





Hyper-Personalization

- This year, the #1 customer engagement challenge for marketers is "delivering personalized experiences," whereas last year it was "budget constraints."
- Executing hyper-personalization has become a bigger challenge year over year, with **39.5%** of marketers citing it as a challenge last year compared to **52.6%** this year.
- The #1 barrier for executing hyper-personalized campaigns has been "slow execution" due to manual processes or rigid technology (31%) that impede marketers from reacting quickly.



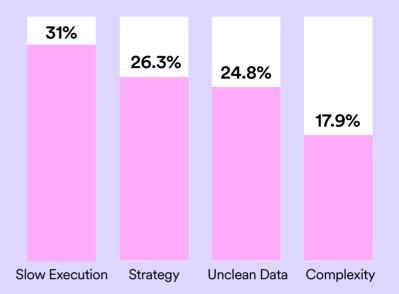
KEY CHALLENGES WITH EXECUTING HYPER-PERSONALIZED CAMPAIGNS

Slow Execution: Manual processes or rigid technology make it hard to react quickly enough for campaigns to resonate (31.0%)

Strategy: Understanding how to use personalization effectively (26.3%)

Unclean Data: Difficulties keeping customer data up-to-date leads to mistakes (24.8%)

Complexity: Too many moving parts to keep track of at scale (17.9%)



TAKEAWAYS



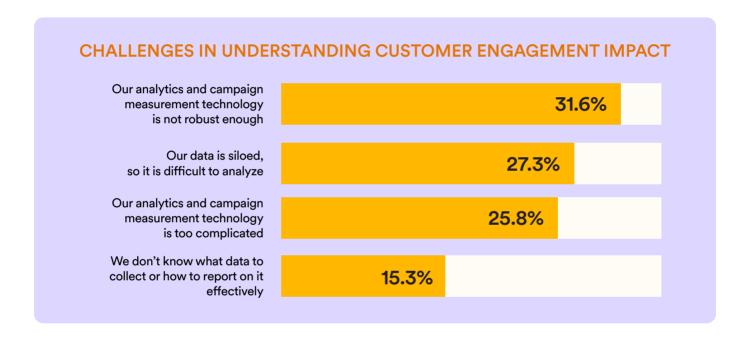
As marketers double down on enhancing customer experiences, personalization as a cross-channel marketing tactic continues to grow in importance. However, marketers are still struggling to execute it seamlessly due to overreliance on manual processes and rigid technology. This calls for an urgent need to adopt flexible, modern Martech solutions that can automate tasks, provide real-time data analysis, and ultimately drive hyper-personalization across channels.





Measuring Impact

31.6% of marketers said their analytics and measuring capabilities are too limited, and **27.3%** cited siloed data as a culprit in making it hard for them to see a full picture of their customers and engagement programs.



TAKEAWAYS



Data silos and outdated technology severely limit the understanding of customer behavior and preferences, reducing campaign effectiveness. On the other hand, modern, all-in-one platforms that unify data, swiftly crunch numbers, and deliver digestible insights, can transform these challenges into opportunities, improving decision-making and accelerating business performance.

Cross-Channel Communication

The top three barriers to executing cross-channel marketing are:

- Reconciling digital and offline marketing channel data (23.6%)
- Creating personalized messaging that resonates (22.6%)
- Customer segmentation (21.2%)



CHALLENGES IN EXECUTING CROSS-CHANNEL COMMUNICATION		
Reconciling digital and offline marketing channel data	23.6%	
Creating personalized messaging that resonates	22.6%	
Segmenting customers appropriately	21.2%	
Maintaining brand and messaging consistency across channels	13.6%	

TAKEAWAYS

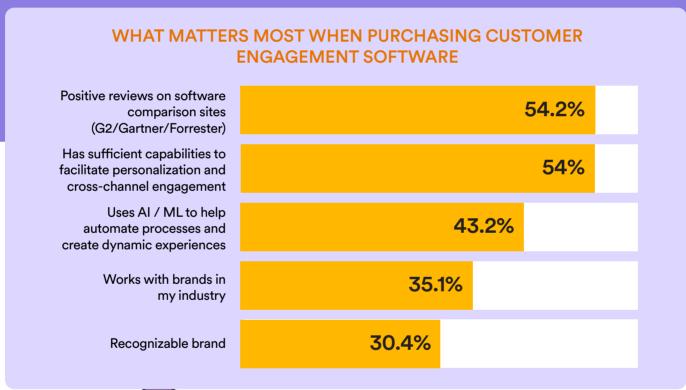


Again overreliance on outdated methods and tools has given rise to data silos and prevented holistic customer data integration, hampering cross-channel marketing efforts.

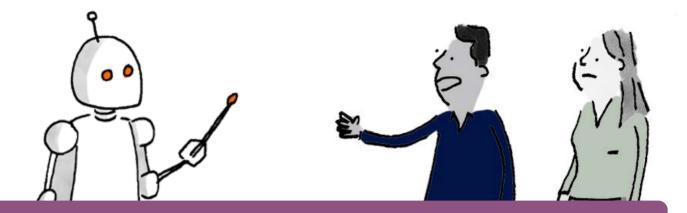


Vendor Evaluation

- Finding "positive reviews on software comparison sites like G2, Gartner, and Forrester" for a customer engagement platform (54.2%) is an equally popular vendor evaluation criterion as when the platform "has sufficient capabilities to facilitate personalization and cross-channel engagement" (54%).
- Last year, only 22.5% of the respondents considered a CEP's AI / ML capabilities to be an important factor, but this year the number has almost doubled.
- Similarly, "great customer service" was an important factor for more marketers this year, with respondents increasing YoY from 18.1% to 30%.

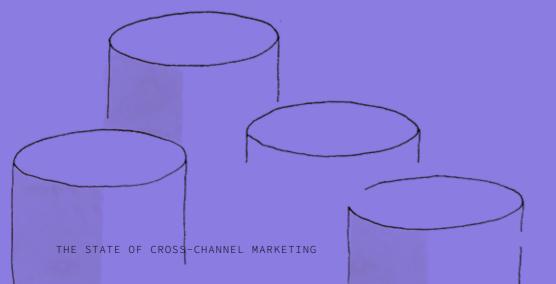






TAKEAWAYS

- Despite market speculation about the diminishing influence of software comparison sites and review platforms, our research illustrates their continued importance. More than half of the respondents use websites like G2, Gartner, and **Forrester** to gauge user experience and feedback before making strategic decisions.
- The growing significance of AI/ML as a factor in vendor selection reaffirms its expanding influence in the marketing landscape.
- The increased importance placed on "great customer service" signifies a rising demand for more strategic partnerships in vendor selection. This emphasizes that beyond just products and services, marketers value vendors that can serve as reliable partners, providing support and expertise. A superior vendor partnership can fuel campaign success, assist in navigating market complexities, and positively impact a business's bottom line.



I can't wait for AI to come along to help crunch numbers so I can focus more on creating content.



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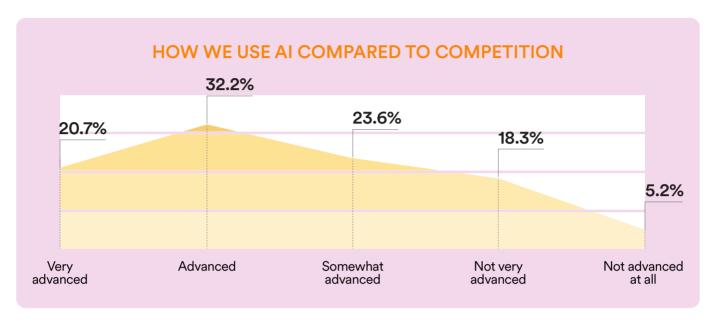
AI: The Good, Bad, and Ugly

As we navigate the digital age, Artificial Intelligence (AI) emerges as a critical component of cross-channel marketing. For the first time ever, we're witnessing a technology that is enabling brands to achieve personalization at such a scale. Even though its exact scope is still largely undefined, brands have started experimenting with different use cases. Specifically, AI's evolving role in content creation, email optimization, and website personalization highlights its expanding influence. It's no longer considered a good-to-have tool, but one that's essential for remaining competitive.

However, the journey to AI adoption is fraught with apprehensions concerning inaccurate outputs and job security. Despite these fears, marketers are aware of the immense potential of AI and are willing to harness it to address complex tasks like predicting customer behavior.

Usage

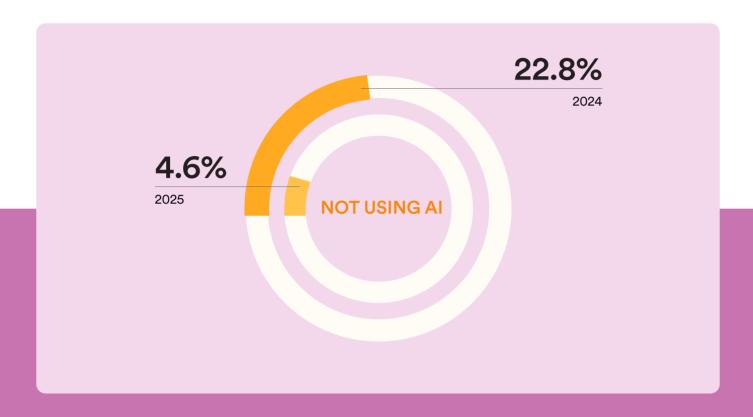
• 52.9% of respondents say their AI strategy is "advanced" or "very advanced" when compared to their competitors.



• The main way respondents are using AI is for "content creation" (57%). Even though this was the most popular choice by marketers last year as well, the number of respondents was significantly less (33.2%).



 The number of marketers NOT using AI in their cross-channel campaigns has decreased YoY from 22.8% to only 4.6%.



TAKEAWAYS

Marketers are leveraging AI for the same use cases as last year, but many more marketers are adopting AI for customer engagement. This could mean that AI is no longer just a nice to have but a requirement to remain relevant in today's competitive landscape.



Fears

- 76% of respondents are afraid that using Al will lead to mistakes because Al can provide inaccurate information, which would inevitably lead to fear #2 (71%) i.e. a negative impact on brand reputation.
- 23.9% responded that they were afraid that Al would replace their job.



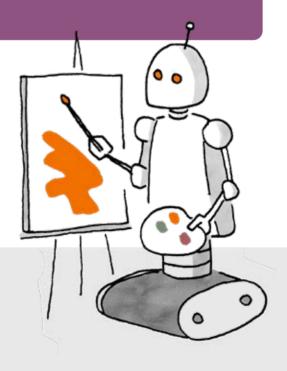


TAKEAWAYS

- While everyone is bullish on adopting AI to figure out how to extract the maximum benefit from it, there are valid fears holding marketers back. A majority of them are concerned about relying on or distributing misinformation as this would have a negative impact on brand reputation, which is very costly to build in the first place.
- Almost a quarter of the respondents felt their job security was compromised by the introduction of AI into the marketing process. This can be problematic for a number of reasons. The fear can fuel resistance to innovation, and misalignment with strategic goals due to self-preservation, leading to missed opportunities for leveraging Al.

☼ Pro tip:

If you're an IC, you can overcome this fear by closing any skill gap by training and educating yourself on how to best leverage Al. If you're a team lead, you should encourage familiarity with AI usage in your team by demonstrating key use cases. **



Strategy

The top four things marketers believe AI can help them with:

- Forecasting consumer behavior and trends (47.8%)
- Social media trend analysis and automated engagement (46.9%)
- Content automation (46.6%)
- Hyper-personalization (46.3%)



TAKEAWAYS

- Despite the prevalent fears, it appears marketers see a lot of opportunity in the ways Al could improve their current customer engagement strategies, with more than 45% of respondents voting for each of the top four responses.
- Marketers want AI to help them with highly complex or time-consuming tasks, such as predicting customer behavior by crunching gazillions of numbers, so they can focus on the more creative or strategic side of marketing.

Investing in a modern CEP with AI capabilities can help you predict things like which customers are most likely to not open your app in the next seven days, which ones are going to uninstall your app in the next two weeks, and who are most likely to convert in the 5 days. And all this can be done in seconds!

AI will deliver
the next How are we generation of using AI personalization. right now?



Have you seen our self-driving vacuum?

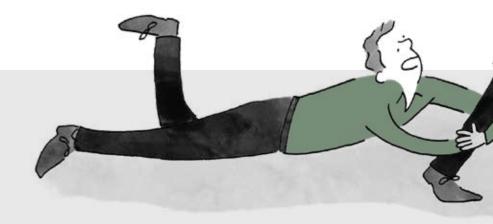


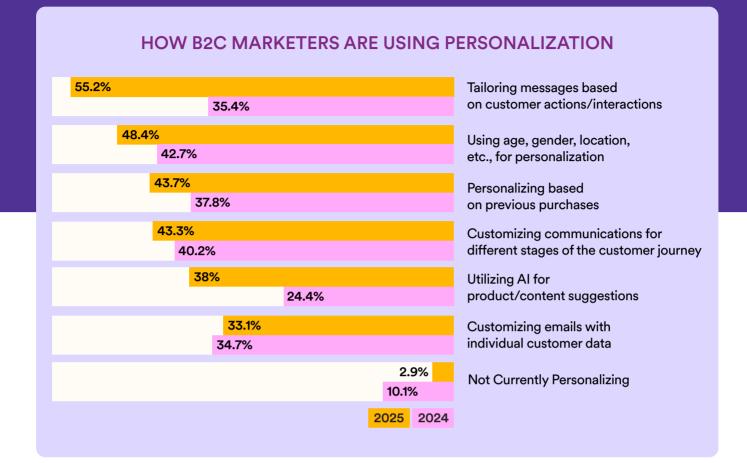
Best Practices for Cross-Channel Success

Cross-channel marketing is rapidly evolving with current trends tilting towards behavior-based personalization. Fueled by the cut-throat competition in the market, this shift demonstrates an increased inclination towards real-time customer engagement. Simultaneously, there's a growing preference amongst marketers for integrated technology, as they use more cross-channel personalization tactics than ever before. This underscores the survival mantra: "Adapt or die".

How Marketers Are Personalizing

- This year, **55.2%** of marketers are tailoring marketing communication to real-time customer actions and interactions, whereas last year, only **35.4%** were doing this. This makes behavior-based personalization the #1 personalization style being used.
- Last year, 10.1% of respondents said they weren't using personalization, but this year, only 2.9% aren't.





TAKEAWAYS

- This year, marketers are using more personalization tactics than last year.
- Behavior-based personalization has surpassed attribute and journey-based personalization in terms of usage. Sending marketing communication in real time based on specific customer actions is very effective because it reflects the current interests and activities of customers. As a result, the messaging is more likely to resonate.

₽ Did You Know?

In our **2025 Email Benchmarks Report**, we found that behavior-based personalization performed better this year than in previous years. No wonder we are seeing more marketers transition to using behavior-based personalization in their cross-channel efforts!

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What's Working

When asked what has contributed the most to helping you build an effective cross-channel marketing strategy, the #1 response was "utilizing a comprehensive tech stack" (31%). This is the exact opposite of our findings from last year, where this factor was the least popular (only 11.5% of marketers said this was important).



TAKEAWAYS

- These findings suggest that while the biggest obstacle to implementing highly personalized campaigns this year has been "slow campaign execution due to manual processes or rigid technology," the most successful strategy for overcoming this barrier is using integrated technology, like a modern, all-in-one CEP.
- Leveraging customer data to make decisions remains crucial for B2C marketers. However, the primary focus has shifted from the data itself to a macroscopic view of where this data comes from and the technology used to process it. The growing significance of technology shows that marketers are realizing that the right tools paired with the right strategies are the competitive edge needed to succeed in today's world.





The Future of Cross-Channel Marketing: Final Thoughts

The current state of cross-channel marketing is in flux, with a transition from a focus on customer acquisition to fostering loyalty. This marks a fundamental shift in the mindset of B2C marketers. We're also seeing the rapid integration of AI through evolving use cases, such as customer behavior predictions. This acts as an essential catalyst to the customer-centric transformation while offering a more data-driven approach to developing marketing strategies. Alongside AI, personalization has gained increased attention, emphasizing the significance of curated individual experiences, even amidst technological and process constraints.

The future of the industry lies in adopting innovative techniques and pursuing robust marketing technology investments that promise refined customer experiences and elevated campaign efficacy. As such, marketers' understanding and navigation of these trends are critical in bridging the gap between a lackluster customer engagement strategy and a successful one.

Summary of Key Takeaways

Revenue Growth and Engagement

A majority of respondents reported significant revenue growth, which correlates with an increasing focus on customer engagement and loyalty (as opposed to only acquisition). This underscores the value of engaging and retaining existing customers in driving business success.

Personalization Challenges

Delivering personalized experiences remains a top challenge, with slow execution due to manual processes and rigid technology being a significant barrier. Addressing these roadblocks is crucial for effective customer engagement.



Channel Evolution

A majority of respondents reported significant revenue growth, which correlates with an increasing focus on customer engagement and loyalty (as opposed to only acquisition). This underscores the value of engaging and retaining existing customers in driving business success.

Al Adoption

The rapid increase in AI utilization for various aspects of cross-channel marketing and the interest in predictive analytics highlight the market's move towards automation and actionable insights. Understanding and implementing AI can provide a competitive advantage. However, brands need to make a conscious effort to drive AI literacy across the organization to counter any prevalent fears.

Integration of Technology

The growing importance placed on integrated marketing technology reflects a recognition amongst marketers that modern, cohesive tools are essential for executing successful cross-channel campaigns. Investing in such technology can address data silos, streamline operations, and improve campaign outcomes.

Recommendations for B2C Marketers to Adapt and Thrive in 2025

Use Deeper Personalization

- Take a step beyond sending broadcast communication or superficial personalization towards finding ways to execute deeper personalization.
- Invest in technology that can integrate customer data from multiple sources and help you get a holistic picture of each of your customers.
- Set up triggers for specific customer actions and send them contextually relevant and well-timed communication via Push notifications, In-app messages, Email, or SMS.
- Constantly use A/B testing to figure out which personalization strategies work and which don't and iterate consistently.

Leverage the Full Potential of AI

- Use AI to predict crucial customer actions ahead of time, such as conversions, dormancy, and churn.
- Connect with your customers on their preferred channels to maximize engagement.
- Effortlessly optimize every aspect of your campaign in real time, including the ideal customer journey, messaging, channels, content, and frequency.

Turn Al into a Team Sport

- Remove the intimidation barrier for your team by driving Al literacy across the organization.
- Build an AI culture in the organization by encouraging team members to make use of it as a regular practice.
- Provide coaching to relevant individuals and teams, beginning with the fundamentals of Al and key use cases for your brand.

Embrace Integration

- Move away from manual processes, legacy tools, and disparate point solutions that slow you down and prevent you from gaining a unified view of your customers.
- Find a scalable Martech solution that helps you aggregate customer data from different sources, draw actionable insights, and set up real-time cross-channel campaigns while offering end-to-end customer support all through a single interface.



How MoEngage Can Help You

If you're looking for a strategic engagement partner that can help you execute cross-channel campaigns with finesse, <u>MoEngage</u> is here to help! Here are some ways MoEngage has helped thousands of global consumer brands drive exceptional results:



Integrated Technology

MoEngage is an all-in-one customer engagement platform that's purpose-built for marketers and product owners who value agility over cumbersome complexity. It can import data from different sources and convert it into a 360° view of each of your customers, eventually enabling you to distill actionable insights. Using these analytics, you can reach customers through multiple channels like Email, SMS, Web and App push, and overall App and Web personalization via a single user interface. In fact, MoEngage also supports emerging channels like WhatsApp and RCS, allowing you to diversify your communication strategies effectively. No matter what your current tech stack looks like — whether you have an in-house tool or rely on a legacy platform for certain channels or use a different tool to handle analytics — you can easily hook in MoEngage to execute seamless cross-channel campaigns.



Advanced Personalization

MoEngage offers robust segmentation features, enabling you to categorize customers based on their preferences, behavior, and likelihood to take specific actions on your website or app. This allows you to send the right message to the right customer on the right channel(s) and at the right time. You can also set up behavior-based triggers to send highly contextual communication to customers in real time and at scale. Additionally, **MoEngage Inform** enables you to send hyper-personalized messages to customers in real time and across the relevant channels. This includes transactional messages, security alerts, membership expiry alerts, shipping updates, and more.



Al-powered Content Optimization

MoEngage's Generative AI engine, <u>Merlin AI</u>, enables dynamic content and image optimization, ensuring that every customer receives messages that resonate with their individual preferences and behavior. Unlike other Generative AI platforms, Merlin AI learns from the performance of your past campaigns, understands context based on your customers and use cases, considers the positive and negative impact of various keywords, and helps you build high ROI-driving campaigns.



Al-powered Insights and Predictions

MoEngage has industry-leading features such as <u>Best Time to Send and Most Preferred</u>
<u>Channel</u>, which is fueled by its Al engine — <u>Sherpa Al</u>. You can also predict things like which customers are most likely to churn, become dormant, or convert. This helps you eliminate guesswork, automate your campaigns, and ensure your messages are sent at the best time via the best channel for each customer. This makes the customer experience delightful and your cross-channel marketing game on fire!

About MoEngage

MoEngage is an insights-led customer engagement platform for consumer brands that empowers marketers and product owners with Al-driven insights to create cross-channel experiences that customers love. Trusted by 1,350+ global consumer brands such as SoundCloud, Poshmark, Citi, Nestlé, Domino's, McAfee, Samsung, 7-Eleven, Deutsche Telekom, and more, MoEngage powers personalized and seamless digital experiences.

Consumer brands across 60 countries use MoEngage to power digital experiences for over 1 billion customers every month.

MoEngage was named a Strong Performer in The Forrester WaveTM: Cross-Channel Marketing Hubs Report for Q4 2024



To learn more about MoEngage, visit <u>www.moengage.com</u> or email <u>hello@moengage.com</u>.